

By-laws for Davidson Street Baptist Church

A South Carolina Baptist Non-profit Religious Corporation

Adopted: September 2015

Preamble to The Church By-laws

We, the membership of Davidson Street Baptist Church of Clinton, SC, do declare and establish this constitution for the preservation and security of the principles of our faith, and to govern the body in an orderly manner.

Article One **Principal Office**

Organized: 05/03/1959

Constituted: 12/01/1959

Location Address: 400 Davidson Street

City: Clinton State: SC Zip: 29325

Phone: (864) 833-1058

Mailing Address: P.O. Box 629, Clinton SC 29325

Web Site: www.davidsonstreetbaptist.org

Associational Affiliation: Laurens Baptist Association

Article Two **Statement of Faith**

Davidson Street adheres to the Baptist Faith and Message 2000 as adopted by the Southern Baptist Convention as an additional means of applying scripture to the life of Davidson Street Baptist Church as the statement of faith.

Article Three Membership

Section 1 - Candidacy

Any person that affirms the Statement of Faith may offer oneself as a candidate for membership in this church and shall be presented to the church at any regular church service in any of the following ways:

- a) By profession of faith and for baptism by immersion as demonstrated by Jesus in scripture.
- b) By promise of a letter of recommendation from another Baptist Church.
- c) By statement of belief of prior conversion.
- d) New members will be encouraged to participate in the New Member Orientation Class.

As stated, all members are expected to live lifestyles that are consistent with and not contrary to the teaching of Holy Scripture, so Davidson Street Baptist Church reserves the right to limit membership and employment to those individuals whose conduct and behavior is consistent with the expectations of a Christian as determined solely by Davidson Street Baptist Church.

Section 2 - Designation

In an effort to properly reflect the membership of the church, two (2) church rolls will be maintained by the Church Clerk; to be updated periodically and reported to the church.

- a) Active members: All members who are currently involved in the activities, functions and worship of the church.
- b) Inactive members: Members who have become inactive as a result of moving from the church's ministry area and not having joined another church, or members who have been inactive for twelve (12) months. Inactive members may be reinstated by personal request at a regular church service. Exception: shut-ins.

Section 3 - Responsibilities

Each member of Davidson Street Baptist Church is expected to maintain a lifestyle that is consistent with Biblical teachings. The church reserves unto itself the right and responsibility to interpret the scripture, as led by the Holy Spirit, in all such matters. Examples of unacceptable lifestyles include, but are not limited to, abuse of alcohol, illegal drugs, pre-marital sex or extramarital sex, cohabitation apart from the marriage relationship, homosexuality, and rejection of one's biological sex. Members exhibiting unacceptable behavior shall be subject to church discipline as provided in these By Laws.

The responsibilities of membership are as follows:

- 1) Protect the unity of the church by acting in love toward other members, by refusing to gossip and by following the leaders (Rom. 15:5,19; Eph. 4:29; Heb. 13:17; I Peter 1:22).
- 2) Share the responsibility of the church by praying for its growth, inviting the unchurched to attend and by warmly welcoming those who attend (Romans 15:7; I Thessalonians 1:2).

3) Serve the ministry of the church by discovering individual gifts and talents, being equipped to serve by pastor and by developing a servant's heart (Eph. 4:11-12; Phil. 2:3-4, 7; I Pet. 4:10).

Section 4 - Voting Rights

Every active member is entitled to vote at all elections and on all questions submitted to the church in conference.

Voting matters include: annual church budget, election of maintenance needs, acquisition of real property and related indebtedness, incurring indebtedness for facilities development, merger or dissolution of the church, amendments to the Articles of Incorporation, Constitution or By-laws, calling or removing of a pastor, and election of messengers for annual associational, state and national meetings, or other needs deemed necessary by the pastor and/or deacons.

Voting by proxy is prohibited except to shut-ins.

Membership - Mediation

Members of the church agree to submit any legal dispute with the church for mediation before a mutually agreed-upon mediator, or if none can be agreed upon, one selected by Peacemaker Ministries. Lawsuits between believers, or threats of lawsuits between believers, are a matter of grave concern for the church, are contrary to biblical and church teaching, and mediation is an effort to resolve disputes in a biblical fashion(1 Cor. 6:1-7).

