

EMMANUEL BAPTIST CHURCH
Constitution and Bylaws

Final Version – Dec 4, 2022

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Emmanuel Baptist Church Constitution

We declare and establish this Constitution to preserve and secure the principles of our faith and to govern the Body of Christ with grace and order. This Constitution will preserve the liberties of the movement of the Christ-life in and through each church member and the freedom of action of this body in relation to other churches.

Article I Church Name

This Body of Christ followers shall be known as Emmanuel Baptist Church. The primary offices will be located at 3252 E James Lee Blvd, Crestview, FL 32536.

Article II Mission Statement

Emmanuel exists to lead people in a growing relationship with Jesus Christ.

Article III Our Purpose Statement

Because Emmanuel exists to lead people in a growing relationship with Jesus Christ, the church will exercise that mission through:

1. Encountering God in Worship
2. Connecting with others through spiritual formation
3. Serving the world with the desire for 'global' impact

Article IV Emmanuel Baptist Church Statement of Faith

The core beliefs of the membership of Emmanuel Baptist Church are:

I. The Scriptures

The Holy Bible was written by men divinely inspired and is God's revelation of Himself to man. It is a perfect treasure of divine instruction. It has God for its author, salvation for its end, and truth, without any mixture of error, for its matter. Therefore, all Scripture is totally true and trustworthy. It reveals the principles by which God judges us, and therefore is, and will remain to the end of the world, the true center of Christian union, and the supreme standard by which all human conduct, creeds, and religious opinions should be tried. All Scripture is a testimony to Christ, who is Himself the focus of divine revelation.

Exodus 24:4; Deuteronomy 4:1-2; 17:19; Joshua 8:34; Psalms 19:7-10; 119:11,89,105,140; Isaiah 34:16; 40:8; Jeremiah 15:16; 36:1-32; Matthew 5:17-18; 22:29; Luke 21:33; 24:44-46; John 5:39; 16:13-15; 17:17; Acts 2:16ff; 17:11; Romans 15:4; 16:25-26; 2 Timothy 3:15-17; Hebrews 1:1-2; 4:12; 1 Peter 1:25; 2 Peter 1:19-21.

II. God

There is one and only one living and true 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 perfections. God is all powerful and all knowing; and His perfect knowledge extends to all things, past, present, and future, including the future decisions of His free creatures. To Him we owe the highest love, reverence, and obedience. The eternal triune God reveals Himself to us as Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, with distinct personal 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 purposes of His grace. He is all powerful, all knowing, 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; 2:7; Exodus 3:14; 6:2-3; 15:11ff.; 20:1ff.; Leviticus 22:2; Deuteronomy 6:4; 32:6; 1 Chronicles 29:10; Psalm 19:1-3; Isaiah 43:3,15; 64:8; Jeremiah 10:10; 17:13; Matthew 6:9ff.; 7:11; 23:9; 28:19; Mark 1:9-11; John 4:24; 5:26; 14:6-13; 17:1-8; Acts 1:7; Romans 8:14-15; 1 Corinthians 8:6; Galatians 4:6; Ephesians 4:6; Colossians 1:15; 1 Timothy 1:17; Hebrews 11:6; 12:9; 1 Peter 1:17; 1 John 5:7.

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 human nature with its demands and necessities and identifying Himself completely with mankind yet without sin. He honored the divine law by His personal obedience, and in His substitutionary 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 One Mediator, fully God, fully man, 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.

Genesis 18:1ff.; Psalms 2:7ff.; 110:1ff.; Isaiah 7:14; 53; Matthew 1:18-23; 3:17; 8:29; 11:27; 14:33; 16:16,27; 17:5; 27; 28:1-6,19; Mark 1:1; 3:11; Luke 1:35; 4:41; 22:70; 24:46; John 1:1-18,29; 10:30,38; 11:25-27; 12:44-50; 14:7-11; 16:15-16,28; 17:1-5, 21-22; 20:1-20,28; Acts 1:9; 2:22-24; 7:55-56; 9:4-5,20; Romans 1:3-4; 3:23-26; 5:6-21; 8:1-3,34; 10:4; 1 Corinthians 1:30; 2:2; 8:6; 15:1-8,24-28; 2 Corinthians 5:19-21; 8:9; Galatians 4:4-5; Ephesians 1:20; 3:11; 4:7-10; Philippians 2:5-11; Colossians 1:13-22; 2:9; 1 Thessalonians 4:14-18; 1 Timothy 2:5-6; 3:16; Titus 2:13-14; Hebrews 1:1-3; 4:14-15; 7:14-28; 9:12-15,24-28; 12:2; 13:8; 1 Peter 2:21-25; 3:22; 1 John 1:7-9; 3:2; 4:14-15; 5:9; 2 John 7-9; Revelation 1:13-16; 5:9-14; 12:10-11; 13:8; 19:16.

