

Constitution and By-Laws  
Eastside Baptist Church  
Douglas, Georgia

April 9, 2017



**CONSTITUTION AND BY-LAWS**  
**EASTSIDE BAPTIST CHURCH, DOUGLAS, GEORGIA**

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# CONSTITUTION

For the most certain preservation and security of the principles of our faith and to the end that this congregation may be governed in an orderly manner consistent with the tenets of Holy Scripture and the Southern Baptist Convention, and for the purpose of preserving the liberties inherent in each individual member of this Church and the freedom of action of this body with respect to its relation to other churches of the same faith, we do declare and establish this Constitution and By-Laws.

## ARTICLE I – NAME

This church shall be known as the Eastside Baptist Church of Douglas, Georgia, Inc. This church shall be affiliated with the Smyrna Baptist Association, the Georgia Baptist Mission Board, and the Southern Baptist Convention.

## ARTICLE II – OBJECTIVES

To be a dynamic spiritual organism empowered by the Holy Spirit to share Christ with as many people as possible in our church, community, and throughout the world.

To be a worshipping fellowship and experience an awareness of God, recognizing His person and responding in obedience to His leadership.

To help people experience a growing knowledge of God and man.

To be a church that ministers unselfishly to persons in the community and world in Jesus' name.

To be a church that purposes to be Christ-like in our daily living by emphasizing total commitment of life, personality, and possessions to the Lordship of Christ.

## ARTICLE III – STATEMENT OF FAITH

### Section 1 – The Baptist Faith and Message

The Holy Bible is the inspired Word of God and is the basis for any statement of faith. The doctrinal statement of this church is the current doctrinal statement of “The Baptist Faith and Message” as adopted by the Southern Baptist Convention.

### Section 2 – Statement of Biblical Authority

The statement of faith does not exhaust the extent of our faith. The Bible itself, as the inspired and infallible Word of God that speaks with final authority concerning truth, morality, and the proper conduct of mankind, is the sole and final source of all that we believe. For purposes of church doctrine, practice, policy, and discipline, the Senior

Pastor and Deacon Body are the church's final interpretive authority on the Bible's meaning and application.

#### **ARTICLE IV – RELATIONSHIPS**

This church is not subject to the control of any other ecclesiastical body. It recognizes and sustains, however, the obligations of mutual counsel and cooperation that are common among Southern Baptist churches. Insofar as it is practical, this church will cooperate with and support the Smyrna Baptist Association, the Georgia Baptist Mission Board, and the Southern Baptist Convention.

#### **ARTICLE V – AUTHORITY**

The church is a theocracy. Our role under the Lordship of Jesus Christ recognizes that the church is His and all decisions must be made in recognition of His Lordship. The authority and responsibility of church affairs is vested in its members whose will on any subject or measure is expressed by a majority vote.

# BYLAWS

## ARTICLE I – MEMBERSHIP

### Section 1 – General

This is a sovereign Southern Baptist Church under the Lordship of Jesus Christ. The membership retains unto itself the exclusive right of self-government in all phases of the spiritual and temporal life of this church. Therefore, the membership reserves the exclusive right to determine who shall be members of this church and the conditions of such membership.

### Section 2 – Candidacy

- A. Baptism  
After satisfactory evidence of repentance toward God and public profession in the Lord Jesus Christ, an applicant may be received as a candidate for baptism, and after baptism shall automatically enjoy the full fellowship of the church.
- B. By Letter  
A member of another Southern Baptist church may be received by a letter of recommendation from such a church.
- C. By Statement of Experience  
Any person to whom the ordinance of baptism has been administered, according to the belief of our church, may be received as a member upon statement of experience and faith in Jesus Christ; and also those whose letters have failed to arrive within 90 days after joining this church.
- D. In Absentia  
Candidates for membership that come under this category are those that are physically unable to present themselves to the church for membership or, even though being able to present themselves for membership would be physically unable to take part in baptism.
- E. Watchcare  
Candidates for watchcare membership are those who wish to retain their official membership in a home church but who wish to unite with the fellowship of this church for a prescribed period of time. These are individuals who are fully aware that their presence in our area is temporary in nature. They will receive all the privileges of membership with the exception of voting and the holding of an ongoing position of leadership. The Deacons may also suggest that an individual be placed under watchcare because of extenuating circumstances.

