

# **PREAMBLE TO THE CONSTITUTION AND BYLAWS**

We declare and establish this constitution and these bylaws to preserve and secure the principles of our faith, and to govern this body in an orderly manner. This constitution will preserve the liberties of each individual church member and the freedom of action of this body in its relationships with other churches.

## **CONSTITUTION**

### Article I

#### **OFFICIAL TITLE**

This body shall be known as the Trustee Corporation of River Road Baptist Church, Inc. 21067 CR 121, Hilliard, FL 32046

#### **INCORPORATION**

The church shall be incorporated according to the laws of the state of Florida governing religious bodies. Jesus saith unto him, "I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me." John14:6.

### Article II

#### **PURPOSE OF THE CHURCH**

The purpose of the church shall be to carry out the Great Commission of our Lord and Savior as recorded in Matthew 28:19-20. Therefore, we do hereby identify the objective of the church to be:

- A. A dynamic spiritual body empowered by the Holy Spirit to share Christ with as many people as possible in our church, community, and throughout the world.
- B. A worshiping fellowship of Christian believers, experiencing an awareness and presence of God, recognizing His person, presence, and responding in obedience to His leadership.
- C. A church that ministers unselfishly to persons in the church, community, and world in Jesus' name.
- D. A church whose members strive to be Christ like in their individual daily living by emphasizing total commitment of life, personality, and possessions to the Lordship of Christ.
- E. A group of followers of Christ who desire to grow in Christian knowledge and wisdom through continuous individual and group prayer and Bible study under the leadership of the Holy Spirit.

### Article III

#### **ARTICLES OF FAITH**

The Holy Bible is the inspired word of God and is the basis for every statement of faith. The church subscribes to the doctrinal statement of "The Baptist Faith and Message" as adopted by the Southern Baptist Convention in 2000. We band ourselves together as a body of baptized believers in Jesus Christ personally committed to sharing the good news of salvation to lost mankind.

### Article IV

#### **BAPTISM AND THE LORD'S SUPPER**

Christian baptism is the immersion of a believer in water in the name of The Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit. It is an act of obedience symbolizing the believer's faith in a crucified, buried, and risen Savior, the believer's death to sin, the burial of the old life, and the resurrection to walk in newness of life in Christ Jesus; it is a testimony to his faith in the final resurrection of the dead. Being a Church ordinance, it is prerequisite to the privileges of church membership and to the Lord's Supper.

The Lord's Supper is a symbolic act of obedience whereby members of the Church, through partaking of the bread and the fruit of the vine, memorialize the death of the Redeemer and anticipate his second coming. Matthew 3:13-17, Mark 1: 9-11, Romans 6:1-10, 1 Corinthians 1:16.

## Article V **RELATIONSHIPS**

The government of this church is vested solely in the body of believers who compose its membership; but, because our Christ given responsibilities are world wide, we recognize our privilege and obligation to cooperate with other religious bodies. We shall, therefore, be voluntarily members with the Northeast Florida Baptist Association, and voluntarily affiliated with the Florida Baptist Convention, the Southern Baptist Convention, and such other religious bodies with whom we may desire to cooperate in joint enterprises so long as such affiliation does not violate the autonomy of our local church.

Delegates, messengers, or representatives to meetings, assemblies, or conventions at which our church should be represented shall be nominated and approved by the church.

## Article VI **CHURCH COVENANT**

Having been led, as we believer, by the Spirit of God, to receive the Lord Jesus Christ as our Savior and on the profession of our faith, having been baptized in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit, we do now, in the presence of God, and this assembly, most solemnly and joyfully enter into covenant with one another as one body in Christ.

We engage, therefore, by the aid of the Holy Spirit to walk together in Christian love; to strive for the advancement of this church, in knowledge, holiness, and comfort; to promote its prosperity and spirituality; to sustain its worship, ordinances, discipline, and doctrines; to contribute cheerfully and regularly to support of the ministry, the expenses of the church, the relief of the poor, and the spread of the gospel through all nations.

We also engage to maintain family and secret devotions; to religiously educate our children; to seek the salvation of our kindred and acquaintances; to walk circumspectly in the world; to be just in our dealings, faithful in our engagements, and exemplary in our deportment; to avoid tattling, backbiting, and excessive anger; to abstain from the sale of and use of destructive drugs or intoxicating beverage; to shun pornography, to be zealous in our efforts to advance the kingdom of our Savior.

We further engage to watch over one another in brotherly love; to remember one another in prayer; to aid one another in sickness and distress; to cultivate Christian sympathy in feeling and Christian courtesy in speech; to be slow to take offense, but always ready for reconciliation and mindful of the rules of our Savoir to secure it without delay.

We moreover engage that when we remove from this place, we will, as soon as possible, unite with some other church where we can carry out the spirit of this covenant and the principles of God's word.

## Article VII **THE CHURCH**

A New Testament church of the Lord Jesus Christ is a local body of baptized believers who are associated by covenant in the faith and fellowship of the gospel ordinances of Christ, committed to His teachings, exercising the gifts, rights and privileges invested in them by His word, and seeking to extend the gospel to the ends of the earth.

This church is an autonomous body, operating through democratic processes under the Lordship of Jesus Christ. In such a congregation members are equally responsible. Its Scriptural officers are pastors and deacons.

The New Testament speaks also of the church as a body of Christ which includes all of the redeemed of all ages. Matthew 18:16-20, Acts 2:41-42, Ephesians 2:19-22, I Timothy 3:1-15

## **GOD**

There is one and only one God. He is an intelligent, spiritual and personal Being, the Creator, Redeemer, Preserver, and Ruler of the universe. God is infinite in Holiness and all other perfection. To him we owe the highest love, reverence and obedience. The eternal God reveals Himself to us as Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, with distinct attributes, but without division of nature, essence or being.

### **A. God the Father**

God as Father reigns with providential care over His universe, His creatures, and the flow of the stream of human history according to the purpose of His grace. He is all powerful, all loving, and all wise. God is Father in truth to those who become children of God through faith in Jesus Christ. He is fatherly in His attitude toward all men. Genesis 1:1, Isaiah 64:8. Ephesians 4:6, Romans 8:14-17.

