



# **CONSTITUTION AND BYLAWS**

*Buck Creek Baptist Church*

*Cumberland, Indiana*

## **PREAMBLE**

This corporation is organized pursuant to the General Non-Profit Corporation Law of the State of Indiana. The property of this corporation is irrevocably dedicated to religious and charitable purposes, and upon liquidation, dissolution, or abandonment, shall not inure to the benefit of any private person except a fund, foundation, or corporation organized and operated for religious or charitable purposes and as designated in Article VI of this Constitution.

This congregation is organized as a church exclusively for charitable, religious, and educational purposes, within the meaning of Section 501c(3) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 (or the corresponding provision of any future United States Revenue Law), including, but not limited to, the establishing and maintaining of religious worship; the building of churches; the evangelizing of the unsaved by the proclaiming of the Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ; the educating of believers in a manner consistent with the requirements of Holy Scripture, both in Sunday School and other religious educational venues as deemed appropriate by the church and the maintaining of missionary activities in the United States and any foreign country.

This Constitution and Bylaws are made to:

1. Preserve and secure the principles of our faith.
2. Preserve the liberties of each individual member of the church.
3. Ensure freedom of action and independence from any religious body or organization.
4. Provide for orderly conduct of internal affairs, in dealing with others, and of governing church members.

### **I. Name**

As stated in the Articles of Incorporation, the name of the corporate church shall be *Buck Creek Baptist Church, Incorporated*. It shall maintain a cooperative relationship with the Crossroads Baptist Association, the State Convention of Baptists in Indiana, and the Southern Baptist Convention in all their work and agencies.

### **II. Business Location**

The address of the principal office of this church shall be: 135 Muessing Road, Cumberland, IN 46229.

### **III. Purpose**

1. To worship God, who is worthy of all praise and glory.
2. To glorify Jesus Christ, the redeeming Savior of all mankind.
3. To follow the leadership of the Holy Spirit, the comforter sent to sustain and guide us until Christ's magnificent return.

4. To serve God locally, nationally, and internationally by fulfilling the Great Commission of Jesus Christ as set forth in Matthew 28:19-20.
5. To minister to the needs of the members and others as God leads the church, through the movement of His Holy Spirit.
6. To do any and all things related to and in connection with the carrying out of the purposes of a New Testament Church.

#### **IV. Articles of Faith**

1. We believe the Holy Bible as the inspired Word of God, without any error, the all-sufficient authority in all matters of faith, doctrine, and Christian living.
2. We believe in one God, eternally existing in three Persons: The Father, The Son, and The Holy Spirit.
3. We believe in the Virgin Birth of Jesus Christ, and that He is true God and man. He died on the cross for our sins. He rose bodily from the dead, ascended into heaven where He sits at the right hand of the Father and is now our High Priest and Advocate and whom will return to gather His people at a time known only to God the Father.
4. We believe that man was created in the image of God but fell into sin and is, therefore, lost. Only through regeneration by the work of the Holy Spirit can man's salvation and spiritual life be obtained.
5. We believe that the term 'marriage' has only one meaning and that is marriage sanctioned by God which joins one man and one woman in a single, exclusive union, as delineated in Scripture.
6. We believe that God intends sexual intimacy to only occur between a man and a woman who are married to each other. We believe that God has commanded that no intimate sexual activity be engaged in outside of a marriage between a man and a woman.
7. We believe in the sanctity of all human life from conception to natural death.
8. We believe that any form of sexual immorality, such as adultery, fornication, homosexuality, bisexual conduct, bestiality, incest, pornography or any attempt to change one's sex, or disagreement with one's biological sex, is sinful and offensive to God.
9. We believe that in order to preserve the function and integrity of the church as the local Body of Christ, and to provide a biblical role model to the church members and the community, it is imperative that all persons employed by the church in any capacity, or who serve as volunteers, should abide by and agree to this Statement on Marriage and Sexuality and conduct themselves accordingly.
10. We believe that God offers redemption and restoration to all who confess and forsake their sin, seeking His mercy and forgiveness through Jesus Christ.