### **Section 3 – Voting Rights of Members**

Every member of the church is entitled to vote at all elections and on all questions submitted to the church in conference. A member must be present to vote.

### **Section 4 – Termination of Membership**

Membership may be terminated in one of the following ways:

- A. Death
- B. Request of membership to another Southern Baptist church
- C. Joining another church  
If it becomes known that a member has united with another church and there is no contact made from either the member or the church joined then the member will be considered dropped from membership.
- D. Request of member  
A member who wishes to be dropped from membership may do so by making an oral or written statement to the Senior Pastor or the church office.
- E. Dismissal  
The church reserves the right to remove from membership persons who bring discredit to the name of Christ and the reputation of the church. Dismissal should be a last resort, employed only after a member has refused counsel from the Pastor and from the deacons.

### **Section 5 – Interpretation of Membership**

All issues regarding the interpretation or acceptance of membership shall rest with the Senior Pastor and active Deacons.

## **ARTICLE II – CHURCH STAFF**

### **Section 1 – Classification of Church Employees**

- A. Ministerial  
Although the Senior Pastor is considered a ministerial employee his employment considerations are addressed in II.2, “Senior Pastor.” Ministerial employees are ordained ministers other than the Senior Pastor who are employed by action of the church. They are employed in the following manner: The Senior Pastor will nominate a suitable candidate for approval to the Personnel Committee. The Senior Pastor and the Personnel Committee will seek the approval of the active Deacons before presenting a ministerial candidate to the church. Following the approval of the active Deacons, the Senior Pastor and the Personnel Committee



will nominate the candidate to the church at a called conference for this purpose. No nominations shall be made from the floor. An 80% vote of the members present is required for employment. Should the nominee fail to receive the necessary 80% vote, the moderator shall declare the nominee not elected, and shall refer the matter to the Senior Pastor and Personnel Committee for further action without debate. The Senior Pastor and Personnel Committee shall continue their search for an acceptable replacement. All ministerial employees must subscribe to the doctrinal statement of this church and will be ordained Southern Baptist ministers in good standing. Termination of ministerial employees may be done for just cause with the consent of the Senior Pastor, the active Deacons, and the Personnel Committee.

B. Administrative

Administrative employees are non-ordained. They perform administrative and/or ministry tasks in the program of the church. They are employed in the following manner: The Senior Pastor will nominate a suitable candidate for approval to the Personnel Committee. The Personnel Committee is authorized to hire. Termination of administrative employees may be done for just cause with the consent of the Senior Pastor and the Personnel Committee.

C. Support

Support employees are non-ordained and provide support to the ministers and administrative employees. They are employed in the following manner: The Senior Pastor or his designee may hire them. Termination of support employees may be done for just cause by the Senior Pastor and the Personnel Committee.

## **Section 2 – Senior Pastor**

A. Qualifications

In the selection of the Senior Pastor the church shall be guided by the scriptural qualifications as outlined in 1 Timothy 3:1-7, Titus 1:5-9, and 1 Peter 5:1-4. No person shall be elected Senior Pastor who is not a regular ordained Southern Baptist minister in good standing. These qualifications are detailed in the Eastside Baptist Church Senior Pastor job description, as approved by the active deacons, and on file in the church office.

B. Duties

The Senior Pastor shall be the spiritual leader of the church. His primary responsibilities are to proclaim the Bible and to provide pastoral care to the church and community. His is also to provide administrative leadership for the church, including all paid and volunteer staff. The specific duties of the Senior Pastor are listed in the Senior Pastor Job Description, which is on file in the church office.