C. God the Holy Spirit

The Holy Spirit is the Spirit of God, fully divine. He inspired holy men of old to write the Scriptures. Through illumination He enables men to understand truth. He exalts Christ. He convicts men of sin, of righteousness, and of judgment. He calls men to the Saviour, and effects regeneration. At the moment of regeneration, He baptizes every believer into the Body of Christ. He cultivates Christian character, comforts believers, and bestows the spiritual gifts by which they serve God through His church. He seals the believer unto the day of final redemption. His presence in the Christian is the guarantee that God will bring the believer into the fullness of the stature of Christ. He enlightens and empowers the believer and the church in worship, evangelism, and service.

Genesis 1:2; Judges 14:6; Job 26:13; Psalms 51:11; 139:7ff.; Isaiah 61:1-3; Joel 2:28-32; Matthew 1:18; 3:16; 4:1; 12:28-32; 28:19; Mark 1:10,12; Luke 1:35; 4:1,18-19; 11:13; 12:12; 24:49; John 4:24; 14:16-17,26; 15:26; 16:7-14; Acts 1:8; 2:1-4,38; 4:31; 5:3; 6:3; 7:55; 8:17,39; 10:44; 13:2; 15:28; 16:6; 19:1-6; Romans 8:9-11,14-16,26-27; 1 Corinthians 2:10-14; 3:16; 12:3-11,13; Galatians 4:6; Ephesians 1:13-14; 4:30; 5:18; 1 Thessalonians 5:19; 1 Timothy 3:16; 4:1; 2 Timothy 1:14; 3:16; Hebrews 9:8,14; 2 Peter 1:21; 1 John 4:13; 5:6-7; Revelation 1:10; 22:17.

III. Man

God wonderfully and immutably creates each person as male or female. These two distinct, complementary genders together reflect the image and nature of God. Man is the special creation of God, made in His own image. He created them male and female as the crowning work of His creation. The gift of gender is thus part of the goodness of God's creation; rejection of one's biological sex is a rejection of the image of God within that person. In the beginning man was innocent of sin and was 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 inherit a nature and an environment inclined toward sin. Therefore, as soon as they are capable of moral action, they 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 person of every race possesses full dignity and is worthy of respect and Christian love.

Human life is of inestimable worth in all its dimensions, including pre-born babies, the aged, the physically or mentally challenged, and every other stage or condition from conception through natural death. The church is called to defend, protect, and value all human life.

Genesis 1:26-30; 2:5,7,18-22; 3; 9:6; Psalms 1; 8:3-6; 32:1-5; 51:5; Isaiah 6:5; Jeremiah 17:5; Matthew 16:26; Acts 17:26-31; Romans 1:19-32; 3:10-18,23; 5:6,12,19; 6:6; 7:14-25; 8:14-18,29; 1 Corinthians 1:21-31; 15:19,21-22; Ephesians 2:1-22; Colossians 1:21-22; 3:9-11.

IV. Salvation

Salvation involves the redemption of the whole man and is offered freely to all who accept Jesus Christ as Lord and Saviour, who by His own blood obtained eternal redemption for the believer. In its broadest sense salvation includes regeneration, justification, sanctification, and glorification. There is no salvation apart from personal faith in Jesus Christ as Lord.

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.

B. 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 unto a relationship of peace and favor with God.

C. 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 maturity through the presence and power of the Holy Spirit dwelling in him. Growth in grace should continue throughout the regenerate person's life.

D. Glorification is the culmination of salvation and is the final blessed and abiding state of the redeemed.

Genesis 3:15; Exodus 3:14-17; 6:2-8; Matthew 1:21; 4:17; 16:21-26; 27:22-28:6; Luke 1:68-69; 2:28-32; John 1:11-14,29; 3:3-21,36; 5:24; 10:9,28-29;15:1-16; 17:17; Acts 2:21; 4:12; 15:11; 16:30-31; 17:30-31; 20:32; Romans 1:16-18; 2:4; 3:23-25; 4:3ff.; 5:8-10; 6:1-23; 8:1-18,29-39; 10:9-10,13; 13:11-14; 1 Corinthians 1:18,30; 6:19-20; 15:10; 2 Corinthians 5:17-20; Galatians 2:20; 3:13; 5:22-25; 6:15; Ephesians 1:7; 2:8-22; 4:11-16; Philippians 2:12-13; Colossians 1:9-22; 3:1ff.; 1 Thessalonians 5:23-24; 2 Timothy 1:12; Titus 2:11-14; Hebrews 2:1-3; 5:8-9; 9:24-28; 11:1-12:8,14; James 2:14-26; 1 Peter 1:2-23; 1 John 1:6-2:11; Revelation 3:20; 21:1-22:5.

V. God's Purpose of Grace

Election is the gracious purpose of God, according to which He regenerates, justifies, 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 the 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, and 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; Exodus 19:5-8; 1 Samuel 8:4-7,19-22; Isaiah 5:1-7; Jeremiah 31:31ff.; Matthew 16:18-19; 21:28-45; 24:22,31; 25:34; Luke 1:68-79;2:29-32; 19:41-44; 24:44-48; John 1:12-14; 3:16; 5:24; 6:44-45,65; 10:27-29; 15:16; 17:6,12,17-18; Acts 20:32; Romans 5:9-10; 8:28-39; 10:12-15; 11:5-7,26-36; 1 Corinthians 1:1-2; 15:24-28; Ephesians 1:4-23; 2:1-10; 3:1-11; Colossians 1:12-14; 2 Thessalonians 2:13-14; 2 Timothy 1:12; 2:10,19; Hebrews 11:39-12:2; James 1:12; 1 Peter 1:2-5,13; 2:4-10; 1 John 1:7-9; 2:19; 3:2.