### **B. God the Son**

Christ is the eternal Son of God. In His incarnation as Jesus Christ he was conceived of the Holy Spirit and born of the Virgin Mary. Jesus perfectly revealed and did the will of God, taking upon Himself the demands and necessities of human nature and identifying Himself completely with mankind yet without sin. He honored the divine law by His personal obedience, and His death on the cross He made provision for the redemption of men from sin. He was raised from the dead with a glorified body and appeared to His disciples as the person who was with them before His crucifixion. He ascended into Heaven and is now exalted at the right hand of God where He is the Mediator, partaking of the nature of God and of man, and in whose Person is effected the reconciliation between God and man. He will return in power and glory to judge the world and to consummate His redemptive mission. He now dwells in all believers as the living and ever present Lord. Isaiah 7:14, Matthew 1:18-23, Romans 5:20-21, Revelation 1:13-18.

### **C. God the Holy Spirit**

The Holy Spirit is the Spirit of God. He inspired holy men of old to write the Scriptures. Through illumination He enables men to understand the truth. He exalts Christ. He convicts of sin, of righteousness and of judgment. He calls men to the Savior, and effects regeneration. He cultivates Christian character, comforts believers and bestows the spiritual

gifts by which they serve God, through His Church. He seals the believer into the fullness of the stature of Christ. He enlightens and empowers the believers and the Church in worship, evangelism, and service. Joel 2:28, Genesis 1:2, Acts 1:8, Matthew 3: 16-17

## **MAN**

Man was created by the special act of God, in his own image, and is the crowning work of His creation. In the beginning man was innocent of sin and endowed by His Creator with freedom of choice. By his free choice, man sinned against God and brought sin into the human race. Through the temptation of Satan, man transgressed the command of God, and fell from his original innocence; whereby his posterity inherits a nature and an environment inclined towards sin, and as soon as they are capable of normal action, become transgressors and are under condemnation. Only the grace of God can bring man into His holy fellowship and enable man to fulfill the creative purpose of God. The sacredness of human personality is evident in that God created man in His own image, and in that Christ died for man; therefore, every man possesses dignity and is worthy of respect and Christian love. Genesis 2:15-22, Psalm 1, Romans 3:10-23, Ephesians 2:1-22.

## **SALVATION**

Salvation involves the redemption of the whole man, and is offered freely to all who accept Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior, who by His own blood obtained eternal redemption of the believer. In its broadest sense salvation includes regeneration, sanctification, and glorification.

- A. Regeneration, or the new birth, is a work of God's grace whereby believers become new creatures in Christ Jesus. It is a change of heart wrought by the Holy Spirit through conviction of sin to which the sinner responds in repentance toward God and faith in the Lord Jesus Christ.

Repentance and faith are inseparable experiences of grace. Repentance is a genuine turning from sin toward God. Faith is the acceptance of Jesus Christ and commitment of the entire personality to Him as Lord and Savior. Justification is God's gracious and full acquittal upon principles of His righteousness of all sinners who repent and believe in Christ. Justification brings the believer into a relationship of peace with God.

- B. Sanctification is the experience, beginning in regeneration, by which the believer is set apart to God's purposes, and is enabled to progress toward moral and spiritual perfection through the presence and power of the Holy Spirit dwelling in Him. Growth in grace should continue throughout the regenerate person's life.
- C. Glorification is the culmination of salvation and is the final blessed and abiding state of the redeemed. Exodus 3:14-17, Romans 6:1-23, Ephesians 2:1-22, Revelation 3:20.

## **GOD'S PURPOSE OF GRACE**

Salvation is the gracious purpose of God, according to which He regenerates, sanctifies, and glorifies sinners. It is consistent with the free agency of man, and comprehends all the means in connection with the end. It is a glorious display of God's sovereign goodness, and is infinitely wise, holy, and unchangeable. It excludes boasting and promotes humility.

All true believers endure to the end. Those whom God has accepted in Christ, and sanctified by His Spirit, will never fall away from the state of grace, but shall persevere to the end. Believers may fall

into sin through neglect and temptation, whereby they grieve the Spirit, impair their graces and comforts, bring reproach on the cause of Christ, and temporal judgments on themselves, yet they shall be kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation. Genesis 12:1-3, John 1:12-14, Romans 8:23-29, Ephesians 1:4-23.

Article VIII  
**AMENDING THE CONSTITUTION & BYLAWS**

Changes in this constitution or bylaws may be made at any regular business meeting of the church, provided each amendment shall have been presented in writing at a previous business meeting, and copies of the proposed amendment made available to each member present. Amendments to the constitution or bylaws shall be by three-quarters (3/4) of all members present and voting to approve. Changes become effective immediately.

**BYLAWS**  
Article I  
**CHURCH MEMBERSHIP**

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

Section 1  
Candidacy for Church Membership

Any person may offer himself /herself as a candidate for membership at any worship service. The names of all such candidates shall be presented to the Church at the next regular business meeting for granting of membership. A majority vote of those present shall be necessary to accept a member.

General -Membership in Trustee Corporation of River Road Church, Inc. shall be open to all persons who publicly confess Jesus Christ to be their Lord and Savior, who are baptized by immersion (unless excused by the church for reasons of disability) and who embrace the covenant of this church.

Candidacy – A person may request membership in this church by coming before the congregation at any worship service. A request is made and the candidate can be presented at the following business meeting in one of the following ways:

- A. Profession of Faith-By testimony of repentance, a public profession of faith in the Lord Jesus Christ and a desire for baptism by immersion.
- B. Promise of Letter-By promise of a letter of recommendation from a church of like faith and order. The church must receive this letter prior to being presented to the church for membership.
- C. Statement - By statement of a previous profession of faith. If not previously baptized by immersion then a candidate shall be baptized.
- D. Request by a physically disabled person – A person so physically disabled as to preclude their attendance or baptism may be received as a member in any of the ways above after making the appropriate request to the pastor or chairman of deacons.

- E. Restoration -By request for restoration from a former member, previously terminated due to discipline of the church as outlined in these bylaws. When candidate satisfy membership requirements they shall be welcomed and affirmed as candidates for membership of this church. The new members should subsequently be counseled under the leadership of the pastor or designee.

## Section 2 Responsibilities

Church members are expected to be faithful in their responsibilities as Christians. These responsibilities include: habitual attendance in the services of this church, to give tithes regularly for support of the church, to share in its organized programs, to embrace its covenant and to carry out the spirit of its constitution and bylaws.

