

CONSTITUTION

SOUTHCLIFF BAPTIST CHURCH FORT WORTH, TEXAS

PREAMBLE

To declare the principles, practices and polity which bind us in unity as a fellowship of believers desiring to serve our Lord Jesus Christ and endeavoring to fulfill the five New Testament purposes of worship, evangelism, fellowship, discipleship, and ministry, this constitution is established.

ARTICLE I

This body shall be known as Southcliff Baptist Church of Fort Worth, Inc. Its principal facilities shall be located at 4100 Southwest Loop 820, Fort Worth, Texas.

ARTICLE II

The purpose of Southcliff Baptist Church collectively and individually is to foster and develop a body of believers filled with the Holy Spirit whose beliefs are based upon the Word of God, the Holy Bible; who magnify God in their worship; share His love through evangelism; strengthen each other in fellowship; model God's character in discipleship and minister His grace.

ARTICLE III

Southcliff Baptist Church shall be affiliated with the Southern Baptist Convention and the agencies and organizations that are in general accord with the doctrines and polity they represent.

ARTICLE IV

Southcliff Baptist Church is a democratic fellowship of believers in Christ, recognizing no ecclesiastical hierarchy either within or beyond the local church. The Bible is its sole authority in spiritual matters, and its members earnestly seek the help of the Holy Spirit in rightly dividing the Word of Truth.

**BYLAWS
SOUTHCLIFF BAPTIST CHURCH
FORT WORTH, TEXAS**

ARTICLE I

MEMBERSHIP

1. QUALIFICATION FOR MEMBERSHIP

Persons are invited to join the fellowship of Southcliff Baptist Church who have accepted Jesus Christ as their personal Savior and Lord, have been baptized by immersion in a New Testament church of like faith and order, and will live by the teachings of the Holy Bible, and who agree to abide by the constitution and bylaws of Southcliff Baptist Church.

2. ADMISSION TO MEMBERSHIP

A. Upon profession of Faith

Any person publicly professing faith in Jesus Christ as his personal Lord and Savior and declaring that it is his purpose to be His disciple, may be received by acclamation into full fellowship, subject to baptism in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit.

B. By Letter

Anyone may be received from another church of like faith and order by acclamation, upon receipt of a letter of recommendation from that church.

C. By Statement

Anyone who has been a member of another church of like faith and order and has no regular letter of dismissal may be received into the fellowship upon a statement satisfactory to the church.

D. By Restoration

A person from whom fellowship has been withdrawn may be restored to membership upon presentation of evidence of repentance satisfactory to the church.

3. DUTIES OF MEMBERS

Each member of Southcliff Baptist Church is expected to be faithful in living out the Christian life; to attend regularly the services of the church, to give tithe and offerings to the support of the Kingdom causes; to use his spiritual gifts to carry out the organized work of the church; and to witness daily to others of Jesus Christ and His saving power.

4. RIGHTS OF MEMBERS

The privileges of voting on the business of the church are limited to members of the church only.

5. TERMINATION OF MEMBERSHIP

A. Death

The name of a member shall be removed from the church roll upon his death.

B. Dismissal

Letters of dismissal may be granted to any church of like faith and order for members in good standing. A person's membership in this church shall cease at the time the request for a letter of dismissal is received from another church of like faith and order. The church shall be notified of letters of dismissal only upon request of another church at a regular scheduled business conference following the request.

C. Erasure

A member may request in writing that his name be removed from church membership; or when a member of this church joins a church of a different faith and order, membership in this church immediately terminates without a letter of recommendation. The church shall approve, by majority vote, erasures at a regular scheduled business conference.

D. Discipline

After due notice and opportunity for hearing and kindly efforts to make such action unnecessary, the church may terminate the membership of persons who fail to reconcile themselves to the church after the church has followed the biblical pattern of Matthew 18:15-19.

ARTICLE II

CHURCH LEADERS

1. MINISTERIAL STAFF

A. Pastor

The Pastor, as the "overseer" of the church, shall be responsible for the primary preaching/teaching ministries of the church, the management and oversight of all pastoral and ministry functions of the church, and the conduct of all services of the church.