VI. The Church

A New Testament church of the Lord Jesus Christ is an autonomous local congregation of baptized believers, associated by covenant in the faith and fellowship of the gospel; observing the two ordinances of Christ, governed by His laws, exercising the gifts, rights, and privileges invested in them by His Word, and seeking to extend the gospel to the ends of the earth. Each congregation operates under the Lordship of Christ through democratic processes. In such a congregation each member is responsible and accountable to Christ as Lord. Its scriptural officers are pastors and deacons. While both men and women are gifted for service in the church, the office of pastor is limited to men as qualified by Scripture. The New Testament speaks also of the church as the Body of Christ which includes all of the redeemed of all the ages, believers from every tribe, and tongue, and people, and nation.

Matthew 16:15-19; 18:15-20; Acts 2:41-42,47; 5:11-14; 6:3-6; 13:1-3; 14:23,27; 15:1-30; 16:5; 20:28; Romans 1:7; 1 Corinthians 1:2; 3:16; 5:4-5; 7:17; 9:13-14;12; Ephesians 1:22-23; 2:19-22; 3:8-11,21; 5:22-32; Philippians 1:1; Colossians 1:18; 1 Timothy 2:9-14; 3:1-15; 4:14; Hebrews 11:39-40; 1 Peter 5:1-4; Revelation 2-3; 21:2-3.

XI. Evangelism and Missions

It is the duty and privilege of every follower of Christ and of every church of the Lord Jesus Christ to endeavor to make disciples of all nations. The new birth of man's spirit by God's Holy Spirit means the birth of love for others. Missionary effort on the part of all rests thus upon a spiritual necessity of the regenerate life and is expressly and repeatedly commanded in the teachings of Christ. The Lord Jesus Christ has commanded the preaching of the gospel to all nations. It is the duty of every child of God to

seek constantly to win the lost to Christ by verbal witness undergirded by a Christian lifestyle, and by other methods in harmony with the gospel of Christ.

Genesis 12:1-3; Exodus 19:5-6; Isaiah 6:1-8; Matthew 9:37-38; 10:5-15; 13:18-30, 37-43; 16:19; 22:9-10; 24:14; 28:18-20; Luke 10:1-18; 24:46-53; John 14:11-12; 15:7-8,16; 17:15; 20:21; Acts 1:8; 2; 8:26-40; 10:42-48; 13:2-3; Romans 10:13-15; Ephesians 3:1-11; 1 Thessalonians 1:8; 2 Timothy 4:5; Hebrews 2:1-3; 11:39-12:2; 1 Peter 2:4-10; Revelation 22:17.

XIII. Stewardship

God is the source of all blessings, temporal and spiritual; all that we have and are we owe to Him. Christians have a spiritual debtorship to the whole world, a holy trusteeship in the gospel, and a binding stewardship in their possessions. They are therefore under obligation to serve Him with their time, talents, and material possessions; and should recognize all these as entrusted to them to use for the glory of God and for helping others. According to the Scriptures, Christians should contribute of their means cheerfully, regularly, systematically, proportionately, and liberally for the advancement of the Redeemer's cause on earth.

Genesis 14:20; Leviticus 27:30-32; Deuteronomy 8:18; Malachi 3:8-12; Matthew 6:1-4,19-21; 19:21; 23:23; 25:14-29; Luke 12:16-21,42; 16:1-13; Acts 2:44-47; 5:1-11; 17:24-25; 20:35; Romans 6:6-22; 12:1-2; 1 Corinthians 4:1-2; 6:19-20; 12; 16:1-4; 2 Corinthians 8-9; 12:15; Philippians 4:10-19; 1 Peter 1:18-19.

XV. The Christian and the Social Order

All Christians are under obligation to seek to make the will of Christ supreme in our own lives and in human society. Means and methods used for the improvement of society and the establishment of righteousness among men can be truly and permanently helpful only when they are rooted in the regeneration of the individual by the saving grace of God in Jesus Christ. In the spirit of Christ, Christians should oppose racism, every form of greed, selfishness, and vice, and all forms of sexual immorality, including adultery, homosexuality, and pornography. We should work to provide for the orphaned, the needy, the abused, the aged, the helpless, and the sick. We should speak on behalf of the unborn and contend for the sanctity of all human life from conception to natural death. Every Christian should seek to bring industry, government, and society as a whole under the sway of the principles of righteousness, truth, and brotherly love. In order to promote these ends Christians should be ready to work with all men of good will in any good cause, always being careful to act in the spirit of love without compromising their loyalty to Christ and His truth.