## Section 3 Rights

1. Every member that is of the age of 18 or older is entitled to act and vote on business transactions of the church. This member must be present to vote and an active member. An active member is defined as a member who has been in attendance in worship other than a business meeting unless providentially hindered in the last three months. Any member who is considered inactive may be asked to excuse themselves from the business meeting. If the active/inactive status of a member is questioned, the decision of the church clerk is final.
2. Every active member of the church 18 or older is eligible for consideration by the membership as a candidate for elected offices or appointed positions in the church in accordance within the provisions of these bylaws after six months of membership.
3. Members will have the right to examine church documents. No financial documents of Church members may be reviewed by anyone. This includes contributions made to the church by individuals or business.
4. Active church members are allowed after five days prior notice to view on the premises of the church any financial document of the church other than individual contribution records.
5. Church members will not be allowed audio and video copies of business meetings. However, upon request and appointment, video and audio recordings of business sessions may be viewed on church premises. They may be viewed by appointment only. The church clerk may have access to video/audio recordings of the business meetings in their home for up to 5 days following a business meeting for the purpose of authenticating the minutes of that meeting. The church clerk is not to allow anyone else to view or duplicate the recordings while in his/her custody.

## Section 4 Membership Termination

Termination of church membership shall be subject to the following guidelines:

1. Transfer by Letter - Any member who desires a transfer of membership to any Baptist church is entitled to have it sent upon that church's request. The member is then dropped from our church roll. This action shall be reported to the church in a business meeting.

2. Death - The names of deceased members will be removed from the church membership and removal will be reported at the next business meeting.
3. Change of Church Affiliation – Any member who has made a change of church affiliation by joining another church shall be dropped from the church membership roll. The church may, upon a member's request, provide an appropriate statement acknowledging membership and termination. These actions shall be voted upon in business session.
4. Withdrawal – If a member desires to withdraw membership from this church for reasons which the church deems satisfactory, the church by a majority vote at any business meeting may grant the request after having patiently and kindly endeavored to secure continuance of their membership following biblical instruction (Matthew 18:15-17).
5. Inactivity – Should a member not attend for 1 year, the church in a regular business meeting may drop the member, by a majority vote, from the church roll. This action will be initiated only after faithful and kindly efforts have been made to restore such members to fellowship through guidance of Matthew 18:15- 17.
6. Offense -Should a member become an offense to the church by reason of immoral or unchristian conduct, the church in a regular business meeting may terminate his/her membership. The following efforts should be made by the deacons to restore the member.
  - (A) An attempt shall be made by the pastor and the chairman of deacons to counsel the member in a spirit of love and compassion, so that the member may repent and remain in the fellowship of the Church (Matthew 18:15 -17, Galatians 6:1). The privacy of the member shall be respected as much as may be reasonably possible.
  - (B) If the member remains unrepentant, the matter may be brought to the Church for separation of membership. (Matthew 18:17).
  - (C) A member may be separated from membership by a majority vote at any business meeting.

## Section 5

### Restore Member Because of Offense

Upon satisfactory evidence to the Pastor or Chairman of the Deacons the person's repentance and reformation, the church may restore membership to any person previously excluded. Membership is restored by a request of the Chairman of deacons, pastor and the excluded person and by a majority vote at any business meeting.

## Article II

### **CHURCH ORGANIZATIONS**

#### Section 1

- a. General- All organizations of the church shall be under church control. The pastor of the church is the pastor of all its organizations.
- b. Officers - The officers of the church shall be chairman of deacons, chairman of trustees, clerk, chairman of stewardship committee, treasurer, committee chairpersons team leaders, and organizational leaders. Unless provided otherwise in these bylaws, all church officers shall be active members of the church, shall be nominated by the nominating committee, shall be elected by a majority vote of a quorum, may be terminated by a majority vote of a quorum, and shall serve for one year from January 1 to December 31, unless filling a

partial term. Officers may be re-elected yearly unless otherwise provided for in these bylaws. Officers are expected to demonstrate loyalty to the church and faithfulness to their offices. Officers who become inactive or otherwise wish to resign should resign their office by so informing the pastor or the chairperson of the nominating committee.

- c. The Church Council- The Church Council shall consist of the pastor as chairman, organizational leaders, team leaders, and committee chairmen. The council shall prepare a program of activities and express them in a calendar that the church shall vote to approve prior to the following year.

## Section 2 Pastor and Staff

### THE PASTOR

A) Responsibilities and Authority: His duties are four-fold; (1) as a preacher, to be called of God to interpret and proclaim the whole gospel; (2) as a bishop, to oversee the work of the church; (3) as a minister, to serve the people for Jesus' sake; (4) as a pastor, to be shepherd of the flock. The pastor is responsible in leading the church in functioning as a New Testament church. He is the leader of worship, proclamation, education and pastoral ministry. The pastor will lead the congregation, the organizations and the church staff in performing tasks relating to the ministry of the church.

He will serve as moderator of all business meetings except when he is personally involved.

The pastor will serve as an ex-officio, non-voting member of all committees and organizations to give spiritual guidance. He shall be given a copy of minutes of all committee meetings whether he is present or not.

The pastor and personnel committee shall jointly employ and or dismiss non-ministerial staff members, as needed, to carry out the business and programs of the church.

B) Selection: In the event of a vacancy in the position of Pastor, a Pastor Search Committee consisting of a minimum of six (6) persons proven to possess sound Biblical teachings and a working knowledge of the church through experience at River Road Baptist Church (minimum of two years membership), after a three week notice a special called business meeting shall be called at which the nominating committee shall nominate persons for the committee. Members will be encouraged to submit suggestions to the nominating committee prior to their nominations. Before the election, additional nominations from the floor will be in order. After the election of the Pastor Search Committee, any member has the privilege of making recommendations to the committee for the position of Pastor. The Pastor Search Committee shall keep the church informed of their progress or lack thereof. The Committee shall bring only one man at a time to the church for consideration.

The Associate Pastor shall fill the position of Pastor until the Pastor Search Committee recommends an Interim Pastor, or Transitional Pastor for approval by the church. Approval of a 75% majority of those members present and voting shall constitute a call of the Interim or Transitional Pastor.