The Pastor shall have supervision of the church staff, but may delegate portions of such supervisory responsibilities to other staff members as he deems expedient. When the office of the pastor is vacant, the delegation of these Supervisory duties shall be recommended to the church by the deacon body.

B. Other Ministerial Staff

The church may call such other persons to serve on its ministerial staff as it deems necessary as expressed by the vote of the church in accordance with the provisions of these bylaws. The Ministerial Staff is to facilitate and give guidance to the individual church members as the members seek to fulfill the purposes of the church as set out in the New Testament and articulated in the church constitution.

C. Position Descriptions

The Personnel Committee shall propose and present to the church for approval, a position description for each ministerial staff position.

The Personnel Committee shall recommend to the church amendments to position descriptions as needed.

D. Termination of Ministerial Staff

If the church finds it necessary to terminate a member of the Ministerial Staff, the deacon body must make a recommendation for the termination to the church in writing, stating the reasons for the recommendation. The three-fourths majority vote of members in attendance at a regular or called business conference shall constitute termination.

E. Elimination of a Position

The Personnel Committee, in counsel with the pastor and deacon body, shall recommend to the church for approval the elimination of a ministerial staff position.

F. Salaries and Benefits

The Ministerial Staff salaries and benefits shall be established by the church upon recommendation by the Personnel Committee.

G. Interim Ministerial Staff

1) Interim Pastor

The Personnel Committee, in counsel with the deacon body, shall be responsible for recommending to the church for approval an interim pastor.

2) Other Interim Ministerial Staff

The pastor, in counsel with the Personnel Committee and deacon body, shall recommend to the church other interim Ministerial Staff as deemed necessary by the pastor.

H. Calling the Ministerial Staff

1) Pastor

When the office of the pastor becomes vacant, a pastor search committee shall be elected by the church to seek the Lord's will in calling a pastor.

The Chairman of the Committee on Committees, the Chairman of Deacons, the Chairman of Personnel Committee, and Chairman of Finance Committee shall comprise a committee to nominate church members to serve on the Pastor Search Committee. Any or all of these Chairmen, if elected by the church, may serve on the Pastor Search Committee. Two family members cannot serve on the Pastor Search Committee.

The Committee shall consist of not fewer than five (5), nor more than nine (9) members. The Committee will serve until a pastor is called or until the Committee is relieved of its duties by vote of the church.

The Committee will obtain from the Personnel and Finance Committees a salary range for the position. The salary package shall be offered by the Pastor Search Committee in consultation with the Personnel and Finance Committee, and should be based on the church's current salary structure, taking into consideration the experience and expertise of the potential pastoral candidate.

A majority agreement of the Pastoral Search Committee in favor of a candidate shall be required to recommend a prospective candidate to the church. The Committee shall bring one candidate at a time to the church for consideration and vote.

2) Other Ministerial Staff

Whenever a vacancy occurs in a Ministerial Staff position that reports directly to the pastor, as defined by the position description, or whenever the church votes to add such a position, a committee composed of the Pastor, Chairman of Deacons, and Chairman of Personnel shall nominate persons to serve on a Staff Member Search Committee. The Committee shall be composed of not fewer than five (5), and not more than nine (9) members. The Pastor shall be fully involved in the entire selection process. No two family members may serve on the search committee. The Personnel Committee, in consultation with the Finance Committee, will provide the Search Committee with a salary range. The Personnel Committee will make the final salary offer. A majority agreement of the Staff Search Committee in favor of a candidate shall be required to recommend a prospective candidate to the church. The committee shall bring one candidate at a time to the church for consideration and vote.

Whenever a vacancy occurs in a ministerial staff position that does not report directly to the Pastor, as defined by the position description, or when the church votes to add such a position, a Staff Search Committee may be used, or the Personnel Committee, in counsel with the Pastor and deacon body, may serve as a search committee to recommend personnel to fill the position. A majority agreement of the search committee in favor of a candidate shall be required.