Exodus 20:3-17; Leviticus 6:2-5; Deuteronomy 10:12; 27:17; Psalm 101:5; Micah 6:8; Zechariah 8:16; Matthew 5:13-16,43-48; 22:36-40; 25:35; Mark 1:29-34; 2:3ff.; 10:21; Luke 4:18-21; 10:27-37; 20:25; John 15:12; 17:15; Romans 12-14; 1 Corinthians 5:9-10; 6:1-7; 7:20-24; 10:23-11:1; Galatians 3:26-28; Ephesians 6:5-9; Colossians 3:12-17; 1 Thessalonians 3:12; Philemon; James 1:27; 2:8.

XVII. Religious Liberty

God alone is Lord of the conscience, and He has left it free from the doctrines and commandments of men which are contrary to His Word or not contained in it. Church and state should be separate. The state owes to every church protection and full freedom in the pursuit of its spiritual ends. In providing for such freedom no ecclesiastical group or denomination should be favored by the state more than others. Civil government being ordained of God, it is the duty of Christians to render loyal obedience thereto in all things not contrary to the revealed will of God. The church should not resort to civil power to carry on its work. The gospel of Christ contemplates spiritual means alone for the pursuit of its ends. The state has no right to impose penalties for religious opinions of any kind. The state has no right to impose taxes for

the support of any form of religion. A free church in a free state is the Christian ideal, and this implies the right of free and unhindered access to God on the part of all men, and the right to form and propagate opinions in the sphere of religion without interference by the civil power.

Genesis 1:27; 2:7; Matthew 6:6-7,24; 16:26; 22:21; John 8:36; Acts 4:19-20; Romans 6:1-2; 13:1-7; Galatians 5:1,13; Philippians 3:20; 1 Timothy 2:1-2; James 4:12; 1 Peter 2:12-17; 3:11-17; 4:12-19.

XVIII. The Family

God has ordained the family as the foundational institution of human society. It is composed of persons related to one another by marriage, blood, or adoption.

Marriage is the uniting of one man and one woman in covenant commitment for a lifetime. It is God's unique gift to reveal the union between Christ and His church and to provide for the man and the woman in marriage the framework for intimate companionship, the channel of sexual expression according to biblical standards, and the means for procreation of the human race.

The husband and wife are of equal worth before God since both are created in God's image. The marriage relationship models the way God relates to His people. A husband is to love his wife as Christ loved the church. He has the God-given responsibility to provide for, to protect, and to lead his family. A wife is to submit herself graciously to the servant leadership of her husband even as the church willingly submits to the headship of Christ. She, being in the image of God as is her husband and thus equal to him, has the God-given responsibility to respect her husband and to serve as his helper in managing the household and nurturing the next generation.

Children, from the moment of conception, are a blessing and heritage from the Lord. Parents are to demonstrate to their children God's pattern for marriage. Parents are to teach their children spiritual and moral values and to lead them, through consistent lifestyle example and loving discipline, to make choices based on biblical truth. Children are to honor and obey their parents.

Genesis 1:26-28; 2:15-25; 3:1-20; Exodus 20:12; Deuteronomy 6:4-9; Joshua 24:15; 1 Samuel 1:26-28; Psalms 51:5; 78:1-8; 127; 128; 139:13-16; Proverbs 1:8; 5:15-20; 6:20-22; 12:4; 13:24; 14:1; 17:6; 18:22; 22:6,15; 23:13-14; 24:3; 29:15,17; 31:10-31; Ecclesiastes 4:9-12; 9:9; Malachi 2:14-16; Matthew 5:31-32; 18:2-5; 19:3-9; Mark 10:6-12; Romans 1:18-32; 1 Corinthians 7:1-16; Ephesians 5:21-33; 6:1-4; Colossians 3:18-21; 1 Timothy 5:8,14; 2 Timothy 1:3-5; Titus 2:3-5; Hebrews 13:4; 1 Peter 3:1-7.

The core beliefs of Emmanuel and her Statement of Faith is an extract of the Baptist Faith and Message, 2000.

Article V Emmanuel Baptist Church Membership Covenant

The following membership covenant may be revised by the EBC Deacons as required without requiring formal revision to this Constitution.

I will serve the ministry of the church by

- discovering my gifts and talents
- personally pursuing growth in Christ
- developing a servant's heart

(1 Peter 4:10; 2 Timothy 2:15; Philippians 2:3-4, 7)

I will protect the unity of my church by

- acting in love toward other members
- refusing to gossip rather continually encouraging others,
- following leaders as they follow Christ.

(Romans 14:19; 1 Peter 1:22, Ephesians 4:29, Hebrews 13:17)

I will share the responsibility of my church by

- serving the church in ministry
- praying for its growth
- helping create a contagious atmosphere of friendliness,
- inviting the unchurched to attend.

(1 Thessalonians 1:1-2; Luke 14:23, Romans 15:7)

I will support the testimony of my church by

- my presence in faithful attendance,
- pursuing godliness in my relationship with Christ,
- supporting its vision through my giving,
- personally investing in others within the church and also those who do not yet know Christ.

