

CONSTITUTION AND BYLAWS

**Westside Independent Missionary Baptist Church
1825 Gilmer Avenue, Tallassee, Alabama 36078**

21 December 2023

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ARTICLE I - THE NAME

The name of the church shall be the WESTSIDE INDEPENDENT MISSIONARY BAPTIST CHURCH, Tallassee, Alabama.

ARTICLE II - OBJECT

The object of this Church is the salvation of souls, the edification of Christians through the teaching of God's Word, the worldwide proclamation of God's saving grace expressed in the shed blood and finished work of the Lord Jesus Christ on Calvary, the promotion of godly worship, the defense of the faith once delivered and cooperation with Christian activity functioning in harmony with God's Holy Word, the Bible, until He comes.

ARTICLE III - DOCTRINE

(See Doctrinal Statement on Page 8)

ARTICLE IV - GOVERNMENT

The government of this Church, under the leadership of the Holy Spirit, is vested in the body of believers who compose it, whose majority vote shall be final. By the action of the Church in electing its officers, the immediate direction of the spiritual and temporal affairs of the Church shall be committed to said officers during the term of office as provided for in Article V. This Church acknowledges the Lord Jesus Christ only as its Head and receives the Holy Scriptures as the only infallible guide in matters of faith, church order and discipline, and responsible to no ecclesiastical body.

ARTICLE V - OFFICERS

Section I - Election of Officers

1. The officers of the Church shall be five Deacons elected to serve on a rotating basis every three years: two first year, two second year, and three third year: Pastor, and the individuals that are chosen by the nominating committee and approved by the church at an annual or special called meeting.
2. The Pastor shall be recommended to the Church by unanimous vote of the Pulpit Committee and elected in a regular convened congregational meeting of the Church. The office of the Pastor is not an annually elected office.
3. At the time of the election. A two-thirds majority vote of the convened qualified voters shall be required to call a Pastor.
4. The termination of the Pastor's service may be affected at any time by the same order or procedure as is prescribed for his election and call.
5. The Deacons shall be elected by the Church at the annual meeting on the third Sunday, (if there is no quorum), or the next Sunday before the new church year begins. The Deacons shall be elected for a period of three years of active service on a rotation basis so that the active terms of approximately one-third of the members shall expire each year after each member has served at least one term in office. Deacons are chosen by secret ballot. If for any reason we do not have anyone who meets all the qualifications to meet this rotation change, the current Deacons remain as they are.

6. On the first Sunday of October each year, the Deacons shall meet and select officers within themselves to serve as Chairman, Vice-Chairman and Secretary.

Section II - Nominating Committee

1. The nominating committee shall consider and vote upon the name of any eligible layman of the congregation presented to it for consideration by the Pastor or any qualified voter of the congregation desiring to present a name for service on the Committee shall, on or before the first Sunday of August, file with the Deacon secretary the name of such person or persons they desire to have considered, and it shall be the duty of the Deacon secretary to present to the nominating committee when they meet the names of every person filed with him under this provision of the Constitution.
2. The nominating committee shall choose the members for individual service by voice vote.
3. It shall be the duty of the Committee on Recommendations to present to the Congregation not later than the annual meeting a list of laymen who the Committee, after prayerful and diligent investigation and examination, believes to be biblically qualified.
4. The name of no layman shall be submitted unless the Committee is reasonably sure of his willingness to accept the responsibilities and the function to his full ability in the capacity for which he is to be considered, and of temperamental fitness to yield his individual views in relation to the activities and programs of the Church to the decisions made in the manner provided in this Constitution.
5. It shall be the privilege of any active member of the Westside Baptist Church to present to the Committee the name of any lay member that he or she may desire considered for election of Deacon. Such presentation of names by a qualified voter or voters shall be made either by appearing before the Committee in person at its meeting or by filing in writing with any member of the Committee the name of the layman that he desires to have considered.
6. The entire prepared list of recommended officers submitted by the Committee shall be presented to the congregation at the annual meeting for the election of officers, and the election shall be by secret ballot, and only those receiving a majority of votes of those present shall be elected, providing at least a quorum voters are present. Provided, further, that the complete list recommended by the Committee shall be posted on the Church bulletin board at least two weeks prior to the date of the annual meeting for the election of officers.
7. In the balloting of the congregation of officers, no name shall be considered until and unless it shall have been first favorably reported by the Committee in order, in the process of consideration by the congregation or at any other time, to, in any manner whatsoever, eliminate any name on the list presented by the Committee for consideration.
8. In its deliberate choice, the Committee shall not be bound as to the number of nominees submitted.
9. This Committee shall recommend all other officers to the Church.