11. We oppose all racism, every person must be afforded compassion, love, kindness, respect, and dignity. 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 the church."
12. We believe that eternal salvation is the free gift of God, entirely apart from man's works, and is possessed by any and all who have faith in and receive Jesus Christ as their personal Lord and Savior.
13. We believe in a regenerated church membership: that is, persons old enough to understand their need for Jesus Christ and, of their own free will, accepted Him as their personal Lord and Savior.
14. We believe that baptism is by immersion and the Lord's Supper is a memorial to His suffering and death on the cross. These are ordinances to be observed by the church in its present age. They are, however, not to be regarded as means for man's salvation.
15. We believe in the personal, bodily, imminent, and glorious return of the Lord Jesus Christ and that His second coming inspires believers for dynamic and zealous life and service for Him while waiting for His return.
16. We believe in the bodily resurrection of the dead, the everlasting blessedness of the saved in heaven, and the everlasting punishment and separation from God of the unsaved in hell.
17. We believe in the autonomy of the local church. The church shall manage its own affairs and shall not be subject to any other religious body or organization.
18. We subscribe to the "Baptist Faith and Message" adopted by the Southern Baptist Convention as our larger statement of faith with scriptural references.

## **V. Government**

The government of *Buck Creek Baptist Church* is vested in its members. The membership retains unto itself the right of exclusive self-government in all phases of its life and organization. It recognizes the need for mutual counsel and cooperation, which are common among Baptist churches. This church will cooperate with and mutually work with Crossroads Baptist Association, State Convention of Baptists in Indiana, and the Southern Baptist Convention.

## **VI. Non-profit Status and Liquidation**

This church is not organized for profit. In the event of liquidation or dissolution of the church, all of its assets and property of every nature and description whatsoever shall be paid over and transferred, at the direction of the trustees, to the State Convention of Baptists in Indiana.

## **VII. Amendment**

This Constitution and Bylaws may be amended provided the proposed amendment shall have been presented in writing and circulated to the membership. Amendments to this Constitution and Bylaws shall be two-thirds vote of members of the church who are qualified to vote and are present at a regular or special-called business meeting to discuss and vote on this matter.

# BYLAWS

## I. Church Membership

### A. Qualifications

Membership of *Buck Creek Baptist Church* shall consist of people having made a profession of their faith in Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior, and who, having been scripturally baptized by immersion, are in agreement with the Articles of Faith.

### B. Reception

Membership in the church may be attained by one of the following manners:

1. Scriptural baptism by immersion after profession of faith in Jesus Christ as personal Lord and Savior.
2. Transfer of church letter from another Southern Baptist church.
3. Statement of faith of their prior experience of conversion and scriptural baptism by immersion in another evangelical church of like faith and practice.
4. Restoration to the church membership after having been dropped from the membership rolls.

### C. Termination

Membership in this church shall be terminated when a member:

1. Requests a letter of transfer to join another Baptist church.
2. Is dropped from the roll of membership when he or she joins a church of a different denomination. A letter of transfer is not necessary.
3. The member dies.
4. Is dismissed by a vote of the church due to reasons and circumstances provided in Section IV. Church Discipline. The pastor(s) and deacons will do all they can to counsel the member for restoration prior to action of dismissal or a request of the member to be dismissed from the church membership.

## II. Church Officers

All church officers must be members of the church in good standing.

## A. The Senior Pastor:

1. The qualifications for Senior Pastor shall be consistent with those listed in I Timothy 3:1-7. While formal ministerial education is important, lack of formal training will not serve as a sole disqualifier. The Senior Pastor shall be ordained into the Gospel Ministry. If not already ordained, Buck Creek Baptist Church will ordain as soon as possible after assumption of duties as Senior Pastor. The Church may call, at its sole discretion other pastoral staff as deemed necessary. Pastoral Staff will assist the Senior Pastor in the ministries and administration of the church.
2. Senior Pastor Responsibilities:
  - a) These generally fall into the following areas: preaching, teaching, pastoral counseling, administration, planning, and guiding the church to grow and fulfill its purpose.
  - b) He shall lead the church, the organizations, and all leaders of the church in performing their tasks in worship, proclamation, education, and evangelism.
  - c) The Senior Pastor shall be an ex-officio member of all church standing committees, except the Pastor Selection Committee.
  - d) He shall assist the deacons in securing pulpit supply for occasions of his absence as necessary.
3. Call
  - a) A Senior Pastor shall be chosen and called whenever a vacancy occurs.
  - b) A Pastor Selection Committee shall be appointed by the church to seek out a suitable pastor and this committee's recommendation will serve as a nomination.
  - c) The Pastor Selection Committee will recommend only one candidate at a time.
  - d) The pastor's election shall take place at a meeting called for that purpose, of which at least two weeks' notice shall be given to the members.
  - e) An affirmative vote of three-fourths (3/4) of those church members present and voting is necessary for a call.
4. Terms of Service
  - a) The Senior Pastor shall serve until the relationship is terminated by either his request or that of the church. In either case, at least sixty (60) days' notice shall be given unless otherwise mutually agreed.