(Hebrews 10:25; Philippians 1:27, 1 Corinthians 16:2, Ephesians 3:20)

Article VI Ordinances

Section 1 Baptism

A person who receives Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior by personal faith and who indicates a commitment to follow Christ as Lord will be received for baptism. Baptism will be by immersion in water, and it will be administered by a pastor and may include other participants authorized by the pastor.

Section 2 The Lord's Supper

The Lord's Supper is a symbolic act of obedience whereby members of the church (Body of Christ), through partaking of the bread and fruit of the vine, commemorate the death of Jesus Christ and anticipate His second coming. This ordinance will be observed in any gathering deemed appropriate by the pastor(s).

Article VII Polity and Relationships

The governance of this church is vested in the body of believers who compose it. All internal groups and teams created by and empowered by the church shall report to and be held accountable to the church membership unless specific action is taken by church membership as outlined in the bylaws.

Article VIII Affiliation

Emmanuel Baptist Church (EBC) is autonomous and maintains the right to govern its own affairs, independent of any denominational control. However, the Scripture is clear that the local church should seek voluntary fellowship with other New Testament churches. This association is to provide help and encouragement while working together as Christ directs. This is a voluntary association that in no way involves the surrender of the individual church's freedom or dependence on God.

EBC has chosen to affiliate itself through cooperation with the Southern Baptist Convention, Florida Baptist Convention, and with the Okaloosa Baptist Association. We maintain this relationship, believing that it is God's will to do so. Fundamental to this affiliation is the understanding that the Southern Baptist Convention is a fellowship of autonomous, New Testament churches that choose to work together to

further the name and the renown of the living God. Voluntary contributions to local, state, national, and international mission's projects support this affiliation. Support may also be provided by sending messengers to the associational, state, and annual convention for voting on doctrinal, ethical, and procedural positions and by cooperative efforts in missional objectives.

Article IX Conducting Church Affairs

The conduct of the affairs of EBC not addressed in the Articles of Incorporation or this Constitution will be in accordance with the Bylaws of Emmanuel Baptist Church, Inc. The Bylaws define the church's organizational structure, the rights of members in the structure, and the procedures by which these rights may be exercised.

Article X Amendments to the Constitution

This Constitution may be altered, amended, or repealed, and a new constitution adopted at any time with an affirmation as reflected by at least 90% vote at any business meeting at which a quorum is present, as defined in the bylaws of the Emmanuel Baptist Church, Inc.

Emmanuel Baptist Church By-Laws

Article I Church Membership

Section 1 General

Emmanuel Baptist Church (EBC) is a sovereign Southern Baptist church under the Lordship of Jesus Christ. The membership retains unto it, the right of exclusive self-government in all aspects of the spiritual and temporal life of the church as a part of the Body of Christ.

Section 2 Requirements

Any person may seek membership in EBC upon his or her:

1. profession of faith in Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior followed by baptism, or promise of a letter of recommendation from another church of like faith and practice, or statement of prior salvation experience and baptism,
2. completion of a membership class that will lend clarity to the mission and vision of EBC,
3. agreement with EBC Statement of Faith and Membership Covenant

Section 3 Responsibilities of Members

It is expected that a member's signature agreement with the EBC Membership Covenant (Article V of the Constitution) will be visible in his or her life and relationships within EBC.

Only members of EBC, at least 18 years of age, are entitled to vote on items submitted at business meetings. Members must be present to vote. Any questions of eligibility will be referred to the Chairman of Deacons.

Members of EBC shall have no property rights or other ownership interest in any assets of EBC.

Section 4 Change in Membership

Membership status can be changed in the following ways:

1. By Death.
2. By alignment with another Southern Baptist church.
3. By disciplinary action of as provided in Article I, Section 5.
4. By joining with a church of another denomination.
5. By written request that one's name to be removed from membership.

Section 5 Discipline

Church discipline ministers to those within the Body of Christ who are dominated by some area of sin so they can experience liberation from its power through fellowship with Christ. Matters of church discipline, including restoration to membership, shall be directed by the Lead Pastor and the Servant Lead Team based on biblical principles.

Article II Church Leadership

Section 1 EBC Leadership

EBC is a pastor led church whose leadership consists of a Lead Pastor, Ministerial Staff, a Servant Lead Team, Deacon Ministry Team, and Officers. Additionally, EBC has numerous ministry teams responsible for operations or specific ministry functions.

Section 2 Lead Pastor and Ministerial Staff

The Lead Pastor is responsible for leading EBC to function as a New Testament church; the Ministerial Staff oversee their respective ministries which include worship, missions, small groups, students, children, and preschool. The Lead Pastor and Ministerial Staff are employed to equip members for ministry.

The Lead Pastor is the under-shepherd of EBC in leading to encounters with God; connecting with others; and serving the world (locally and globally). As such, he will lead EBC members, the various ministry programs, and the Ministerial Staff. The Lead Pastor will counsel with the Servant Lead Team and Deacon Ministry Team and be responsible to the members.

Section 2.1 Selection of Lead Pastor

In pursuit of a new Lead Pastor, the Servant Lead Team, Deacon Ministry Team, and Ministerial Staff will nominate for EBC approval, a Pastor Search Team comprised of EBC members to seek out a Lead Pastor candidate.