2. SUPPORT STAFF

To assist the ministerial staff to be efficient in the performance of their duties and to be of service to the general membership of the church, a supporting staff of secretaries, custodial personnel, musicians, children's personnel, etc., may be employed. Each member of the supporting staff shall be responsible to the Pastor (or to such person as the Pastor may delegate to exercise such supervision). The Personnel Committee in counsel with the Pastor shall have the responsibility for hiring and terminating members of the support staff. Support Staff salaries and benefits shall be established by the church upon recommendation by the Personnel Committee.

In the absence of a Pastor, the Personnel Committee shall counsel with the deacon body in hiring and terminating members of the supporting staff. The Personnel Committee may, with church approval, delegate the hiring and terminating of certain members of the support staff to members of the ministerial staff.

The Personnel Committee shall prepare and seek church adoption of a position description for each member of the supporting staff and shall recommend to the church amendments to the position descriptions as shall be needed. The Personnel Committee shall recommend to the church for approval the elimination of any support staff position.

1. General Church Officers

A. Church Clerk

The church shall annually elect (as provided in Article V of these bylaws) a person to serve a Church Clerk, whose duties shall be to:

- (1) Record the minutes of all business conferences.
- (2) Sign church approved documents as required.
- (3) The church clerk will file the church minutes with a designated church secretary for inclusion in the church's permanent records.

B. Church Treasurer

The church shall annually elect (as provided in Article V of these bylaws) a person to serve as Church Treasurer, whose duties shall be to:

- (1) Monitor the church's financial condition.
- (2) Examine the supporting data for all checks before they are signed.
- (3) Serve as one of the cosigners of checks.
- (4) Ensure church fund disbursements follow established procedures.
- (5) Review and comment on financial reports of the church.
- (6) Serve as Ex-Officio member of the Finance Committee.

C. Church Moderator

The Pastor, with church approval, has full authority to serve as church moderator. In addition, the church shall annually elect (as provided in Article V of these bylaws) a person to serve as Church Moderator. The Pastor shall not moderate the calling of Ministerial staff members or when such duties would be inappropriate. Under such conditions, or in the absence of the Moderator, the Chairman of the Deacons, or someone designated by him, shall moderate. The Moderator shall preside according to Robert's Rules of Order, Revised, doing so in a manner which will expedite the handling of the church's business with due regard to fair and equal treatment of all parties to such meetings, abiding by the policies as set out in the constitution and bylaws of the church, assisting the church to express its will relative to any business which may be brought before the church.

D. Church Historian

The church shall annually elect (as provided in Article V of these bylaws) a person to serve as Church Historian, whose duties shall be to: record events of importance in the life of the church and preserve them in proper archives for the future benefit of the church.

2. CHURCH TRUSTEES

The church shall annually elect (as provided in Article V of these bylaws) five (5) members to serve as Trustees of the church. No more than two (2) trustees can be replaced at the same time. These shall hold in trust the legal title of the material property of Southcliff Baptist church of Fort Worth, Inc. and shall be empowered to execute deeds, deeds of trust, mortgages, liens, promissory notes or other financial obligations and to transfer, assign, and convey all church property, or any part thereof, only upon officially recorded instructions by the church in business conference. When the church, in business conference, authorizes an action requiring signatures, three (3) of the five (5) Trustees are required to sign. The Trustees may consult legal counsel before signing. All powers and duties of the Trustees shall be conformable with the charter of the church and the laws of the state of Texas.

3. DEACONS

The church shall have a body of deacons that is unlimited in number. This body of deacons shall be composed of two groups: active and inactive. All active deacons will be contacted in the last month of the church's fiscal year to determine the status they plan to assume at the beginning of the new fiscal year. Active deacons are defined as participating in meetings, serving the Lord's Supper and taking part in all other areas of the Deacon Ministry of Southcliff that may arise as well as supporting the church as a whole. Active deacons are expected to be faithful in attending meetings, accepting deacon assignments and otherwise rendering faithful service. Inactive deacons are defined as those who have chosen not to participate in the deacon ministry. These deacons may attend meetings but cannot vote. Inactive deacons who wish to move to the active list may do so by making a request to the deacon chairman. The request will be reviewed by the Deacon Screening Committee. Upon their approval, the committee will make a recommendation to the deacon body. The church will vote to approve the active status. Deacon emeritus status is granted to active deacons upon reaching age 70.