Mediation will be governed by the Rules of Procedure for Christian Conciliation of the institute for Christian Conciliation(ICC Rules). Unless modified as stipulated by the parties. In particular, subject to the more detailed provisions of the ICC Rules, mediator(s) will attempt to assist us in reaching a voluntary settlement of any disputes through mediation. The confidentiality of the mediation process will be protected, and these matters will not be discussed with people who do not have a necessary interest in them. If settlement can be agreed upon, the conciliators may, at their discretion, issue an advisory opinion. Neither the opinion, nor any communications exchanged in the mediation process, will be admissible for any purpose in any subsequent legal proceeding.

I have reviewed the statements above and agree to be governed by all the provisions herein.
(optional provision: I recognize that I am knowingly and voluntarily waiving my right to revoke membership during church discipline.)

Section 7 - Termination

Membership shall be terminated for the following reasons:

- 1) Death
- 2) Transfer of membership to another Baptist Church.
- 3) Proof of membership in a church of another denomination.
- 4) By personal request of the member.
- 5) Church Discipline

Section 8 - Discipline

It shall be the practice of this church to emphasize to its members that every reasonable measure will be taken to assist any troubled member. The pastor, deacons, and other members of the church staff are available for counsel and guidance. The attitude of members toward one another shall be guided by a concern for redemption rather than punishment.

Should a member commit a serious offense which the church considers to be detrimental to the church's general welfare and reputation, the pastor and deacons will take every reasonable measure to encourage the offender to repent and be reconciled to God and the church in accordance with scripture (Matthew 18:15-18; 1 Timothy 5:20-21).

If the welfare of the church is best served by the exclusion of the member, the church may dismiss the member by a two-thirds vote in a specially called conference.

The Church may restore membership to any person previously excluded upon their request, and by vote of the church upon evidence of the excluded person's repentance and reformation.

Article Four

Section 1 - Ordinances

Baptism: A person shall be received for Baptism

- a) Who receives Jesus Christ as Savior by personal faith,
- b) Who professes Him publicly at any worship service,
- c) Who indicates commitment to follow Christ as Lord.

Baptism shall be by immersion in water, shall be administered by the pastor or whomever the deacons authorize, and shall be administered as an act of worship during any worship service. A person confessing Christ and failing to be baptized after a reasonable length of time shall be counseled by the pastor and/or staff and deacons. If negative interest is ascertained, that person shall be deleted from those awaiting Baptism.

Lord's Supper: The Lord's Supper is symbolic of obedience whereby members of the Church body, through partaking of the bread and fruit of the vine, commemorate the death of Jesus Christ and anticipate His second coming.

- a) The pastor and deacons shall be responsible for the administration of the Lord's Supper.
- b) The Lord's Supper shall be observed quarterly.

Article Five

Meetings/Business Conference

Section 1 - Place

The church shall hold regular meetings for worship, teaching, training, outreach and fellowship at the principle church location, unless otherwise designated from time to time by the pastor/staff.

Section 2 - Regular Business

Regular business meetings shall be held the 4th Sunday evening of each month should there be necessary business, unless otherwise agreed to by this Church at the previous regular business meeting.

All business meetings will be guided by Christian courtesy and conducted according to parliamentary procedure, of Robert's Rules of Order, Newly Eleventh Edition Revised.

Section 3 - Special Called

Special business meetings may be called at any time by the pastor and/or chairman of the deacons for any purpose by giving notice to the members in accordance with Section 5 of this Article.

Section 4 - Notices

Notification of regular business meetings shall be given to the active church members in any of the following manners which shall be deemed to be a reasonable method if there is necessary business: Announcement of the meeting in a church program, bulletin, newsletter or by oral public announcement to the congregation with a 1 week notice.

Section 5 - Quorum

A quorum shall consist of those members present and voting at a meeting duly noticed and called for the transaction of business.

Section 6 – Voting

Any action will require a majority vote from the members present unless otherwise stated in these By-Laws.

Article Six **Professional Ministerial Leadership Staff**

Section 1 - Staff Overview

Pastor

Minister of Music

Minister of Children and Youth

Administrative Assistant

Section 2 - Staff Function

Pastor

The Pastor is responsible for leading the church body in functioning as a New Testament Church (Acts 14:23, 20:28-32; 1 Tim. 5:17; Titus 1:5-9; 1 Pet. 5:1-4). The Pastor is responsible for providing spiritual instruction and strategic leadership to the members, staff and ministries of the church.

Minister of Music

The Minister of Music, working with the Music Ministry Team, is responsible for the planning, coordination, operation, and evaluation of a comprehensive Music Ministry.