The Pastor Search Team will make every effort to make decisions by consensus. The Pastor Search Team will identify a Lead Pastor candidate for consideration and present their nomination to the Servant Lead Team and Deacon Ministry Team. It is understood the Pastor Search Team, Servant Lead Team and Deacon Ministry will make every effort to be united in consensus prior to a nomination being presented to the Emmanuel Baptist Church body. The Search Team will bring only one candidate forward at a time.

The presentation and affirmation of the Lead Pastor candidate shall be at a business meeting in accordance with Article III, Section 2. The meeting will include a presentation of the Pastor Search Team's recommendation and a vote of EBC members. The selection of the candidate shall be approved by the affirmative vote of 85% of the EBC members present and voting at said meeting.

An affirmative vote of 85% of the EBC members present and voting at said meeting authorizes the Search Team to complete and document the agreements constituting the call of the Lead Pastor.

Section 2.2 Selection of Ministerial Staff

The selection and nomination of a ministerial staff candidate is the responsibility of the Lead Pastor, current Ministerial Staff, the Servant Lead Team, and the Deacon Ministry Team.

The Lead Pastor oversees the selection and nomination process which consists of increasingly detailed question and answer dialog, interviews, and exposure to additional EBC leadership as God affirms the candidate. After satisfactory completion of this process the Deacon Ministry Team is responsible for recommending the candidate to EBC members.

The presentation and affirmation of the candidate staff member shall be at a business meeting in accordance with Article III, Sections 2 and 3. The meeting will include a presentation of the Deacon Ministry Team's recommendation and a vote by EBC members. An affirmative vote requires at least 90% of the required quorum and authorizes the Lead Pastor or his designee, to complete and document the agreements constituting the call to EBC.

Section 2.3 Employment Packages

Employment packages for Lead Pastor and ministerial staff will be established by the Finance Ministry Team with recommendations from Personnel Ministry Team, in coordination with the Lead Pastor and Chairman of Deacons. Staff salaries are not publicly disclosed but EBC members may acquire this information through the Chairman of Deacons and the Finance Ministry Team.

Section 2.4 Resignation

Should the Lead Pastor decide to resign, a written resignation will be submitted to the Servant Lead Team which provides at least four weeks' notice before terminating responsibilities as Lead Pastor. The office of Lead Pastor will be considered vacant at the time pastoral responsibilities are terminated.

Should any ministerial staff decide to resign, a written resignation will be submitted to the Servant Lead Team which provides at least two weeks' notice before terminating responsibilities as a staff member. The office of that staff member will be considered vacant at the time staff responsibilities are terminated.

Section 2.5 Dismissal

When conditions warrant dismissal, the church may take action to declare the office of Lead Pastor or a staff member vacant. Such action shall take place at a business meeting in accordance with Article III, Sections 2 and 3. The meeting will include a presentation of the dismissal recommendation and a vote by EBC members. A dismissal vote requires at least 90% of the required quorum to prevail and declare an office vacant, whereupon the termination of duties shall be effective immediately. When required, the Servant Lead Team and Personnel Ministry Team will determine a fair separation package. If the dismissal vote does not prevail, the same matter cannot be presented to the church for at least three (3) months from the date of the vote.

Section 3. Deacon Ministry Team

In accordance with the meaning of the work and practice of the New Testament, deacons are to be servants of the church. Their primary purpose is to lovingly care for the members' spiritual and physical welfare, to display God's compassion, kindness, mercy, and love to the lost world. The task of a deacon is to serve with the Lead Pastor, Ministerial Staff and Servant Lead team in empowering EBC through unceasing prayer, lend encouragement to the Lead Pastor and Ministerial Staff; lead EBC in her mission of igniting and inspiring a passion for Jesus Christ.

Section 3.1 Deacon Qualification

A deacon must:

1. Be born again of the Spirit of God and willing to give and live his Christian testimony before the church membership and the world.
2. Believe that the Bible is the inspired Word of God, written by men moved by the Spirit of God to write the very words of scripture. Therefore, the Bible is without error.
3. Have a teachable spirit to learn and apply the scriptures to his life.
4. Believe that the mission of EBC (to lead people in a growing relationship with Jesus Christ) is both a personal and a corporate mission.
5. Believe in and practice generosity in giving as an expression of love for God through His church.
6. Know of the primacy of building the church body via refusing to gossip and lifting others up in love.
7. He must serve and guide his own home before becoming a leader in his church.
8. Handle his own business affairs in a way that is above reproach, possessing a good name among the people of his community.
9. Have been a member of Emmanuel Baptist Church for at least one year and be at least twenty-eight years of age.

Section 3.2 Deacon Selection

Nominations for deacons will be made by the EBC members on an annual basis, unless the current Deacon Ministry Team decides that a sufficient active team is in place. A nominee must possess the character qualities stated in 1 Timothy 3:8-10 and must meet the qualifications outlined in Section 3.1. The nominees will be reviewed and endorsed by a deacon selection team along with the Lead Pastor. The deacon selection team will be either a designated group of active deacons or all active deacons, decided by the current group of active deacons. The endorsed candidates will be recommended to the Deacon Ministry Team who will confirm their qualifications and present the endorsed candidate(s) for approval at a regular or special called business meeting of EBC.