- C. Moderator  
The Senior Pastor shall be the moderator and shall conduct all meetings of the church. In absence of the Senior Pastor, the Chairman of the Deacons shall act as moderator. In the absence of both the Senior Pastor and the Chairman of the Deacons, the Vice Chairman of the Deacons shall preside. Should all three be absent, a representative selected by the active Deacons shall call the meeting to order and an acting moderator shall be elected.
- D. Election  
When a vacancy in the Senior Pastor position occurs, the active Deacons shall promptly nominate to the church a pastor search committee consisting of not fewer than five church members. The retiring or resigning Senior Pastor shall not serve on this committee, ex-officio or otherwise. The committee, when elected, shall elect a chairman and a secretary from its members and shall proceed with as little delay as possible to select a minister of the Gospel whose character and qualifications fit him for the office of Senior Pastor of the church. When this committee has made its choice, it shall give at least one week's public notice of the meeting at which the prospective Senior Pastor will preach. The committee shall submit its recommendation in a church conference for which proper notice has been given and shall put before the church only one name at a time. No nominations shall be made from the floor. To be elected Senior Pastor, the person nominated by the committee must receive at least 80% of the votes cast. If the committee's nominee fails to receive the necessary 80% of the votes cast, the moderator shall declare the nominee not elected, and shall refer the matter to the committee for further action without debate. The committee shall continue their search for an acceptable replacement.
- E. Line of Responsibility  
The Senior Pastor is responsible to the active Deacons for the quality of his work.
- F. Termination  
The Senior Pastor shall be called for an indefinite term. Should the Senior Pastor or the church desire to terminate the relationship, the party desiring such change shall give the other written notice at least thirty days prior to the termination date. Dismissal of a Senior Pastor shall require a recommendation from a majority of the active Deacons and an 80% vote of the church at a church conference called for that purpose. Voting shall be by secret ballot. If necessary to defend the unity of the Church and prevent dishonor to the advancement of God's kingdom, the active deacons may suspend the Senior Pastor's services immediately after the church vote. In that case, the exiting Senior Pastor will be given severance pay equal to four weeks salary.
- G. Interim Pastor  
In the absence of a Senior Pastor the active Deacons shall with as little delay as possible appoint an interim individual who will fulfill the administrative duties of the Senior Pastor. The active Deacon body is responsible for the filling of the

pulpit or the employment of an Interim Pastor in the absence of a Senior Pastor. The salary or stipend given to an Interim Pastor or to multiple speakers is determined by the active Deacons within the constraints of the church budget.

### **Section 3 – Pertinent issues and guidelines for all employees**

A. Salaries

Salaries are determined by the church budget and cannot exceed the particular line item of the budget which is designated for that position. The Personnel Committee is responsible to see that salaries are commensurate and fair for all employees. All salaries are held in confidence by the Senior Pastor or his designee, the active Deacons, the Personnel Committee and the Finance Committee. The Personnel Committee will review salaries for possible adjustment at least annually.

B. Positions

No employment position can be created without the consent of the Senior Pastor and the Personnel Committee. No funding can be granted for salaries or benefits without the consent of the Finance Committee. All funds related to expenditures of employment must be within the constraints of the church budget.

C. Performance review

An annual review of all employees is to be conducted by the Senior Pastor or his designee. This review is given to the Personnel Committee and is used for the accountability of the employee and the consideration of salary adjustments.

D. Termination package

Upon termination of employment, the active Deacons with the consent of the Personnel Committee and the Finance Committee may grant an equitable termination package for ministerial employees.

E. Line of responsibility

All employees of the church are responsible to the Senior Pastor or his designee for the quality of their work.

### **ARTICLE III – ACTIVE DEACONS**

#### **Section 1 – Purpose and Responsibility of Deacons**

A. Purpose

Deacons are viewed as an extension of the Senior Pastor's ministry. It is their responsibility to serve the congregation in its overall mission of being the church. There shall be a minimum of 6 active Deacons. The number of active Deacons may vary as deemed necessary by the Pastor and currently serving active Deacons.

B. Responsibilities

Deacons will:

1. serve as a council of wisdom and advice for the Senior Pastor;
2. develop and maintain a strong relationship with the Senior Pastor to ensure his protection and accountability;
3. support the Senior Pastor in his burden of caring for the church;
4. approve the annual church budget before it is presented to the church;
5. approve ministerial staff members prior to their presentation to the church;
6. assist in the outreach visitation and hospital visitation of the church;
7. be available for counsel of church members;
8. serve as the interpreters of this constitution and bylaws in all matters;
9. maintain and zealously guard the unity of the church body;
10. assist the Senior Pastor in all matters of church issues;
11. be aware of the financial situation of the church;
12. assume other duties that are assigned by the Deacon Chairman and the Senior Pastor.