Section III - The Duty of Officers

Pastor

1. It shall be the duty of the Pastor to preach the Word and administer the ordinances, to take and have charge of all services, and to watch over the spiritual interests of the Church.
2. The Pastor shall be an ex-officio member of each and every organization and of each and every committee.
3. All employees salaried or otherwise, including the Associate Pastor (if any), shall be directly responsible to the Pastor.
4. The Pastor shall moderate all congregational meetings unless he himself deems otherwise.
5. He will agree not to attempt to affiliate this Church with any other group.
6. He will be shown the Constitution before being considered as Pastor.
7. As concerning the payment of a Supply Pastor in the absence of a Pastor, and as to the number of revivals that the Pastor could take, this shall be determined by mutual agreement of the Church and Pastor. The maximum number of revivals being three, any others by express permission of the Church.

8. In regards to the Pastor's expenses to Church related meetings, the Church shall bear all expenses to and from said meetings not to exceed \$300.00 annually without express permission of the Church.
9. The Church shall provide a clothing allowance of \$200.00 annually.

Deacons

1. It shall be the duty of the Deacons to lead in the spiritual affairs of the Church, acting for the Church, and cooperating with the Pastor in conducting the examination of those who make confession of their faith, and in exercising discipline where it is needed.
2. It shall also be their duty to cooperate with the Pastor in the administration of the ordinances and the shepherding of the congregation of the Church, tenderly "watching for their soul as they that must give account", striving to present every man perfect in Christ Jesus, healing (so far as possible) all differences, giving counsel and comfort to the poor, the sick and afflicted, keeping order in the public assemblies of the Church, making provision for the supply of the pulpit in the absence of the Pastor in the event of his failure to do so.
3. Each year on the First Monday following the annual election of officers, the Deacons shall elect to serve for a period of twelve months, beginning the first day of October, a Chairman, a Vice-Chairman and Clerk, and such standing committees as the work may require.
4. It shall be the privilege of the Chairman of Deacons, the Pastor, or a group of not less than three Deacons to call any special Deacon's meeting.
5. The Clerk of the Deacons shall keep the records of all the action taken by the Deacons.
6. A yearly report of the action of the Deacons shall be made at each annual meeting of the Church.
7. The Deacons shall keep the Church property in repair and hold the same subject to the uses and benefit of the Church.
8. If a member of the Deacons shall absent himself from three regular meetings consecutively without leave for such absences, or absence having been secured from the Deacons, his name shall be removed from the active list of Deacons and his place shall automatically become vacated. The same will hold true for any office holder.

Other Officers

1. A monthly report of the receipts and disbursements by the Treasurer shall be made to the congregation of the Westside Baptist Church along with the Missionary Treasurer.
2. The books of both the Church Treasurer and Missionary Treasurer shall be audited annually after the last Sunday in August by a committee of three members appointed by the Recommendation Committee.
3. It shall be the duty of the Trustees to hold title to the Church property.
4. The Church Clerk shall keep all records of action taken by the Church.
5. The Church Clerk shall keep a list of the membership and handle request for letters after vote of the Church.
6. The Parliamentarian shall see to it that the Church abides by the Constitution and the By-laws and conducts its business by Robert Rules of Order.