The Pastor Search Committee, after consultation with the active Deacons and Stewardship Committee shall prepare a benefit package to present to a prospective pastor. The package should address salary, and other conditions of employment not addressed in these by-laws. The agreed upon benefit package shall be signed by the called pastor, the chairman of the pastor search committee, and the chairman of the Deacons and approved by the church prior to calling

the pastor. A copy of the signed benefit package shall be given to the church clerk to be a part of the records of the church.

C) Election: The election of a Pastor shall take place at a business meeting called for that purpose, with at least two (2) weeks notice announced at the regular worship services -the two Sunday services and the two (2) Wednesday services. The special called business meeting to call a pastor shall be held after the Sunday P .M. worship service following the two week notice. Approval of at least an 80% majority of those members present and voting by secret ballot shall constitute a call. Ballots will be given only to active members. If active membership is questioned, the clerk shall decide the matter. The ballots will be counted by the ushers. Thus elected, the Pastor shall serve until the relationship is terminated either by his resignation or the church's request. The Pastor Search Committee shall be terminated once the church has extended a call and the candidate has accepted.

D) Resignation or retirement: The Pastor shall give at least two (2) weeks and not more than sixty (60) days notice from the time of his announced retirement until the termination of his responsibilities. Upon voluntary resignation or retirement, his duties, responsibilities and compensation cease immediately.

E) Termination: The pastor may be terminated from his office by the following procedures:

1. The deacons shall meet with the pastor to discuss all issues against him with a view of reaching a solution.
2. If after prayerful deliberation, the deacons vote to recommend the pastor's removal from office all pastoral duties shall cease immediately and access to the church **office and office** equipment is denied; however, all compensation will continue until the matter is settled by church vote or resignation of the pastor.
3. The deacons shall call a special business meeting with a two (2) week notice announced at two (2) Sunday services and two (2) Wednesday services. The deacons will be responsible for selecting someone to fill the pulpit until the matter is settled.
4. Should the pastor resign prior to the business meeting the termination agreement is as follows: if the pastor has served as many as two (2) years of service, the pastor will receive one month's salary for each year (12 months) of service prorated over twelve (12) months.
5. The pastor shall not preside at the business meeting or designate a person to do so. The chairman of deacons will call the meeting to order and lead the body to select a moderator. At the special called business meeting the deacons will present their charges against the pastor that in their opinion merit his termination. The pastor may have an opportunity to defend himself against the charges brought by the deacons. Member will have the right to ask questions of deacons and the pastor. A secret vote will be taken. The Pastor may be removed from office by a majority vote. Should the vote be less than a majority, he will resume all the duties of the pastor immediately and will have access to the office and equipment.

G) Qualifications: Any male, age twenty-one (21) or over, who meets the scriptural requirements of a Pastor as found in 1 Timothy 3:1-7 and Titus 1:5-9, is eligible to be considered for the office of Pastor. The prospective pastor must have been ordained by a Southern Baptist Church before he can take office.

### Section 3

#### The Associate Pastor

Duties: The associate pastor will assist the pastor in duties as directed by the pastor. In the case where the office of the pastor becomes vacant, the associate pastor will assume all duties until an interim or a transitional pastor is called.

Selection: The Pastor and chairman of the Deacons and three (3) persons at large nominated by the nominating committee shall serve as the associate pastor search committee, keeping the church informed of their progress. The associate pastor must meet all the requirements of the pastor.

The procedures for calling and electing, conditions of employment, resignation and termination of an associate pastor are the same as for the pastor.

#### Section 4

##### The Minister of Music

Duties: The minister of music shall provide leadership for the establishment and development of the church music program including graded choirs. The music minister will keep a current job description in cooperation with the pastor and as a member of the ministerial staff be directly responsible to the pastor for carrying out primary ministries and other assigned duties.

Selection: The nominating committee shall nominate three members from the music program to be joined the personnel committee to form a selection committee. The procedures for the calling, conditions of employment, resignation and termination shall be the same those for calling the pastor.

#### Section 5

##### The Minister of Students (Youth)

Duties: The Minister of Students shall be responsible for the youth (Jr. High and High School) and the college and career programs of the church. This minister must be ordained and keep a current job description in cooperation with the pastor and as a member of the ministerial staff be directly accountable to the pastor for carrying out primary ministries and other assigned duties. The selection committee will be dissolved upon election of a person to this position.

Selection: The nominating committee shall nominate three members who are parents of youth or college age persons actively involved in the church to be joined to the personnel committee to form a selection committee. The procedures for the calling, conditions of employment, resignation and termination shall be the same those for calling the pastor. The selection committee will be dissolved upon election of a person to this position.

#### Section 6

##### The Minister to Children

Duties: The minister to children shall provide leadership for the establishment and development of the children program for grades birth – fifth grade. His will be responsible for a program of extended care of preschoolers during all times of worship. The minister to children will keep a current job description in cooperation with the pastor and personnel committee. This may be a paid position or filled by a volunteer who will be treated as staff in every way other than receiving a salary.

Selection: The nominating committee shall nominate three members who are parents of children birth – fifth grade and actively involved in the church to be joined to the personnel committee to form a selection committee. The procedures for the calling, conditions of employment, resignation and termination shall be the same those for calling the pastor. The selection committee will be dissolved upon election of a person to this position. This process will be used even if the position is filled with a volunteer.

## Section 7

### Deacons

#### A. Definition

1. In accordance with the meaning of the word and practices of the New Testament, Deacons are men who are servants of the Church.
2. There shall be three types of Deacons as follows: Active Deacons - who shall be elected and compose the Deacon body, whose duties shall be as here-in-after provided. Reserve Deacons - who shall be any member who has been ordained by this church or a church of like faith and order and is not presently serving as an active Deacon, and whose duties are defined here-in-after. Deacon Emeritus - Deacons whose service merit special honor. They are retired from active service and shall be known as Deacon Emeritus. The Deacon body will recommend these individuals to the church and they shall be elected by a majority of those present and voting.

#### B. Qualifications

The qualifications for the office of Deacons are as follows.