Deacons shall serve the body on partnership with the Pastor and staff in practical ways of caring. They shall also promote the general welfare of the church and serve the needs of the church, especially in those areas which release the ministerial staff for more prayer and ministry of the Word.

A. The Body of Deacons shall be formed as follow:

(1) Qualifications of a Deacon

The church shall seek men who are full of the Holy Spirit and wisdom, who are honorable servants of God, and who seek to conform their lives to the teachings of the New Testament as set forth in I Timothy 3:8-13.

They also: shall have been a member of Southcliff for at least one year prior to the election of new deacons.

(2) Elections of Deacons

- a. A Deacon Screening committee shall be appointed from within the deacon body consisting of six men as appointed by the Chairman of Deacons and the Pastor.
- b. A time shall be set aside for an emphasis on the Deacon Ministry at Southcliff and notification shall be given of the upcoming deacon nomination days.
- c. The committee shall receive nominations of prospective deacons from the membership of the church without regard to whether the nominees have been previously ordained as deacons. Church members may nominate as many individuals as they wish.
- d. The Deacon Screening committee shall interview the nominees concerning their basic theological beliefs and recommend those who are qualified to the deacon body.
- e. The recommended nominees shall be interviewed by a council of ordained men which shall recommend those who are qualified to the church for election.
- f. The names of the recommended nominees shall be published preceding the date of election, which shall be conducted during a business conference.
- g. The election shall be by individual ballot and the men receiving a majority affirmative vote shall be elected.

(3) Ordination of Deacons

Elected men who have never been ordained as deacons in a Southern Baptist Church or in a manner acceptable to the body of Southcliff Baptist Church shall be ordained by a laying-on of hands ceremony.

B. Discipline of Deacons

In the event it is necessary to discipline a deacon for conduct unbecoming a deacon, unwillingness to serve as a deacon or failure to fulfill his commitments under the deacon ministry, the principles of Matthew 18:15-17 shall be followed with the intent of restoring the deacon to fellowship.

C. Deacon Officers

Deacon Officers shall consist of Chairman, Chairman-elect, and Secretary. Other officers may be elected as deemed necessary by the deacon body.

ARTICLE III

ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE

1. STANDING COMMITTEES

Standing Committees of the church are Committee on Committees, Finance, Personnel, Properties, and Cooperative Program/Missions.

A. Structure

- (1) The church exercises autonomous supervision over all committees by creating, terminating, or adjusting committees.
- (2) Members of standing committees of the church shall be elected by the church to serve for three (3) years. One-third of the committee membership is to be elected each year, and no person is to be reelected to serve on that same committee until one year has elapsed since his previous service on that committee. Unexpired terms vacated by resignation will be filled by the Committee on Committees and approved by the church.
- (3) Committee duties are assigned and adjusted by the church. A copy of the church approved duties of the Standing Committees shall be kept in a Committee Handbook by the Committee on Committees.
- (4) Each committee shall elect a chairman from its membership at its first meeting following election. All committee chairmen shall have been a member of Southcliff church for at least a year prior to serving as chairman.
- (5) Each committee shall designate someone to record all minutes of the committee meetings. Minutes shall be submitted to a designated church secretary to be included in the church's permanent records.
- (6) No member shall serve on more than one church committee.
- (7) Two family members shall not serve on the same church committee.
- (8) The pastor shall serve as an ex-officio member of each committee.

B. Duties of Committee Members

- (1) All committee members shall maintain a daily personal walk with the Lord, be supportive of the church through prayer, attendance, and stewardship of time, talents, and finances.
- (2) All committee members shall be faithful in attending meetings, accepting committee assignments, and rendering faithful service. Missing more than three (3) consecutive meetings without explanation shall constitute an automatic resignation from the committee.
- (3) The chairman of the committee shall notify the chairman of the Committee on Committees when any vacancy occurs on the committee.