Minister of Children and Youth

The Minister of Children and Youth is responsible for planning, administering, coordinating, supervising and evaluating a comprehensive and active Children and Youth Ministry.

Administrative Assistant

The Administrative Assistant is responsible for administrating those tasks and functions relevant to the church office on a day-to-day basis. In addition to the handling of these administrative needs, the administrative assistant will also be responsible for delegating tasks to the paid or volunteer workers associated with the Church office.

Section 3 - Staff Selection

Pastor

Shall be chosen by the Pastor Search Committee and called by the church during a special called business meeting for that purpose, of which a one week notice shall be given to the membership. A three-fourths vote is required for the election of a Pastor. The Pastor shall continue to serve until the relationship is ended by resignation or termination. A three-fourths vote is required for the termination of a Pastor.

Ministerial Staff

Each shall be presented to the church by the deacons for employment in these positions. Service in these positions shall continue until the relationship is ended by resignation (2 weeks written notice given to the pastor and deacons) or by the expiration of a predetermined time of service. Should a need arise for a staff to be terminated the motion would come from the deacons to the church body for a church vote. If any severance is to be granted this motion would come from the deacons to the church for a church vote.

Section 4 - Pastor Search Process

A pastor shall be chosen and called by the church whenever a vacancy occurs. A Pastor Search Committee shall be elected by nominations from the congregation, with the 3 receiving the most nominations and agreeing to serve will serve as the committee. The deacons will choose 2 to serve on the committee and 1 alternate to also serve on the committee. The Pastor Search Committee shall be active church members of Davidson Street Baptist Church representing the congregation by gender, age, and length of membership in the church. The call of a pastor shall take place at a called business meeting, after notice as provided for other called or special business meetings has been given. A three-fourths vote by ballot of the members present and voting shall be necessary to extend a call.

A pastor's call shall continue until the relationship is terminated at the request of the pastor or the church. A 2 week notice shall be given, unless otherwise mutually agreed. Should the pastor become incapacitated through illness or injury and not able to resume his duties for 45 days, the pastor and/or family will consult with the deacons for an extended leave for up to 6 months.

Should the church experience death of the pastor, the pastor's family will be allowed to remain in parsonage up to 6 months with the church paying all utilities, paying of salary of 2 months and insurance of 3 months. Compensation determined by the Search Committee and church approval. Only the pastor will be reimbursed for medical insurance.

The deacons will present a motion to the church for a church vote and approval.

Section 5 - Support Staff

The election of staff will be presented to the church from a deacon vote. The removal of any staff would apply as the ministerial staff listed above.
All staff will affirm the Statement of Faith.

Section 6 - Terminations

Voluntary Termination

Support Staff employees should give at least a two-week written notice to their immediate supervisor before leaving their job. This will allow their supervisor enough time to adjust working schedules and secure a replacement.

Involuntary Termination

An involuntary termination is that which is initiated by the church management for reasons other than changing ministry conditions.

Layoff

A layoff is a termination of employment that results from changing ministry conditions which necessitate a reduction in staff.

Section 7 - All Staff Screening

All staff, Ministerial and Support will go through full screening procedures prior to hiring/calling, as outlined in the By-laws; including: credit check, address verifications, criminal, sexual, and academic background checks. Also youth and children workers will be screened. All screening will be done every 3 years. All staff will be presented a copy of the By-laws and asked to sign as agreed. All staff will be encouraged to become members of the church but may not be required.

Article Seven **General Church Officers, Deacons & Other Leadership**

Section 1 - Overview

The leadership structure of Davidson Street Baptist Church is based upon the nature of the church as revealed in Scripture, as well as the necessary legal requirements for a recognized religious organization. The leadership structure of the church is intentionally designed to accommodate simplicity, growth, unity, and biblical teaching.

The primary officers of this church shall be Pastor, Deacons, Trustees, Clerk and Treasurer, whose election, tenure and duties shall be as provided for in the By-laws.

All officers of the church shall be members of the church.

Section 2 - Officer Functions

Pastor – is responsible for providing spiritual instruction and strategic leadership to the members, staff and ministries of the church. The pastor and/or Deacon Chairman will serve as the moderator.

Clerk – is responsible for recording minutes of business meetings, preserving historical records, correspondence to membership, and preparing annual information for the association, state convention, and Southern Baptist Convention.

Tellers – shall count, record, receive and deposit, all monies and other funds of the Church.

Treasurer – will review and sign weekly checks and review monthly financial report.