1. A Deacon must meet the spiritual qualifications as outlined in 1 Timothy 3: 8-13 and Acts 6: 3-7.
2. A Deacon must be actively involved in the life of the church.
3. A Deacon must be at least 21 years of age and have been a Christian for 5 years.
4. He must be an active member of this church for a period of two years before being considered as a candidate for the office of Deacon.
5. A Deacon's wife must be a member of the same church as that of her husband.
6. A Deacon shall not be one who has been divorced.
7. A Deacon shall regularly contribute to the financial program of this church and shall believe in and practice tithing his income.
8. A Deacon shall be a faithful steward of his time and shall regularly support by his attendance the ministries and regularly scheduled meetings of this church.
9. If any Deacon is found unfaithful to the above qualifications, a committee of the Deacon body shall be sent to give Christian warning. If the Deacon fails to take heed, upon recommendation from the Deacon body he shall be removed from office by a three-fourths vote at a regular business meeting by the church.

#### C. Election

A deacon shall be elected in the following manner.

1. Annually the active Deacons will recommend the size of the Deacon body to the church for the next year. When the need arises for additional Deacons, the Pastor and Deacons shall accept nominations for a period of thirty days from the church body.

2. A committee of the Deacon Body and the Pastor shall discuss the names submitted and check for qualifications. If no reason is given by anyone why a nominated man cannot serve, his name is put on a list to receive a Deacons questionnaire.
3. After examining the questionnaires, the Pastor and Chairman of the Deacons will personally meet with the nominee and his wife to explain what is expected of a Deacon. Those who feel they can meet the qualifications and that God is leading them to do are presented to the congregation to be elected as Deacons.
5. Deacons shall be ordained by the Church from its membership. The election for ordination shall be by secret ballot. Once a deacon has been ordained, he is always thereafter a deacon but, unless his ordination is withdrawn by the church, or he requests his ordination to be withdrawn.
6. Deacon candidates must have been active members of this church for two (2) years and will be elected by a three-fourths majority vote.
7. Should the number of candidates exceed the vacancies, those receiving the greatest number of votes above a three-fourths majority during the church vote will be elected so as to fill all vacancies.
8. Each candidate will be voted on an individual basis.

#### D. Terms of Office

1. The Deacons shall serve on a rotational basis. All new active deacons shall be elected for a three-year term unless elected to fill the unexpired term of an active Deacon that has withdrawn from the Deacon body.
2. The term of office for active Deacons shall follow the church calendar year, unless elected to fill an unexpired term.
3. After a full term has been served, an active Deacon will be ineligible for re-election for one year.
4. All Deacons will have to be re-elected to serve another active term.

#### E. Duties- Active Deacons

1. Deacons are to be zealous to guard the unity of the Spirit with the Church in the bonds of peace.
2. They are to establish and maintain the personal fraternal relations with, and the inspiring oversight of all the membership of the Church. Especially are they to seek and to know the physical needs and the moral and spiritual struggles of the brethren and sisters; and to serve the whole church in receiving, encouraging and developing all who are in such need.
3. The deacons shall actively minister in such fields as visitation, soul-winning, hospital calls, widow visitation, nursing homes, and other spiritual needs of the Church.
4. They shall assist the Pastor in administering the Ordinance of the Lord's Supper.
5. In council with the Pastor and by such methods as the Holy Spirit may direct in accordance with the New Testament teachings; they are to have oversight of the discipline of the Church of which shall be guided always by the teachings set forth in Matthew 18: 15-17.
5. In case of absence or inability of the Pastor, subject to advice from and conference with him, they will provide for pulpit supplies.
6. The whole body of the Deacons shall elect their officers, organizing a unit, and meet regularly. They may organize themselves into such committees as their wisdom may direct for efficiency of service.
7. The Deacon shall identify and guide the church in its benevolence ministry.

## F. Duties- Reserve Deacons

1. Although Reserve Deacons will not be assigned families, they shall minister in the fields of visitation, soul-winning, hospital calls, widows, nursing homes and other spiritual needs. They may attend the active Deacons meetings only by the request of the pastor or of the active Deacons for counsel, guidance, and assistance; however, they will have no authority to vote or hold office in this group.
2. They shall assist with the Ordinance of The Lord's Supper.
3. Deacons transferring membership from a church of like faith and order will, if they wish, be added to the reserve Deacon roll only after being counseled and recommended by the Deacons and being confirmed by the Church in a business meeting. He has to be an active member of this Church for one year and meet all above qualifications before becoming eligible as a reserve Deacon.

G. At no time shall any vote taken within the Deacon Body be considered as binding upon the Church or any of its organizations or committees, unless otherwise provided for by these by-laws.

## Article III STAFF MEMBERS

### Section I Ministerial Staff

- A. The term "ministerial staff" is defined as those elected employees of the church who preach, care, and or lead the ministry of the church. The church shall provide for such ministerial staff other than the pastor as required to fulfill the stated purpose of the church.
- B. All ministerial staff shall minister under the supervision of the pastor with the advisement (assistance) of the personnel committee. The pastor shall seek advice from the personnel committee and provide suggestions and recommendations to them for action.
- C. It will be the joint responsibility of the pastor and the personnel committee to recommend to the church all employment policy and job duties for all ministerial staff. This will include but not limited to job duties, benefits, salary, work hours, etc. The personnel committee will provide a Personnel Manual for all employees. The Personnel Manual will be approved by the church.
- D. Interim ministerial staff shall be called in the same way as their permanent counterpart. They shall have duties and compensation spelled out by the search committee upon election to the part-time position and have the same supervision as a permanent position.

### Section II Non-Ministerial Staff

- A. The church may hire non-ministerial staff employees to fill positions which have been specifically authorized by the church. It shall be the joint responsibility of the pastor

and the personnel committee to recommend to the church any and all employment policy and job duties of all non-ministerial staff. This will include but not limited to job duties, benefits, salary, work hours, etc.

- B. All non-ministerial staff will fall under the direct supervision of the pastor or his designated representative.
- C. Non-ministerial staff employees may voluntarily terminate their employment at any time without notice. However, a two week notice is preferable. They may also be discharged, for just cause, upon the recommendation of the personnel committee to the pastor.

## Article IV COMMITTEES /TEAMS

### Section 1 Standing Committees

The church will elect such standing committees and Ministry Teams as required to properly administer its program. These members are to be nominated by the nominating committee and elected at least annually by majority church vote at a regular church business meeting. All standing committees will observe a rotational order. One third will rotate off each year and be ineligible for re-election for one year unless they had been elected to fill an unexpired term.