Section 3.3 Deacon Removal

A deacon may be removed from active service by resignation or grievance. After investigation and consideration of the grievance, and a determination that the grievance is true and substantial, a deacon may be removed by a majority vote of the active deacons.

Section 3.4 Deacon Organization

Deacon Ministry Team chairman and the Lead Pastor will determine frequency and time of Deacon Ministry Team meetings. The Deacon Ministry Team officers will consist of the chairman, vice-chairman, secretary, and any officers deemed necessary by the Deacon Ministry Team. The term of office for a deacon officer will be one year. Each year officers will be nominated by the Deacon Ministry Team, prayerfully selected by the preceding deacon officers in consultation with the Lead Pastor, and then approved by the Deacon Ministry Team by majority vote. The Deacon Ministry Team will keep minutes at all meetings and present them to the church office for a permanent record.

The term of office for a deacon shall be one year. Consecutive terms are encouraged and acceptable for those who are actively serving. At the completion of their one-year term of service, each deacon can acknowledge their desire to continue serving as an active deacon. Concurrent with these decisions, the Deacon Ministry Team will review and determine the need for additional deacon candidates, which will be conveyed to the church as part of the nomination process. Each year the congregation will re-affirm the active Deacon Ministry Team.

Section 4 Servant Lead Team

Servant Lead Team is composed of individuals selected from EBC membership who advise and assist the Lead Pastor in overseeing the mission of EBC.

Section 4.1 Responsibilities

The men and women serving on the Servant Lead Team advise and assist the Lead Pastor in the overall execution of the vision, ministry, and operations of EBC. They are a “sounding board” for the Lead Pastor and provide “front-line” feedback on the condition/interests of EBC members. They hold the Lead Pastor accountable for maintaining and executing the mission of EBC.

The Servant Lead Team will meet with the Lead Pastor on a regular basis. As required, they will consider and provide input on operations and ministry matters. This team is entrusted with the following decisions: 1) selecting church secretary; 2) determining the items that will go before the congregation for vote; 3) affirmation and accountability of all ministry teams; and 4) church member discipline. This team shall always prayerfully endeavor to make all decisions by consensus.

Section 4.2 Qualification

Each Servant Lead Team candidate is to be characterized by spiritual maturity, involvement in the church, high morals, and a healthy family life as described in Scripture. The Servant Lead Team member must be at least 28 years of age and shall have been a member of EBC for at least 1 year immediately preceding the date on which their service on the Servant Lead Team begins.

Section 4.3 Selection

The team will be comprised of up to seven (7) members. Three standing members shall be the residing chairs of the Finance Ministry Team, Personnel Ministry Team, and the Deacon Ministry Team. Up to four non-standing members are selected from nominations submitted by EBC members. From the nominations, the Servant Lead Team, Deacon Ministry Team, and the Lead Pastor will select the needed number of candidates. These candidates will be presented to EBC for a vote of approval.

Section 4.4 Terms of Service

Non-standing members will typically serve a three-year term, with a desirable rotation of two or less selected members rotating off and two or less new members rotating on each year. However, a Servant Lead Team member may serve for a longer term, at the discretion of the Servant Lead Team and the Lead Pastor. The residing chairs of the Finance Lead Team, Personnel Lead Team, and Deacon Ministry Team will serve in accordance to the terms stated in their operations manual. Any vacancies prior to a Servant Lead Team member’s term expiring shall be filled from an appointment by the Servant Lead Team from the most recent list of nominees.

Section 4.5 Removal

Team members may be removed by resignation or grievance. After investigation and consideration of the grievance, and a determination that the grievance is true and substantial, a member may be removed by a majority vote of the remaining members.

Section 5 Ministry Teams

Ministry Teams oversee the conduct of the specific ministry tasks for which they are responsible. They are responsible to EBC in the conduct of their tasks and will share reports of their activities through regular business meetings and church publications. EBC has three standing ministry teams—Finance, Personnel and Properties—and leadership will establish other teams as required.

Section 5.1 Finance Ministry Team

Working in conjunction with the EBC Administrator, the Finance Ministry Team is responsible for the formulation and management of EBC's annual budget. This team will meet on a periodic basis to discuss the financial health of EBC operations. They will work to assist the Lead Pastor and Ministerial Staff in establishing policies regarding financial operations.

Section 5.2 Personnel Ministry Team

The Personnel Ministry Team is responsible for establishing policies, salaries, benefits, and any other items related to the employment of EBC Staff. They also assist the Lead Pastor, as required, in addressing personnel related matters.

Section 5.3 Properties Ministry Team

The Properties Ministry Team is responsible for overseeing the condition of EBC facilities, equipment, and property to ensure they remain presentable and in good working order. They will make recommendations concerning major repair, replacement, and improvement projects and oversee the contracting and work for approved projects. The Properties Ministry Team lead will coordinate with the Lead Pastor, EBC staff, Servant Lead Team, or Finance Ministry Team on recommended projects.