Section IV - Resignation or Dismissal of Any Officers

1. If because of unfaithfulness or unfitness upon the part of any officer, or any other reason, the Church deems it desirable to rescind his election to service in said office. The Church Recommendation Committee shall select a committee of four members with the Pastor as Chairman of the Committee, which shall make a thorough and careful investigation of the case and submit its recommendations and report to the Church, which shall make a final action. When an officer of the Church tenders his resignation as such, the same shall be reduced to writing, stating clearly therein the reason or reasons; therefore, the same shall be filed with the Church Clerk.

2. Any vacancy upon any committee, whether by resignation, death, or otherwise, may be filled by the same order of procedure as prescribed for the original appointment of such committee.

ARTICLE VI - MEMBERSHIP AND VOTING QUALIFICATION

Section I

Any person who has accepted Christ as his Savior and gives assurance of his desire to live a consistent Christian life, and has received or gives assurance of his willingness to receive the ordinances of water baptism and the Lord's Table and shows evidence of a satisfactory attitude toward the doctrinal standards of this Church, shall be eligible for membership.

Section II

Members are expected to conscientiously strive to live according to light revealed to them by the Holy Spirit through God's Word, and to whole-heartedly attend any service and activity of the Church both by attendance and financial support. Anyone failing to do so for six consecutive months without a bona fide reason will automatically be put on an inactive roll.

Section III

Church discipline shall be practiced to the extent that when any member is accused of manifesting inconsistency or flagrant sin in their Christian lives, a wrong attitude toward the Church's doctrinal standards, or show indifference toward the life and the work of the Church shall be investigated for the purpose of remedying any weakness in their Christian lives. It shall be in the province of those investigating to recommend to the Church that the person or persons in question be excluded from Church membership, if he can't be reconciled. The Investigating Committee shall be expected to first approach the Pastor in private about it.

Section IV

Any person excluded can be reinstated when he makes a statement acceptable to the Church. This discipline shall be exercised for the benefit of the involved foremost and secondly, for the sake of the Church's testimony.

Section V

Upon request, the Church will extend a letter of recommendation to those leaving the Church in good standing.

Section VI

Any member, 16 years of age or older, meeting requirements stipulated herein by verbal agreement, may have a right to express his or her opinion and make such observations and suggestions as he or she feels led of the Spirit of God.

CREDENTIAL CARD

“AND FOR MY NAME’ SAKE HAS LABORED” (Rev. 2:3)

Because of my recognition of the Body of Christ, His Church, of which I am a member by virtue of His shed blood and the Baptism or the Holy Spirit (I Cor. 12:12, 13), I herewith, as God enables me, assume my responsibility to participate in the business meeting of this local assembly

1. I have been born again.
2. I am striving to live in daily fellowship with my Lord.
3. I have been in active fellowship with the saints of the Westside Baptist Church for the past 30 days and support it with my stewardship.
4. I will abide by the By-laws and Constitution.

No person will be permitted to actively participate in the forthcoming Church business session who is unable to concur with the preceding requirements.

Name: _____ Date: _____

Address: _____

In the event anyone, in the congregational meeting, desires to express himself/herself does not meet the specified requirements, they shall be required by the Moderator to yield the floor.

ARTICLE VII - CONGREGATION MEETING

Section I - Annual Meeting

The annual meeting of the Church shall be held on the last or next to the last Sunday morning of September.

Section II - Special Business Meetings

Special business meetings may be called by the Pastor or Deacons; if these refuse, by the Clerk on the written requisition of at least eight qualified voters. Notice of any special meeting shall be given from the pulpit four days previous to such meeting. If a business meeting be cancelled one time for lack of quorum, then on the second call, the meeting would be held and business conducted by those present regardless of the number present.

ARTICLE VIII - ORDINANCES

Section I - The Lord’s Supper

The Lord’s Supper shall be observed as frequently as God shall lead.

Section II - Baptism

Baptism shall be administered only by the recommendation of the Church, and after due examination. The mode of Baptism is to be by immersion, which we believe to be according to God’s Word.

ARTICLE IX - AMENDMENTS

If it does not infringe upon the doctrinal principles of this Church, the Constitution may be changed or altered at any annual or special called meeting by two-thirds majority of those present.