Each standing committee will establish a rotational order within one month of the adoption of these bylaws and report the order to the nominating committee. The order as much as possible will follow the length of service, the longest serving rotating off first. Those selected for a one-year term will rotate off before the next calendar year. Those who have served three years or longer will rotate off within one month of the adoption of these bylaws.

Standing committees shall consist of six (6) members or larger if the church so orders. Ordinarily, no one individual shall serve as Chairman of more than one committee at one time or be on more than one standing committee at any given time. No committee shall have more than one deacon at a time as a member. Immediate family members will not be allowed to serve on the same committee. Immediate family member of church staff will not be able to serve on the stewardship committee or the personnel committee. The various standing committees shall implement and or recommend church policies in the areas indicated by each committee title and description. The nominating committee shall designate the chairman of each committee. If after rotation each year, no committee member is willing to serve as a chairman, the nominating committee will nominate a committee chairman as one of the two replaced in the rotational order.

#### A. Standing Committees:

##### a) Nominating Committee-

The purpose of this committee is to assist the church in selecting qualified persons for church leadership filled by volunteer workers other than paid staff, unless otherwise specified herein.

This committee shall be composed of 6 members who are familiar with the church membership, have the ability to recognize the abilities in the

lives of others, and understand the importance of those abilities. Newly elected members will take office after election in February of each year and rotate off at the end of January of their rotational order.

Persons considered for any such position shall first be approved by this committee before they are approached for recruitment. The nominating committee shall present annually to the church for election all who accept the invitation to serve.

The committee will keep track of all church committee resignations and any annual required rotations. Each year at the same time the committee, after rotations have been made and positions filled, will present to the church the entire list of all Sunday School teachers and other program leaders, officers, leaders, directors, and committee members to include position and year of election.

The church council shall nominate new members to the nominating committee each year. This shall be done in the month of February.

b) Stewardship Committee:

This committee shall have full responsibility for oversight of the financial affairs of the church. The committee should be made up of members that have the most education, experience and background to fulfill the obligations of membership, as well as the willingness to serve the church. The committee will develop and maintain a Financial Policy and Procedures Manual and recommend it as well as subsequent changes to the church for adoption. The committee shall have three areas of responsibility:

- i. Budget planning and administration: This involves development of the budget, presenting of the budget to the church for approval, and administering the budget so that monies are spent as authorized by the budget.
- ii. Stewardship Education: This involves an ongoing as well as an annual stewardship emphasis. It includes the promotion of the church budget to the church and explaining its meaning for the church. The purpose is to educate the church regarding the biblical teachings regarding the earning, spending, saving, giving, and investing of their income.
- iii. Accounting: The committee shall be responsible for establishing policies for accounting for all income to the church from the time it is received until all expenditures are reported to the church.

The chairman will be responsible for reporting all budget information to the church, as needed pertaining to church budget.

Any and all problems of any large concern will be brought forth to the church body as soon as it arises and explained to the church body at the next regularly scheduled business meeting by the chairman of the committee.

c) Personnel Committee-

This purpose of this committee is to assist the church in matters related to employed personnel administration, including those called by church action. The committee will select persons that are fully qualified and committed to the positions. Their responsibilities include such areas as determining staff needs, employment, salaries, benefits, policies, job descriptions, reviews, and bringing all recommendations to the proper committees.

The committee shall develop and maintain a Personnel Policy Manual approved by the church. The pastor will be the primary person administering the policies.

New members to the committee will be nominated by the nominating committee and elected by the church-in a regular business meeting.

Other responsibilities:

- \* Prepare and recommend annual budget for church staff to the stewardship committee
- \* Study and recommend the need for church staff positions
- \* Recruit and interview all non-ministerial new employees as directed by church
- \* Prepare and maintain church staff job descriptions
- \* Define reporting relationships among the staff
- \* Council with each staff member at least once per year concerning duties, working conditions, compensation, and other matters

d) Building and Grounds Committee:

This committee is responsible for the for proper maintenance of all church property including building repair and maintenance, and for the purchase and care of equipment and supplies needed to maintain the church buildings and grounds properly.

Special "clean-up" work days may be held and coordinated by this committee before major holidays and special events.

This committee shall present a proposal to the stewardship committee annually in anticipation of needs for the coming year. Where the life expectancy of equipment can be anticipated the stewardship committee needs to be advised as to cost of replacement and life expectancy.

When repairs require an outside vendor exceeding \$2,000.00 the bid process should be observed that is found in Article IX, Section II, 2.

This committee may choose to keep the lawn of the church properly maintained in either of three ways:

1. Volunteers. If this is method is chosen, the committee will have full responsibility for enlisting, training, and supervising the volunteers.
2. Through a job position developed in coordination with the personnel committee and approved by the church.

3. Through a contract with an individual or a company. In such cases the following is to be followed:
  - (a) A minimum of three (3) bids must be received.
  - (b) Granting of the contract shall be by the building and grounds committee after due diligence in the selection process.
  - (c) The church must approve the total amount of the contract.
  - (d) Contracts shall be solicited during the month of February of a year and run for eight (8) consecutive months.
  - (e) The contract shall cover the proper maintenance of lawn and shrubs.

e) Missions Committee:

This committee seeks to discover possibilities for all missions projects, share findings with church program organizations and serves the church in establishing and conducting such mission's projects as may be assigned to it.

f) Ad Hoc Committee:

Appointed or selected to serve in a particular way for a limited period of time. They are automatically dissolved as soon as their assigned functions are completed. They may be appointed by the pastor, or elected from the floor, as the pastor decides, except that the Pastor Selection Committee and Building Committee are always to be selected by vote of the church in business meetings. When the pastor appoints an ad hoc committee, it is expected that he will consult with the Nomination Committee if time permits.

g) Transportation Committee:

Election:

This committee will be composed of six (6) members nominated by the nominating committee and elected by the church.

Purpose of the committee:

This committee will supervise all transportation provided by the church.

Specific Duties:

1. Develop and administer policies for use and maintenance of all vehicles owned and operated by the church.
2. Submit an annual budget request to the Stewardship Committee of the church each year for the following year
3. Develop policies for rental of transportation when needed by the church.
4. Develop guidelines for use of volunteered transportation used by the church. For example: An individual volunteer uses their personal vehicle to transport individuals on behalf of the church.
5. Enlist and supervise drivers for the vehicles owned and operated by the church. Make sure the drivers are listed with the church insurance company.
6. Supervise the use of the church owned vehicles and administer all policies regarding their use.
7. Provide a report to the church periodically regarding the miles traveled and the use of the vehicles.
8. When vehicles owned by the church need replacement, this committee shall research the best alternative and make recommendation to the church for a specific replacement and or additions.