## **B. Associate Pastor(s):**

1. The qualifications for Associate Pastor(s) shall be consistent with those listed in I Timothy 3:1-7. While formal ministerial education is important, lack of formal training will not serve as a sole disqualifier. Associate Pastor(s) need not be ordained into the Gospel Ministry; however, Licensing is recommended. The Church may call, at its sole discretion, Associate Pastoral staff as deemed necessary. Pastoral Staff will assist the Senior Pastor in the ministries and administration of the church.
2. Associate Pastor Responsibilities:
  - a) These generally fall into the following areas: preaching, teaching, pastoral counseling, administration, planning, and guiding the church to grow and fulfill its purpose.
  - b) Associate Pastor(s) shall assist the Senior Pastor in leading the church, the organizations, and all leaders of the church in performing their tasks in worship, proclamation, education, and evangelism.
3. Call
  - a) An Associate Pastor shall be chosen and called whenever the church deems necessary.
  - b) The pastor's election shall take place at a meeting called for that purpose, of which at least two weeks' notice shall be given to the members.
  - c) An affirmative vote of three-fourths (3/4) of those church members present and voting is necessary for a call.
4. Terms of Service
  - a) Associate Pastor(s) shall serve until the relationship is terminated by either his request or that of the church. In either case, at least sixty (60) days' notice shall be given unless otherwise mutually agreed.
  - b) There shall be a written mutual contract/agreement made between the pastor and the church.

## **C. Church Staff**

This church shall employ or call staff as it shall have need.

1. Staff members other than that of the pastoral staff shall be recommended for employment by an elected personnel committee.
2. A written job description and mutual contract/agreement will be prepared when the need for church staff is determined.

## D. Deacons

### 1. Number, term of office

There shall be three (3) deacons for the first 100 resident members and one (1) for each additional fifty (50) of portion thereof. Deacons shall be elected for a term of service of three years or longer term of service as voted upon by the church.

### 2. Qualifications

- a) A church deacon must meet the qualifications listed in 1 Timothy 3:8-13.
- b) A deacon shall demonstrate an exemplary Christian testimony in private, family, and public life; a committed Christian and partner of the pastoral staff; supporter and promoter of the church faith, practice, programs, and ministries.

### 3. Election

- a) When a deacon vacancy occurs, the chairman of the deacons shall announce that an election of a deacon shall be held during a regular or special-called church business meeting.
- b) The deacons will enlist deacon candidates to be recommended to the church. The duties, qualifications, and importance of the office of a deacon will be interpreted to the candidates and shared with the church prior to the scheduled election of deacons.

### 4. Ordination

- a) Selection, election, and ordination of deacons are privileges of the local church.
- b) When ordination of deacons is planned by the church, it shall authorize the pastor to assemble a council to examine the candidates concerning their qualifications to serve as deacons.
- c) The council directed to examine the deacons shall be composed of the pastor, invited ordained pastors in the local association, and deacons of sister Baptist churches.
- d) When the council recommends the ordination of deacons, the ordination service shall be scheduled and led by the pastoral staff.



## 5. Duties

- a) Elected deacons shall elect the chairman of their committee.
- b) Deacons serve in a ministry of encouragement and counsel for the pastor concerning the progress and welfare of the church.
- c) Assist the pastor in ministering to the members by implementing a deacon ministry plan.
- d) Seek to solve any fellowship problem of the church.
- e) Assist the pastor in administering the church ordinances.
- e) In the absence of the pastoral staff, the chairman of the deacons shall serve as an advisory member to all organizations, departments, and committees of the church.

## **E. Moderator**

1. The church moderator may be the Senior Pastor, Associate Pastor or a lay leader elected to this position.
2. The moderator shall preside over all regular and called business meetings of the church.
3. In the absence of the moderator, the associate pastor or the chairman of deacons shall preside over the regular and called business meetings of the church.
4. In the absence of the moderator, associate pastor and the chairman of deacons, the church clerk shall call the church to order and an acting moderator will be elected.

## **F. Clerk**

1. The church clerk shall be elected and be responsible for keeping an accurate record of all business meeting transactions of the church
2. He or she shall keep a register of the names and addresses of the church members.
3. He or she shall issue letters of dismissal voted by the church and write letters of transfer of membership, prepare written reports of the church.
4. During the temporary absence of the church clerk, the clerk's responsibilities shall be delegated to another church member.