ARTICLE X - QUORUM

Two-thirds qualified and authorized voters of this congregation constitutes a quorum. Which number is therefore provided by the church clerk.

Roberts Rules of Order shall be the authorized procedure of all the Church business sessions.

STATEMENT OF FAITH

The following is a statement of faith for the Westside Baptist Church of Tallassee, Alabama.

1. We believe in THE HOLY SCRIPTURE: accepting fully the writings of the old and New Testaments as the very Word of God, verbally inspired in all parts and, therefore, wholly without error as originally given of God, altogether sufficient in themselves as our only infallible authoritative rule of faith and practice.
2. God promises that He will preserve His word; Jesus said, "Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my words shall not pass away", Matt. 24:35. We believe God has kept this promise by preserving His word in the traditional Hebrew and Greek manuscripts and the authorized version, King James Version, is an accurate English translation of the preserved Word of God. Therefore, the authorized King James Version is the only version to be used in any worship service or any other teaching capacity.
3. We believe in THE ONE TRIUNE GOD: who is personal spirit, and sovereign; perfect, infinite, and eternal in His being, Holiness and love, wisdom and power; absolutely separate and above the world as its Creator, yet everywhere present in the world as the Upholder of all things; self-existent and self-revealing in three distinct persons, The Father, The Son, and The Holy Spirit, each having a distinct ministry in God's relation to His creation and people.
4. We Believe in THE LORD JESUS CHRIST: who is the Second Person of the Triune God, the Eternal Word and only Begotten Son; that without any change in his divine Person, He became man by miracle of the virgin birth, thus, to continue forever as both true God and true man, one person with two natures; that as man he was tempted in all points as we are, yet without sin; that He arose bodily from the grave and was glorified; that as our great High Priest, He ascended into Heaven, there to appear before the face of God as Advocate and Intercessor.
5. We Believe in THE HOLY SPIRIT: who is the Third Person of the Trinity, and Divine Agent in nature, revelation and redemption, that He convicts the world concerning sin, righteousness and judgment; that He regenerates, indwells, baptizes, seals, and anoints all who become children of God through Christ; that He further empowers, guides, teaches, sanctifies and fills believers who daily surrender to Him.
6. We believe ALL MEN ARE BY NATURE AND CHOICE SINFUL AND LOST: that man was the direct creation of God, made in His image and likeness: that by personal disobedience to the revealed will of God, man became a sinful creature, the father of a fallen race which is universally sinful in both nature and practice, thus, alienated from the life and family of God, under the righteous judgment and wrath of God, and has within himself no possible means of salvation.
7. We believe in SALVATION BY GRACE THROUGH FAITH: that salvation is a free gift of God, neither merited nor secured in part or in whole by any virtue or work of man, but received only by personal faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, in whom all true believers have as a present possession the gift of eternal life, a perfect righteousness, son ship in the family of God, deliverance and security from all condemnation, every spiritual resource need for life and Godliness and the divine guarantee that they shall never perish, that this salvation affects the whole man; that apart from Christ, there is no possible salvation.
8. We believe in RIGHTEOUS LIVING AND GODLY WORKS; not as a means of salvation in any sense, but as its proper evidence and fruit; and therefore, as Christians, we should obey the Word of our Lord, seek the things which are above, walk as He walked, accept as our solemn responsibility the duty and privileges of bearing the gospel to a lost world; remembering that a victorious and fruitful Christian life is possible only for those who, in gratitude for the infinite and undeserved mercies of God, have presented themselves wholly to Christ.
9. We believe in THE EXISTENCE OF SATAN: who originally was created a holy and perfect being, but through pride and wicked ambition rebelled against God, thus, becoming utterly depraved in character, the great adversary of God and His people, leader of all other evil angels and spirits, the deceiver and god of this present world; that his powers are vast but strictly limited by the permissive

will of God who over-rules all his wicked devices for good; that he was defeated and judged at the cross, and, therefore, his final doom is certain: that we are able to resist and overcome him only in the armor of God, by the blood of the Lamb and through the power of the Holy Spirit.