**Section 2 – Deacon Qualifications**

A. Salvation

A deacon must know that he has been saved by having accepted Jesus Christ as his personal Savior. (Romans 10:9-10)

B. Baptism

A deacon must have followed the Lord Jesus Christ in obedience by Believer's Baptism. (Matthew 28:19-20)

C. Age

A deacon must be at least 25 years old by January 1 and a resident, male member of Eastside Baptist Church for at least one year by that date.

D. Holy Spirit

A deacon must constantly seek the control or filling of the Holy Spirit in his life. (Acts 6:3, Ephesians 5:18)

E. The Bible

A deacon must believe that the Bible is the inspired Word of God. (II Timothy 3:16)

F. Service

A deacon must believe that the main duty of a Deacon is to serve the church as the Senior Pastor's helper in menial duties so that he will not have to leave the Word of God and serve tables. (Acts 6:1-6)

- G. Great Commission  
A deacon must believe that the main mission of the church is to carry out the Great Commission of Jesus Christ. (Matthew 28:19-20)
- H. Governance  
A deacon must believe in the principle of majority in a Southern Baptist church and recognize that there is no higher human authority in a Southern Baptist church than the will and vote of the people. (Matthew 16:18; Acts 15; Ephesians 1:22, 2:20-22; I Timothy 3:15)
- I. Tithing  
A deacon must believe in and practice tithing, giving a tenth of his income to Eastside Baptist Church. (Malachi 3:8-10; Matthew 23:23)
- J. Daily Life  
A deacon must live a Godly life separated from worldly things. (James 4:4; II Corinthians 6:17)
- K. Attendance  
A deacon must attend at least 80% of churchwide services. (Hebrews 10:25)
- L. Murmuring  
A deacon must try to put down murmuring and complaining as he would smother a fire, facing them frankly, dealing with them fairly, and let any issue rest with the decision of the church. (Philippians 1:27, 2:14)
- M. Gossip  
A deacon must hold his tongue and, along with his wife, guard against spreading gossip or talking critically about others (Colossians 3:8-9; I Timothy 3:11)
- N. The Church  
A deacon must work for the enlistment and active advancement of the church, moving by faith, to make it a great and growing church for the Glory of God (Acts 20:7, 20)
- O. Outreach  
A deacon must support and participate in the outreach program of the church (Matthew 28:19-20)
- P. Alcohol and Intoxicating Substances  
A deacon must not become drunk or intoxicated by – or abuse, misuse, or be addicted to – alcohol or any other intoxicating substance. (Proverbs 20:1)
- Q. Activities  
A deacon must not be involved in any activity or difficulty that might dishonor Christ or embarrass the church. (II Corinthians 7:1; II Timothy 2:21)

- R. Home Life  
A deacon must have a relationship with his wife and children that agrees with scripture. (I Timothy 3:12; Ephesians 5:23, 25; 6:4)
- S. Senior Pastor  
A deacon must have a good relationship with the Senior Pastor, and assist him willingly, cheerfully, and be loyal to his leadership in the church under God. (Acts 6) A deacon must recognize that the God-called Senior Pastor is the spiritual leader of the church. (Ephesians 3:7; Romans 10:14-15; II Timothy 4:1-5; I Peter 5:2)
- T. Cooperation  
A deacon must work with the Senior Pastor and fellow Deacons, serving on the basis of frank, brotherly love, confidence, and cooperation. (Galatians 3:28; Ephesians 4:13; I Corinthians 1:10)
- U. Brotherly love  
A deacon must have a love for the membership of Eastside Baptist Church which renders it impossible for him to harbor any grudge or any hatred toward his fellowman. (Colossians 3:8-14; Galatians 6:10)
- V. Honesty  
A deacon must be honest and fair enough to resign without strife or discord if he ever feels that he cannot conscientiously, and in the Spirit of Christ, work with the Senior Pastor, fellow Deacons, and the majority of his brothers and sisters in Christ in pursuing our task and calling for Christ as outlined in the Bible. (I Corinthians 1:10; Philippians 2:3; II Timothy 2:24)