2. AD HOC COMMITTEES

Should the need arise for an ad hoc committee, the Committee on Committees shall evaluate whether the need is to be addressed by a standing committee. If not, the Committee on Committees shall recommend to the church that an ad hoc committee be formed. The membership of such a committee shall be voted on by the church.

3. SERVICE TEAMS

Standing committees or Church Staff may form service teams to accomplish a variety of tasks that are necessary to facilitate the overall work of the church. Service teams will be comprised of members who have an interest and expertise in a particular field.

The purpose of the team is to provide service to the church and its ministries by volunteering to perform an assigned task. These tasks are unlimited but may include technical areas of computers, sound, lighting, construction, electrical, transportation, etc.

Any committee or Ministerial Staff may publicize a need for a service team. Team members will volunteer to serve in the areas of their interest and expertise. Teams are comprised of an unlimited number of people and will serve indefinitely or until the service is no longer deemed necessary by the forming committee or staff.

The related standing committee will keep a list of volunteer team members and will assist the team in carrying out its service task. The committee will not impose a structure on the team. Team leaders may be designated by the team and may be as many, or as few, as the team desires.

The standing committee, Ministerial Staff person responsible for the team, or church vote may terminate membership on the team or dissolve the team completely.

ARTICLE IV

CHURCH MEETINGS

The church shall hold regular business conferences quarterly. These meetings shall be held on the third Sunday evening of April, July, October, and January. Any change to the regular business conference schedule shall be made with prior notification of the church.

The church may call as needed business conferences to consider matters of special nature and significance. At least a one-week notice must be given for the specially called business conference. The notice should indicate the subject, date, time, and place, and it must be given in such a manner that all resident members have opportunity to know of the meeting.

Robert's Rules of Order, Revised, shall be the authority for parliamentary rules of procedure for all business conferences of the church.

ARTICLE V

ELECTIONS AND TERMINATIONS

The Committee on Committees shall present to the church at the last regular business conference prior to the end of the church's fiscal year nominees for the standing church committees, general church officers and trustees. The church shall vote for or against the nominees. A majority vote rules.

Committee members who miss more than three (3) consecutive months of meetings without explanation shall constitute automatic resignation from the committee to which they have been elected. Terminations do not have to be voted on by the church.

The Committee on Committees shall nominate to the church for approval personnel to fill any vacancies in the standing church committees, general church officers, and trustees that might occur during the year.

ARTICLE VI

ADOPTION, SUSPENSION, AMENDMENT OR REPEAL

1. ADOPTION

This constitution and bylaws shall be considered adopted and in immediate effect if and when two-thirds of the members present at the business conference at which a vote is taken shall vote in favor of it. Such vote shall be taken not less than thirty days after formal presentation of the constitution and bylaws to the church.

2. SUSPENSION, AMENDMENT OR REPEAL

This constitution and bylaws may be suspended, amended or repealed by two-thirds vote of those present and voting at any regular business conference, provided, however, that the proposed suspension, amendment or repeal has been presented to the Church Clerk in writing and that the proposed change has been presented to the church at least thirty days prior to the time the vote is taken. The notice of the proposed change shall be given in such a manner that all resident members have had opportunity to know of the proposed change.

3. INTERPRETATION

The interpretation of the constitution and bylaws rests with the Committee on Committees. Any appeals can be presented to the church in conference.

ARTICLE VII

DISSOLUTION

Upon the dissolution of the Corporation, the Corporation shall, after paying or making provision for payment of all the liabilities of the Corporation, distribute all of the assets of the Corporation to another church or other qualified charitable organization under Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986, as amended, or corresponding section of any future federal code, which will be determined by church action and shall require at least two-thirds (2/3) of the vote of the members present at a meeting at which a quorum is present, which is duly called and held in accordance with the Corporation's adopted procedures.