All committee members' names shall be posted in the church office at the beginning of each New Year.

## B. Ministry Teams

1. A Ministry Team is composed of a Team Leader nominated by the church nominating committee and elected by the church. Team members will be enlisted, instructed, and directed by the Team Leader. The Team Leader may make request of the Stewardship Committee for funds each calendar year for activities of the Team. A team leader may be the team leader of only one team at a time.
2. Standing Teams:
  - a. Usher Team. The Team Leader will be elected by the church and serve at all worship services to receive the offering, greet people as they arrive and depart and meet the needs of those in attendance in any way possible. They will receive the offerings in the services and work with the Stewardship Committee to assist in counting the offering as needed. The Team Leader is responsible for enlisting, training, instructing, and training the Usher Team.
  - b. Kitchen Team: The Team Leader will be elected by the church and serve by providing food services to the church when the entire church is engaged in a social activity requiring food. The team is responsible for keeping the kitchen stocked with supplies for all church activities. They are responsible for cooking and serving our Thanksgiving dinner and the 4<sup>th</sup> of July celebration in particular. They will fix beverages for all church wide functions. They will also clean up after such church functions with the help of others.
  - c. Special Events Team: The Team Leader will be elected by the church and serve by leading the following events: VBS, Fall Festival, 4<sup>th</sup> of July event, and other Church Wide Activities. The Team Leader is responsible for providing all information necessary to promote the events and providing an annual budget request to the Stewardship Committee for the next year's activities.
  - d. Decorating Team: The Team Leader will be elected by the church and serve by providing decoration for the Sanctuary and will be responsible for decorating the church for special holidays and removing said decorations and storing all items after the holidays. The Team Leader will provide a budget request to the Stewardship Committee prior to the coming year.
  - e. Women's Ministry Team: The Team Leader will be elected by the church and serve by providing leadership to the women of the church for special biblical studies, retreats, and other disciple and spiritually enriching events. The Team Leader will provide a budget request to the Stewardship Committee prior to the coming year.
  - f. Men's Ministry Team: The Team Leader will be elected by the church and serve by providing leadership to the men of the church for special biblical studies, retreats, and other disciple and spiritually enriching events. The Team Leader will provide a budget request to the Stewardship Committee prior to the coming year.
  - g. Technology Team: The Technology Team is composed of a Team Leader nominated by the church nominating committee and elected by the church. Team members will be enlisted, instructed, and directed by the Team Leader. The Team Leader may make request of the Stewardship Committee for funds each calendar year for activities of the Team.

This team will purchase and maintain all computers and software, sound equipment, video equipment and supplies for this equipment.
  - h. Baptismal Team: The Team Leader will be elected by the church and serve by enlisting a team of volunteers to provide for the ministry of assistance for all baptismal services. This includes making sure the baptistery is filled and at the

right temperature, robes and towels are cleaned and stored properly, as well as assisting candidates in the preparation for baptism.

- i. Christian Care Team: The Team leader will be elected by the church and serve by enlisting a team of volunteers to provide for the care of families in case of death. Usually this will involve providing food at their home or at the church. The Team Leader will provide a budget request to the Stewardship Committee prior to the coming year.
- j. Senior Adult Ministry Team: The Team leader will be elected by the church and serve by enlisting a team of volunteers to provide a ministry to the senior adults of the church. The Team Leader will provide a budget request to the Stewardship Committee prior to the coming year. The Team leader will provide the church council with dates of events for the coming year.

## Article V **CHURCH PROGRAMS**

The church shall organize to fulfill the purpose of the church as defined in Article II of the Church Constitution, All church organizations are responsible to the church body and function under its control.

### Section 1

#### The Sunday School Program

1. The Sunday School Director and all Sunday School teachers shall be elected annually to serve the following year. The term of service shall be from January – December.
2. The Sunday School Director shall aggressively lead the Sunday School to reach people and to teach the Bible to win people to a saving knowledge of Christ and to live a life of discipleship.
3. The Sunday School Director shall have the power to organize the Sunday School in ways consistent with the aims of the organization with the approval of the pastor.

### Section 2

#### The WMU Program

1. The WMU Director shall be elected annually to serve the following year.
2. The WMU Director shall lead the church in an aggressive program of mission education and mission action for women all age groups and young girls.
3. The WUM Director shall have the power to organize the WMU in ways that are consistent with the aims of the program with the approval of the pastor.

### Section 3

#### The Music Program

1. The Music Organization will be lead by the Minister of Music called by the church.
2. The Minister of Music shall lead the church to have a program of music training and performance for all age groups to the end that we may better worship our Lord through music.
3. The Minister of Music shall have the power to organize the church in ways that are consistent with the aims of the program with the approval of the pastor.

### Section 4

## Brotherhood Program

1. The Brotherhood Director shall be elected annually to serve the following year.
2. The Brotherhood Director shall lead the church in an aggressive program of mission education and mission action for men all age groups and young boys.
3. The Brotherhood Director shall have the power to organize the church in ways that are consistent with the aims of the program with the approval of the pastor.

### Article VI

## **OTHER OFFICERS**

### Section 1

#### Church Clerk

The Church Clerk shall be elected annually and shall keep the minutes of business meetings of the church and shall preserve, in a safe place, all church records, documents, bonds, and valuables and shall keep a correct roll of the church membership, with a manner of admission and dismissal.

The Clerk shall submit to the church at a regular business meeting a statistical report of the work which will prove suitable to serve, with alterations, as the annual letter to the association, in the time frame of the association's calendar year.

### Section 2

#### Assistant Clerk

The Assistant Clerk shall be elected by the church annually and shall act as the clerk in all cases where the clerk is unable to attend.

If the Church Clerk wishes to keep minutes and other valuable papers at home the church will purchase him/her a fire proof safe if they do not already have one.

### Section 3

#### Treasurer

The treasurer shall be elected annually by the church body at a regular business meeting. It shall be the duty of the treasurer to receive and disburse all funds, paying with check all bills for goods and services. Treasurer and one other person will sign all checks and as specified in the Financial Policies and Procedures Manual.