### **Section 3 – Deacon Election**

- A. Nomination  
In October of each year the Deacons will solicit nominations from the church at large for the office of Deacon. This solicitation will be publicized by the Senior Pastor from the pulpit. For a prescribed time of at least two Sundays nominations will be received from any member on a nomination form.
- B. Nomination form  
The nomination form shall include:
1. enough room to allow any church member to nominate up to 6 men for the office of Deacon;
  2. a list of Deacons who are currently serving and therefore are ineligible for nomination;
  3. an inclusion of the qualifications for Deacon as stated in these bylaws;
  4. a space for the nominating church member's name and signature.

C. Disqualification of forms

Nomination forms are disqualified if:

1. they include more than 6 nominations;
2. they are not signed by the nominating church member;
3. they are nominated by a non-church member;
4. they are received after nominations are closed.

D. Review Process

The review committee shall consist of the active Deacons and the Senior Pastor. Following the nomination process this committee shall review the list of all nominees. They will attempt to the best of their ability to consider which men are the best qualified to serve in the office of Deacon. Based upon the qualifications of the men who are nominated as well as the needs of the church the review committee will determine the number of Deacons to be selected and select such number of men from the nominations. Each potential candidate for Deacon election will be personally interviewed by the Senior Pastor and at least one of the members of the review committee.

E. Church Election

Following the review process the Deacon candidates shall be presented to the church for approval in the annual conference or a called conference for that purpose. Deacons must be elected by at minimum of 80% of the votes cast. Failure to achieve an 80% vote on a slate of candidates will refer the Deacon election back to the active Deacons.

F. Ordination

The Senior Pastor and Deacon Officers will ensure that newly elected Deacons who require ordination will be ordained before the end of January.

G. Term of Office

Deacon terms begin with the first Deacon meeting of the calendar year. All Deacons are elected to a 3 year term of office with a designated number (as close as possible to 1/3) of the active Deacons rotating off annually. No Deacon may be reelected to office without first being off the active Deacons for at least one year. The Pastor and the active Deacons at their prayerful discretion may appoint a previously ordained man to fill an unexpired deacon term, or may leave the position vacant until the next regular cycle for deacon election.

H. Removal

The Deacon Officers may, at their discretion, remove a Deacon from office for failure to carry out his duties, including, but not limited to, failure to attend 2/3 of Deacon meetings within any six-month period.

I. Office Assistance

The Senior Pastor's secretary shall serve as an office assistant in election of Deacons. The secretary will ensure that the nomination ballot is prepared and that all ballots are accounted for in the church office.

**Section 4 – Deacon Officers**

A. Election

In the January meeting of the Deacons, the retiring Deacon Chairman will conduct an election of Deacon Officers. Deacon Officers are Chairman, Vice Chairman, and Secretary. The Deacon Chairman and Vice Chairman shall be elected from those Deacons who are in the second or third year of their rotation. All active Deacons are eligible to be elected Secretary. Deacon Officers serve in that capacity for a one-year term. The Deacon Chairman may not succeed himself. The newly elected Deacon Officers will take office following the January meeting. The Senior Pastor will announce the newly elected Deacon Officers following the election.

B. Responsibilities

The Deacon Officers' responsibilities include:

1. serving as an administrative committee of the entire Deacon body;
2. closely assisting the Senior Pastor in all matters of church issues;
3. assuming other duties that are assigned by the Deacon Chairman and the Senior Pastor.