Trustees – shall, at the direction and discretion of the church, hold legal title to church property, sign all contracts/documents as approved by the church, and keep the official copies of the Church Incorporation, By-laws, and Policies and Procedures documents.

Deacons – shall at all times consider themselves as servants of the church. It shall be their duty to look after the spiritual well-being of the congregation, to cooperate with the pastor and other officers of the church in the furtherance of their duties, to visit the sick and care for the needy and to perform such other duties as usually pertain to that office. They can spend up to \$500 without a church vote for necessary supplies and work done to the church.

Section 3 - Enlist & Election

Clerk & Treasurer – The church membership will elect the clerk and treasurer annually based on names presented by the Nominating Committee.

Trustees – In June the church will nominate a person to serve as trustee. In July the 2 names receiving the most nominations will be placed on a ballot for a majority vote of one.

Deacons – Deacon rotation will be 2 deacons will rotate off for 2 years and on third year 3 deacons will rotate off. In June church conference 2 rotating off: the church will nominate 4 names to serve as deacon, from those names the 4 individuals receiving the most nominations and willing to serve, will be placed on a ballot. The church will then elect the 2 they would like to serve. The 2 names receiving the most votes will be elected as Deacons.

For the 3 rotating off: the same procedure but it will be 6 names for nomination, then on the ballot the 6 with most nominations, and the church will elect 3. (Deacons will be elected on a rotating basis of 3 people 1 year, 2 the next year and then 2 the next year.) Each deacon will serve for 3 years and must not serve for 1 year before eligible for re-election.

Deacons shall serve on a rotation basis. In case of death, removal or incapacity to serve, the church may elect to fill the unexpired term. After serving a term of three years, no deacon shall be eligible for re-election until the lapse of one year.

In accordance with the meaning of the work and practice of the New Testament, deacons are to be servants of the church.

The deacons shall elect their officers and shall be organized to assist the pastor in all matters pertaining to the welfare and work of the church.

If a need arises for any of the above to be removed the process of Matthew 18:15-17 will be followed.

Section 4 - Officer/Deacon/Leadership Qualifications

Officers/Deacons/Leadership shall be active members of Davidson Street Baptist Church.

Officer/Leadership qualifications are to be based on the characteristics defined in scripture (John 12:26; 1 Corinthians 11:1; 1 Peter 5:2-5).

Deacon qualifications are found in 1 Timothy 3:8-13.

Article Eight **Standing Committees/Teams**

All committees are advisory groups and have no powers except those authorized and approved by church vote. Standing committees will be approved and members elected from the church body. Specific duties and responsibilities of each committee will be as presented by the Nominating Committee and approved by church vote. It is encouraged that committee membership change by rotating off after a three-year term.

All committee members shall be church members in good standing and elected by the church through the work of the Nominating Committee. The Nominating Committee coordinates the staffing of all church leadership positions filled by volunteer workers; meet when necessary to consider all vacancies that may have occurred and make nominations to fill all vacancies. They begin work in April of each year. All volunteers serving in any capacity within the church will be asked to sign the By-laws in agreement. Any use of church bus must have at least two adults.

Article Nine **Fiscal Responsibilities**

The fiscal year of Davidson Street Baptist Church shall begin on January 1 and end on December 31 of each year. The Church year shall begin on September 1 and end on August 31 of each year.

The church shall have an annual budget to serve as the guide for the financial operation of the church. Such budget shall be presented to the church at an annual business conference for vote.

An annual financial review will be conducted by the treasurer, chairman of the deacons, administrative assistant and a member of the finance committee. Every 5 years an outside financial review will be conducted.

Article Ten **Article of Dissolution**

Davidson Street Baptist Church, being organized and incorporated, operates as a non-profit tax-exempt organization under the United States Internal Revenue Code. In the event of dissolution of Davidson Street Baptist Church, the assets thereof shall be liquidated and distributed for payment of all outstanding debts and obligations; remaining assets shall be distributed to the Cooperative Program for the purpose of Kingdom work, or to another church which aligns with our Statement of Faith. This decision would be made by a church vote.

No assets of the church shall be distributed to any member, officer, or staff of Davidson Street Baptist Church or any other individual.

Article Eleven **Amendments to The By-laws**

Any of these By-laws may be amended, altered or repealed by a two-thirds vote at any regular church conference provided that such amendments, alterations, or repeals be given in writing to the church 1 week notice.

(Guidelines and use of church facilities and weddings will be available as an additional document.)