To provide the church at all regular business meetings with a report of all receipts and disbursements, showing the balance both of cash on hand and other assets and of all outstanding obligations. The treasure report and records can be audited annually by the trustees or a public accountant. The treasurer shall be bonded, the church paying for the bond. The treasurer shall render the annual financial report at the end of each fiscal year. He/she shall serve as an ex-officio member on the church budget and finance committee. All books, records, and accounts shall be considered the property of the church.

### Section 4

#### Assistant Treasurer

The assistant treasurer shall be elected by the church annually to serve in the treasurer's absence or in the event of his/her resignation.

## Section 5 Trustees

The trustees shall observe a rotational system like committees. The nominating committee shall nominate and the church shall elect annually one member to serve as a Trustee to replace the Trustee that rotated off. A new Trustee must have been active members for at least five years. Vacancies may be filled at any time with (new trustee) filling any unexpired term of the one whose vacancy is being filled. Having served as a trustee during a previous term will not disqualify a member for re-election.

The Trustees shall, as provided by law and the action of the church, hold in trust the title of all property of the church and shall represent the church in all matters of legal responsibility regarding the purchase, improvements and disposal of church property. They shall execute all legal papers relating to the church and the community as the church may direct. 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 such action. Neither shall they have any control over the use of church property except by vote of the church.

They will make recommendations to the church pertaining to auditing the treasurer's books.

They will have full responsibility for evaluating the insurance program of the church annually and searching for the best arrangements for the church. The insurance program of the church should cover all reasonable liabilities including financial bonds on those who handle money for the church.

## Article VII **CHURCH MEETINGS**

### Section I Regular

The Church shall provide worship on Sunday morning and evening, Sunday School on Sunday morning, Prayer meeting on Wednesday evening, and such other regular meetings as the nature of the organizations may require.

### Section II Special

The church shall sponsor such special services and meetings as it desires. All types of alcoholic beverages are strictly prohibited on all church properties.

### Section III Business Meetings

- A. The church shall have regular monthly business meetings. When possible the meetings shall be on the third Wednesday of the month.
- B. A special business meeting may be called by the pastor or by the deacons or twenty-five members, with the knowledge of the pastor, at any regular general meeting time (Sunday morning or evening worship, or Wednesday night prayer service), provided it is announced at least three preceding regular general meetings, except in an extreme emergency. When announcing the special business meeting, the business to be handled must be announced and only that business shall be handled at the time of the special business meeting.

- C. Any non emergency expenditure exceeding a budget line item shall be approved by the church.
- D. A quorum shall be constituted of 50 members.
- E. Robert' Rules of Order will be used as a guide for any business session.

## Article VIII **CHURCH MINISTRIES**

Believing that ministry is a vital role of the church, we seek to enable members of the church to institute and maintain bona fide ministries of the church. A ministry is defined as an effort to meet spiritual, physical, or emotional needs of individuals in the name of Christ that is not being addressed in another way by the church.

### Section 1

Types of ministries:

Ac hoc – those that are project orientated and last only a few days or weeks and then terminate.

On-going – those that are instituted and continue over a span of years.

### Section 2 – Operation

Both types of ministry will be self organizing but accountable to the church. Each ministry type must make a written proposal for approval. The proposal should include a name for the ministry, the name of the person responsible for organizing the effort, the purpose of the ministry, a clearly stated objective, a way of evaluating the effectiveness of the ministry, and a statement explaining how the ministry fits with the purpose of the church and meets needs the church is not currently meeting. The proposal of on-going types of ministries must include a plan of termination or dissolution. Both types of ministries must coordinate their actions with the church calendar through the church council. On-going ministries must present an annual calendar by October for the following year. Both types of ministries can make use of church resources upon request and approval of the pastor. The pastor or his designee will serve as general supervisor of each ministry.

### Section 3

Approval

A. Ad hoc ministries may, after review, be approved by the pastor and deacons. No monies may be given from the church budget to support this type of ministry. A special offering, however, may be received with the approval of the pastor and deacons. The ministry must make a report to the church at its conclusion indicating its purpose and an evaluation as to its success.

B. On-going ministries of the church must be approved by the church upon recommendation of the pastor and deacons. Once approved, these ministries will be expected to make informational reports to the church periodically. The ministry may make a request to the stewardship committee annually for budget support.

Any ministry of the church may be terminated upon an affirmative vote of the church body.

Article IX  
**GENERAL POLICIES**

Section I

Handling of Offerings

1. Offering envelopes and money which are collected during Sunday School . as well as offering envelopes and monies which are collected during the offering portion of any worship service shall be cared for as specified in the Financial Policies and Procedures Manual.
2. The Stewardship Committee is responsible for developing a system of counting the money received, depositing the money in the bank and providing a weekly report on the offering for the pastor and treasurer, and delivering the empty offering envelopes to the financial secretary.
3. Special Offerings may be taken without special vote of the church business upon recommendation of the pastor and/or consensus of the deacons.
4. All members of the church who are authorized to count or disperse the monies of the church shall be bonded as per the Financial Polices and Procedure Manual.

Section II

Miscellaneous Policies

1. Those who drive the vehicles of the church shall have their names and drivers licenses submitted to the insurance company covering the vehicles of the church.
2. Any time the church signs a contract for service including maintenance, construction, insurance, or any other like contract, three bids much be secured to insure competitive pricing and the selection brought to the church for approval.
3. In all cases when the pulpit is filled by someone other than the pastor, he should subscribe to all the doctrines and beliefs of this church.

Section III

Use of Property

All facilities of the church shall be used freely at any and all times for any and all functions of the church as long as all activities are in line with the doctrinal and biblical position of River Road Baptist Church and shall not be considered exclusive property of anyone or any one group. Church members may use the church facilities if the use does not conflict with the scheduled use by the church or the purposes of the church. The pastor and chairman of deacons must approve all uses of the church facilities by church members. Church use for weddings and receptions is covered by the wedding policy on file. The wedding and receptions policies are to be developed by the pastor and ministerial staff and approved by the deacons.

Section IV

Church Year

The church year shall be January 1 through December 31. The church fiscal year shall be January 1 through December 31. All programs of the church year shall run July 1 through June 30.