C. Nomination Responsibilities

The Deacon Officers, after consulting with the active Deacons, will nominate to the church annually:

1. new members of the Finance Committee;
2. new members of the Personnel Committee;

**ARTICLE IV – OTHER OFFICES**

**Section 1 – Clerk**

A. Responsibilities

The Senior Pastor, with the approval of the active deacons, will designate a qualified church member to serve as a clerk. The clerk will be responsible for:

1. taking official minutes of all church conferences;
2. keeping a record of all the actions taken by the church body and important events of an historical nature;
3. keeping a register of the names of members, with dates of admission, dismissal or death, together with a record of baptisms;
4. issuing letters of request when requested by other churches;
5. preserving on file all communications and written official reports.



Some of these responsibilities can be delegated to members of the secretarial staff.

B. Records

All records are church property and shall be filed in the church office.

**Section 2 – Treasurer**

A. Responsibilities

The Senior Pastor, with the approval of the active deacons, will designate a qualified church member to serve as treasurer. The treasurer will be responsible for:

1. signing checks and thereby approving disbursement, upon receipt of vouchers approved and signed by authorized personnel;
2. rendering to the church at each regular church conference an itemized report of the receipts and disbursements for the preceding time period.

B. Records

All records are church property and shall be filed in the church office.

The treasurer may be assisted by members of the secretarial staff.

**ARTICLE V – STANDING COMMITTEES**

**Section 1 – Nomination of standing committees**

All standing committees will be nominated to the church by the active Deacon Officers for election on an annual basis. In their annual nominations the Deacon Officers shall also designate a person who shall serve as the chairman for each standing committee. Chairmen are eligible for the duration of their term. All standing committee members shall serve a three year term with designated number (as close as possible to 1/3) of members rotating off each year and being ineligible for reelection for at least one year. Standing committee members are eligible for reelection if they have served less than 18 months. Upon special circumstances the Senior Pastor and the active Deacons may choose to extend their term of service and delay the rotation process of a standing committee. If they choose to do so it shall be reported to the church.

**Section 2 – Finance Committee**

A. Membership

The Finance Committee shall consist of no fewer than 3 members.

B. Responsibilities

The responsibilities of the Finance Committee are:

1. coordinating with the church staff in the presentation and administration of an annual church budget;

2. coordinating their work with the Treasurer to ensure that all monies of the church are controlled in a professional and ethical manner;
3. making certain that the church receives accurate and updated reports of all funds.

### **Section 3 – Personnel Committee**

#### **A. Membership**

The Personnel Committee shall consist of no fewer than 3 members. At the discretion of the Senior Pastor and the active deacons, the deacons may serve as the personnel committee.

#### **B. Responsibilities**

The responsibilities of the Personnel Committee are:

1. working closely with the Senior Pastor or his designee in all issues regarding church employees;
2. preparing and updating job descriptions for all church employees;
3. recommending all salaries and annual raises to the Finance Committee;
4. serving as a search committee under the direction of the Senior Pastor in the selection of ministerial staff;
5. receiving an annual review of all employees from the Senior Pastor or his designee.

## **ARTICLE VI – CHURCH MINISTRY TEAMS**

### **Section 1 – General**

A ministry team is a group of church members who are associated together for the purpose of conducting a particular ministry within the life of the church. All ministry teams shall be under church control and are responsible to the Senior Pastor or his designee for the quality of their work and ministry. Specific teams are not named within these bylaws because the church recognizes that within the life and history of a church all ministry areas are in a constant state of being created and/or changing. Terms of service on a ministry team are indefinite for the duration of its ministry life. It is the desire of the church to see all members involved in at least one ministry team. The activities and conduct of all ministry teams shall be in keeping with the overall purposes, doctrines, and ministries of the church.

### **Section 2 – Development and Work of Ministry Teams**

Ministry teams are developed by the ministerial staff. The Senior Pastor or his designee is an ex-officio member of all ministry teams. The ministerial staff shall consistently promote the involvement of lay people in the overall ministries of the church.

### **Section 3 – Ministry Team Chairmen**

#### **A. Appointment**

Team Chairmen are appointed by the Senior Pastor or his designee for one year terms. Chairmen may succeed themselves. The Senior Pastor will ensure that the active Deacons and the church are kept aware of the appointment of new ministry team chairman and that the active Deacons and church are kept aware of the work and progress of all ministry teams.