## **G. Treasurer**

1. The church treasurer shall be elected as the custodian of all moneys of the church and shall disburse these moneys by checks as authorized by the church.
2. He or she shall ensure that, at all times, an itemized accounting of all receipts and disbursements are maintained and that a monthly and annual written report of this account is made available to church members.
3. He or she shall be responsible for seeing that the offerings are properly received, counted, and deposited in the church's bank account.
4. He or she shall ensure proper credit for each contributor and their offerings.
5. He or she shall be responsible for preparing for mailing an annual record of contribution to donors.

## **H. Trustees**

1. At least three (3) trustees shall be elected by the church to hold in trust the property of the church.
2. They shall have no power to buy, sell, mortgage, lease, or transfer any property of the church without a specific vote of the church authorizing each action.
3. It shall be the function of the trustees to sign any, and all legal documents involving the sale, mortgage, purchase, or lease of church property or any other legal documents requiring the signature of the trustees for and in behalf of the church.

## **I. Vacancies**

In case of vacancy in any office, except that of pastoral staff and staff members, the vacancy shall be filled by the church at a regular or special-business meeting as soon as possible after such vacancy has occurred.

## **III. Church Committees**

Church committees shall be formed as needed for successfully accomplishing the mission and purpose of the church. Church committee members shall be elected by the church from nominations presented by a Nominating Committee, and nominations from the floor with the consent of the nominee. All committees shall have a minimum of three (3) members including a chairperson. Any committee member elected to fill any vacancy shall serve the unexpired term of the position vacated. Each committee chairperson shall submit an annual budget request to the Budget and Finance Committee.

## **IV. Church Meetings**

### **A. Worship Services**

The church shall meet regularly each Sunday morning for the worship of God, for preaching, instruction, evangelism, and on Wednesday, or another night, designated for prayer and Bible study. Additional meeting times may be added at the discretion of the Senior Pastor in consultation with the Deacon body and other church officers. These meetings shall be open for the entire membership of the church and for all people and shall be conducted under the direction of the Pastoral Staff or designated church officer in the absence of pastoral staff.

### **B. Regular Business Meetings**

Regular business meetings shall be scheduled to be held quarterly on every first Wednesday, of March, June, September, and December. Regular business meetings may be adjusted, as needs dictate. Regular business meeting date and time will be announced two weeks prior to the meeting.

### **C. Special-Called Business Meeting**

A special-called business meeting may be called by the pastor, or by action of the church to consider special matters of significant nature. A two-week notice or announcement must be given for the special-called business meeting.

### **D. Quorum**

The quorum consists of those church members attending the business meeting, provided it is a stated meeting or one that has been properly called.

### **E. Parliamentary Rules**

The purpose of all congregational meetings is to discern the will of God and to build consensus in our decision making. While we have a history of running our congregational meetings by Roberts' Rules of Order, we establish these rules which are influenced by the general principles of Roberts' Rules, to allow for greater flexibility of process and greater participation. Our desire is that all voices and opinions be heard as we seek to discern God's will and build consensus in our church.

Process for presenting items of business is as follows:

1. While unannounced business can be presented from the floor at business meetings, it is requested that the Moderator be notified of business ahead of time, whenever possible.
2. Prior to the Business Meeting, the Moderator will consult with the person/persons who have notified the Moderator of their intent present business. Some issues are self-explanatory; others require the setting of the context and background so that they can be fully understood by the meeting attendees.
3. The Moderator introduces the meeting presenter who presents the item of business and puts forth any necessary motion. Unless the motion is coming from Committee, it will require seconding.

4. The Moderator invites questions for clarification from the attendees and invites discussion about the item of business. Once everyone has had their say on the motion, the Moderator will call for a vote. This may be done by voice, a show of hands, or (if requested by a member present at the meeting) written vote.

## V. Church Discipline

- A. Should any unhappy difference arise among members, the aggrieved member shall follow, in a tender spirit, the rules given by our Lord in Matthew 18:15-17.
- B. Should any case of gross breach of relationship, or of public scandal occur, the pastoral staff and/or the deacons shall endeavor to resolve the conflict; and if this effort fails, shall report the case to the church.
- C. All such proceedings shall be pervaded by a spirit of Christian kindness and forbearance, but should an adverse decision be reached, the church may proceed to admonish or declare the offender to be no longer in the membership of the church.
- D. Any person whose membership has been terminated for any offense may be restored by vote of the church, upon evidence of repentance and reformation; or if an account of continued absence, upon satisfactory explanation.

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Ratified by action of the church at a special-called business meeting on September, 27, 2020.

Randy A. Stone

Rev. Randy A. Stone  
Moderator

Victoria S. Stone

Victoria S. Stone  
Church Clerk