10. We believe in THE SECOND COMING OF CHRIST: THAT HIS RETURN from Heaven will be personal, visible, and glorious, a blessed hope for which we should constantly watch and pray, the time being unrevealed but always imminent: that when He comes, He will first, by resurrection of the dead and translation of the living, remove from the earth His waiting Church, then pour out the righteous judgments of God upon the unbelieving world, afterwards, descend with His Church and establish His glorious and literal kingdom over all the nations for a thousand years.
11. We believe in FUTURE LIFE, BODILY RESURRECTION AND ETERNAL JUDGEMENT: that the spirits of the saved at death go immediately to be with Christ in Heaven, that their works shall be brought before the Judgment Seat of Christ for the determination of rewards which will take place at the time when Christ comes for His own; that the spirits of the unsaved at death descend immediately into Hades where they are kept under punishment until the final day of judgment, at which time their bodies shall be raised from the grave, that they shall be judged and cast into Hell, the place of final and everlasting punishment.
12. We believe in THE SEPARATION OF CHURCH AND STATE: with each having definite and distinct spheres of responsibility.
13. We believe in THE PRIESTHOOD OF ALL BELIEVERS: that Christ is our Great High Priest and through Him every born again person has direct access into God's presence without the need of a human priest; that the believer has the right and responsibility to personally study and interpret the scriptures guided by the Holy Spirit.
14. We believe in THE LORDSHIP OF JESUS CHRIST: that He alone is Head of the Body of Christ into which all true believers are immediately baptized by the Holy Spirit; that all members of this one spiritual body should assemble and identify themselves in local churches.
15. We believe in THE IMPORTANCE OF THE LOCAL CHURCH: that a New Testament Church is a local assembly of born again, baptized believers united in organization to practice New Testament ordinances, to meet together for prayer, worship, fellowship, teaching, and a united testimony, and to actively engage in carrying out the Great Commission.
16. We believe in THE INDEPENDENCE AND AUTONOMY OF THE LOCAL CHURCH: that each New Testament Church is free to govern itself without ecclesiastical interference, and should cooperate with other New Testament Churches as the Holy Spirit leads; that it is responsible to follow the pattern of the New Testament Church and is directly accountable to God.
17. We Believe THE ORDINANCES GIVEN TO THE LOCAL CHURCH ARE TWO – BAPTISM AND THE LORD'S SUPPER: that baptism is by immersion of believers, thus, portraying the death, burial and resurrection of Jesus Christ; that the Lord's Supper is the partaking of the bread and the cup by the believer as a continuing memorial of the broken body and shed blood of Christ.

STATEMENT OF MARRIAGE, GENDER, AND SEXUALITY

We believe that the term “marriage” has only one meaning: the uniting of one man and one woman in a single, exclusive union, as delineated in Scripture (Gen. 2:18-25). We believe that God intends sexual intimacy to occur only between a man and a woman who are married to each other (1st Cor. 6:18, 7:2-5, Heb. 13:4). We believe that God has commanded that no intimate sexual activity be engaged in outside of a marriage between a man and a woman.

We believe that any form of sexual immorality (including adultery, fornication, homosexual behavior, bisexual conduct, bestiality, incest, and use of pornography) is sinful and offensive to God (Matt. 15:18-20, 1st Cor. 6:9-10).

We believe that in order to preserve the function and integrity of Westside Baptist Church as the local Body of Christ, local role model to the Westside Baptist Church in any capacity, or who serve as volunteers, agree to and abide by this Statement of Marriage, Gender, and Sexuality (Matt. 5:16, Phil. 2:14-16, 1st Thes. 5:22). We believe that God offers redemption and restoration to all who confess and forsake their sin, seeking His mercy and forgiveness through Jesus Christ (Acts 3:19-21, Rom. 10:9-10, 1st Cor. 6:9-11).

We believe that every person must be afforded compassion, love, kindness, respect, and dignity (Mark 12:28-31, Luke 6:31). Hateful and harassing behavior or attitudes directed toward any individual are to be repudiated and are not in accord with Scripture nor the doctrines of Westside Baptist Church.

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www.wibctallassee.org