#### **B. Responsibilities**

The responsibilities of ministry team chairmen are:

1. coordinating the work of their team in conjunction with the church calendar;
2. making certain that the Senior Pastor or his designee is aware of their activities and programs;
3. ensuring that the activities and conduct of their ministry teams is in keeping with the overall purposes, doctrines, and ministries of the church;
4. making necessary requests for the annual budget concerning the financial needs of their ministry teams.

### **Section 4 – Membership of Ministry Teams**

Team chairmen may select all members of their particular ministry team. Each team chairman will attempt to consistently involve the membership of the church in active ministry participation.

## **ARTICLE VII – ORDINANCES**

### **Section 1 – Baptism**

Any person who receives Jesus Christ as Savior is eligible for baptism in this church. Baptism is administered by the Senior Pastor or his designee. Baptism is performed within a public service of the church. Our doctrinal view of baptism is described in the doctrinal statement of this church.

### **Section 2 – Lord’s Supper**

The Senior Pastor and the active Deacons are responsible for the administration of the Lord’s Supper in conjunction with the church calendar. Our doctrinal view of the Lord’s Supper is described in the doctrinal statement of this church.

## **ARTICLE VIII – STATEMENT OF MARRIAGE AND SEXUALITY**

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.

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.

We believe that any form of sexual immorality, such as adultery, fornication, homosexuality, polygamy, pedophilia, 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.

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 in designated service positions, should abide by and agree to this Statement on Marriage and Sexuality and conduct themselves accordingly.

We believe that God offers redemption and restoration to all who confess and forsake their sin, seeking His mercy and forgiveness through Jesus Christ.

We believe that 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.

Eastside Baptist Church supports and upholds our Senior Pastor as well as our Ministry Staff and Deacon Body in leading our church to model biblical marriage for both our congregation and our community. No Ministry Staff member is obligated to perform any marriage that would be against his better judgment. The Senior Pastor and the Deacon Body have the right to refuse the use of our facility for any wedding or any other event that they deem to not be in keeping with the purpose and standards of our congregation.

*Genesis 1:26-28; 2:15-25; 18:20; 19:5, 24-25; Exodus 20:14; Leviticus 18:22; Deuteronomy 23:17; Joshua 24:15; 1 Kings 14:24; 15:12; 2 Kings 23:7; Psalms 51:5; 139:13-16; Proverbs 5:15-20; 12:4-5; 18:22; Ecclesiastes 9:9; Malachi 2:14-16; Mark 10:6-9; John 8:7-11; Romans 1:18-32; 1 Corinthians 6:9-11; 7:2; Galatians 5:13-14; Ephesians 5:21-33; 1 Timothy 1:9-10; Hebrews 13:4; Jude 1:7;*

#### **ARTICLE IX – WEAPONS**

Because of the presence of a preschool on church property, this church follows the laws of the State of Georgia regarding weapons on school property. To this end, only persons who fall into the exemptions specifically listed in the current Official Code of Georgia Annotated may carry weapons at any time on church property. These exemptions include but are not limited to: peace officers, law enforcement officers, and school security officers, and only when acting in the performance of their official duties.

## **ARTICLE X – CHURCH MEETINGS**

### **Section 1 – Worship Services**

The church shall meet regularly each Sunday for preaching, instruction, evangelism, and the worship of Almighty God. 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 Senior Pastor.

### **Section 2 – Special Services**

Special services and any other church meetings which are utilized in the promotion of the objectives of the church can be held under the direction of the Senior Pastor.

### **Section 3 – Regular Church Conference**

A regular church conference meeting shall be held at least semiannually. A two week notice stating the date, time, and location must be given for a regular church conference.

### **Section 4 – Special Church Conference**

A special called church conference may be authorized by the Senior Pastor and/or Deacons to consider special matters of a significant nature. A one-week notice stating the subject, date, time, and location must be given for the special called church conference. When such notice is impractical, then the Senior Pastor and/or Deacons may call for such a meeting at any public service of the church.

The activities of a regular church conference can take place at a special called church conference and thereby fulfill the obligation of a semiannual church conference.