Section 5.4 Team Establishment

The Lead Pastor, with affirmation from the Servant Lead Team, will have the authority to establish and disestablish ministry teams for the efficient and effective operation of EBC and its various ministries. Ministry Team candidates must be members of EBC and will be selected in a method established by the Lead Pastor and the Servant Lead Team.

Section 5.5 Duration

All enduring ministry teams will establish a three-year rotation system. In establishing this rotation, each team will determine the best way to decide who will rotate off after one year, then two years, and then three years. In some instances, exceptions may be made in which some individuals may continue for an additional year due to a particular skill set or a particular situation that warrants their continuance. These exceptions are subject to Servant Lead Team approval.

Section 5.6 Operating Guidelines

The basic guidelines for Ministry Teams are as follows:

1. Ministry Teams shall consist of at least five members to facilitate the rotation process.
2. The chairs of the teams will be selected by their respective team and affirmed by the Servant Lead Team.
3. Each Ministry Team must meet regularly, record minutes of their meetings, and submit meeting minutes to the church office for archival.

Section 6 Staff Lead Teams

The Ministerial Staff shall secure Lead Teams to assist, support, complement, and advise regarding their respective ministry area. The respective ministerial staff member shall establish team composition/selection, duration, and operating guidelines commensurate with the needs of their ministry area. The Church recognizes the following Lead Teams.

- Preschool
- Children
- Student
- Small Group
- Worship
- Missions

Section 7 Corporate Officers

The EBC corporate officers will act as the legal agents of the church's incorporated entity pursuant to Florida state law regarding non-profit organizations. Corporate officers include President (Lead Pastor), Vice President (Deacon Chairman), Treasurer (Finance Chairman), and Church Secretary (selected by Servant Lead Team). The corporate officers shall be responsible for signing any legal documents and performing all legal actions required by law. Additionally, they will designate who will sign EBC checks.

Article III Church Meetings

Section 1 Worship Services

The church shall meet regularly for teaching, shared life, service, connection and for making great declaration of the supremacy of Christ in all things.

Section 2 Official Church Meetings

The business of the church shall be conducted through two types of meetings: Annual Church Administrative Meeting and Church Business Meeting. Additionally, meetings may be called for the purpose of providing information, promoting dialogue on matters of interest, and promoting the objectives of EBC. These meetings will be open for the entire membership of the church.

The Lead Pastor will preside over all church meetings which call for official action to be taken; the Chairman of Deacons will preside in the absence of the Lead Pastor and as requested or required. Meetings are to be conducted in an orderly and Christian manner. When the occasion calls for it, *Roberts Rules of Order Newly Revised* will be applied in a manner consistent with the Spirit of Christ.

Section 2.1 Annual Church Administrative Meeting

The church will assemble each year on or about one month prior to the end of the calendar year (January to December) to approve the budget for the coming year, selection of deacons, hear reports from any teams, ministries of the church, conduct miscellaneous business as needed, and pray for the church. The Annual Meeting will be announced two weeks prior to the date of the meeting in the weekly worship services and through various means of communication to members. The church secretary will record and retain meeting minutes.

Section 2.2 Church Business Meeting

The church will assemble for a business meeting upon the request of the Lead Pastor or the Servant Lead Team. A business meeting will be announced two weeks prior to the date of the meeting in the weekly worship services and through various means of communication to members. In the case of an emergency,

a business meeting may be called by the Lead Pastor or Servant Lead Team without the two-week notice. The church secretary will record and retain meeting minutes.

Section 2.3 Required Call for Votes

Church approval is required for:

1. Election of Lead Pastor and Ministerial Staff
2. Dismissal of Lead Pastoral and Ministerial Staff
3. Approval of yearly budget
4. Securing a loan/establishing debt
5. Construction of new facilities

Section 2.4 Quorum

The quorum consists of the EBC members attending the church meeting, provided it is an announced meeting. The only exception to this quorum is when votes are being taken to declare the office of Lead Pastor vacant or to fill the office of Lead Pastor (reference Article II). For these situations, a quorum shall be not less than ten percent (10%) of the total membership eligible for voting as provided in Article 1.

Section 4 Fiscal Year

The fiscal year of the church shall begin on January 1 and end on December 31.

Article IV Contributions

All contributions accepted by the church will be allocated to the general fund unless they are designated to an established fund. Procedures for establishing designated funds will be published by the Finance Ministry Team.

Article V Amendments

It is the responsibility of the Lead Pastor, Ministerial Staff, and Servant Lead Team to review the Constitution and Bylaws, proposing any revisions or adjustments necessary to maintain their effectiveness, and to bring these changes to the church in an administrative meeting. New bylaws may be adopted, or current bylaws may be amended or repealed by the affirmative vote of a two-thirds (2/3) majority of votes by members cast at a meeting called for such purpose.

The church membership shall be notified of this meeting in accordance with Article III. Further, a copy of the proposed changes shall be made available to members at two consecutive weeks of Sunday morning worship services in advance of the meeting.