### **Section 5 – Annual Church Conference**

An annual church conference will be held prior to the end of the year to hear the following reports:

Presentation of the annual church budget;

Nominations of the standing committees by the Deacon officers for church approval;

A report from the Senior Pastor concerning the number and activities of active ministry teams;

Any other matters of information and activities deemed necessary and prudent.

This annual conference fulfills the requirement of one of the quarterly conferences.

### **Section 6 – Quorum**

A quorum consists of those who attend the church conference, provided it is a stated meeting or that it has been properly called.

## **Section 7 – Parliamentary Rules**

The most important issue in the conduction of church conferences is to ensure that all things be done decently and in order. The current edition of Robert's Rules of Order is to be used as a guideline for parliamentary rules of procedure for all conferences of the church. Any adopted standing rule of this church overrides the authority of Robert's Rules of Order. The moderator will ensure that Holy Scripture and a deportment of Christian conduct govern all matters of discussion and activities within a church conference.

## **ARTICLE XI – STANDING RULES**

### **Section 1 – Calendar**

The church office will maintain an ongoing church calendar and coordinate all church events and activities. Assigantion of church property, buildings, and time, is the responsibility of the ministerial staff.

### **Section 2 – Fiscal year**

The fiscal year of the church will be January-December. Exceptions to this rule can be made in order to fulfill participation with denominational guidelines or any other organization or activity which the church deems appropriate.

### **Section 3 – Budget**

The annual church budget is to be made available to all church members at least one week prior to a presentation of the budget. Following a public presentation, a vote on the annual church budget will take place at the next scheduled church conference, no later than November 30 of the preceding year.

### **Section 4 – Voting Privilege**

Only church members have the privilege of voting in church conferences.

### **Section 5 – New Items of Business**

New items of business for any church conference must be submitted to the church office at least one week prior to a church conference. Items deemed of major importance by the Senior Pastor or Deacon officers may be referred to the active Deacons prior to presentation at a church conference.

## **Section 6 – License to Preach and Ordination**

### **A. License to Preach**

Any male member of the church who in the judgment of the church gives evidence that he is called of God to work in the ministry may be granted a license to preach the Gospel. The recommendation of such license is done by the Senior Pastor and the active Deacons and brought to the church for approval. Candidates for a license to preach must subscribe to the doctrinal statement of this church.

### **B. Ordination**

Any male member of the church who in the judgment of the church gives evidence that he is called of God to a full time vocational ministry may be ordained. The Senior Pastor and active Deacons are authorized to form an ordination council for the purpose of questioning the person seeking ordination. Such council will investigate by questioning the candidate regarding his salvation experience, his call to ministry, his doctrinal views, his commitment to the Southern Baptist Convention, and any other issues the council deems prudent for discussion. Candidates for ordination must subscribe to the doctrinal statement of this church. The ordination council will recommend to the church the ordination of an individual. The Senior Pastor and the active Deacons will ensure that a proper ordination service be held in keeping with the principles and traditions of the Southern Baptist Convention. All men who are ordained by Southern Baptist churches either as ministers or Deacons are qualified to participate in the ordination council.

### **C. Revocation**

The active Deacons are authorized to revoke a License to Preach or an Ordination given by the church.

## **ARTICLE XII – ADOPTION OF & AMENDMENTS TO THE CONSTITUTION AND BYLAWS**

### **Section 1 – Adoption**

This Constitution and Bylaws shall be considered adopted and in immediate effect when a majority of the members present at the business meeting at which the vote is taken for adoption shall vote in favor of adoption. The vote on adoption shall be taken only after the information has been given to the church for four Sundays.

### **Section 2 – Amendments**

Changes in this Constitution and Bylaws may be made at any business meeting of the church, provided that each amendment has been presented to the church in writing for at least two Sundays prior to voting on it.

### **Section 3 – Repeal of Previous Constitutions and Bylaws**

The adoption of this Constitution and Bylaws shall effect a repeal of all previously adopted Constitutions and Bylaws and/or all previously adopted rules.

### **Section 4 – Official Copy**

A copy of this Constitution and Bylaws and any amendments thereof shall be kept in the possession of the church office.

The Constitution and Bylaws were revised April 2017.

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