

**CONSTITUTION**  
**Mt Yonah Baptist Church**  
**882 Asbestos Rd**  
**Cleveland, Ga 30528**

**PREAMBLE**

To preserve the liberties of each individual member of this sovereign and democratic congregation, to reaffirm the principles of faith on which this church was founded, to provide for the conduct of this body in an orderly manner, and to safeguard the freedom of action of this church in relation to other churches and ecclesiastical bodies, the congregation of Mount Yonah Baptist Church does hereby establish this constitution. Under the lordship of Jesus Christ, Mount Yonah Baptist Church retains unto itself all rights of exclusive self-government in all areas of spiritual and temporal life.

**ARTICLE I**  
**NAME OF BODY**

This body shall be known as Mount Yonah Baptist Church, physically located at 882 Asbestos Rd, Cleveland, Ga, 30528, located in the state of Georgia and county of White.

**ARTICLE II**  
**ARTICLES OF INCORPORATION**

This body, incorporated as Mount Yonah Baptist Church, Inc., shall renew its Articles of Incorporation with the state of Georgia as often as necessary to ensure that said incorporation remains current. The registered agents of said corporation shall be the Pastor (CEO), Clerk (Sec), and Treasurer (CFO) Mount Yonah Baptist Church.

**ARTICLE III**  
**PURPOSE OF BODY**

Section 1. The Mount Yonah Baptist Church is a body of believers, joined together in a fellowship under the authority of God the Father, the lordship of Jesus Christ, and the leadership of the Holy Spirit.

Section 2. The membership of Mount Yonah Baptist Church believes that the church derives its purpose from:

- (a) The Great Commandment (“*Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind. This is the first and great commandment: And the second is like unto it, Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself.*” – Matthew 22:37- 39, KJV), and
- (b) The Great Commission (“*Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you...*” – Matthew 28:19-20a, KJV).

Section 3. The members of Mount Yonah Baptist Church commit themselves to the following purposes:

- 1. **To worship** God in diverse ways which honor Him and inspire people.
- 2. **To minister** to people outside the church in a true spirit of servant hood.
- 3. **To witness** to lost people all over the world and present the saving message of Jesus Christ through word and deed.

4. **To fellowship** with and minister to one another in a spirit of unity and Christ-likeness.
5. **To teach, nurture, and encourage** believers in their pursuit of the full lordship of Jesus Christ.

#### **ARTICLE IV CONFESSION OF FAITH**

1. *The Scripture.* The Scriptures of the Old Testament and New Testament were given by inspiration of God and constitute the only sufficient, certain, and authoritative standard by which all human conduct, beliefs, and religious opinions are to be measured. The criterion by which the Scriptures are to be interpreted under the leadership of the Holy Spirit is Jesus Christ. The Bible, as the inspired record of the life and teachings of Christ, who is the revelation of God's will and way, is the authoritative rule of practice for the church.
2. *Authority.* There is only one true and living God, revealed to us as the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. To the church, the ultimate source of authority is Jesus Christ the Lord, and every area of life is to be subject to His Lordship. The Holy Spirit is God actively revealing Himself and His will to mankind; He interprets and confirms the voice of divine authority.
3. *The Individual.* Every individual is created in the image of God and is a person for whom Jesus died. Therefore, every individual merits Christian love, respect, and consideration as a person of infinite dignity and worth. All believers are urged to respect the sanctity of all God-given life. Each person is competent under God to make his or her own moral and religious decisions and is responsible to God in all matters of moral and religious duty. Every person is free under God in all matters of conscience and has freedom of choice regarding personal faith and the right to witness publicly about his or her religious beliefs, always with proper regard for the rights of other persons. The individual's worth, needs, moral freedom, and potential for Christ have primary consideration in the life and work of the church.
4. *Salvation.* Salvation from sin is the free gift of God through the atoning death of Jesus Christ, conditioned only upon the belief in and commitment to Christ as Lord. The only means of salvation is by grace through faith in the atonement and righteousness of Jesus Christ. Nothing can separate true believers from the love of God, but they will be kept through their faith and by His power unto eternal life.
5. *The Demands of Discipleship.* The demands of Christian discipleship, based on the recognition of the lordship of Christ, relate to the whole of life and call for full obedience and complete devotion. The development of Christian family life – including marriage as the union of one man and one woman – is a primary concern of all believers. The Christian is a citizen of both the kingdom of God and the state and is responsible for obedience to the law of the land, as well as the higher law of God. Christians are obligated to serve God with their testimony, time, talents, tithes and offerings and should recognize that all these are entrusted to them to use for the glory of God and for helping others.
6. *The Priesthood of All Believers.* Each Christian, having direct access to God through Christ, is his or her own priest and needs no intermediary. All souls have an equal right to direct access to God and thereby have equal responsibilities to each other before God.
7. *The Nature of the Church.* The church universal is the fellowship of all persons redeemed by Christ and made one in the family of God. The local church is a fellowship of baptized believers,

voluntarily banded together for worship, ministry, witness, fellowship, and nurture. Membership in the church is a privilege and responsibility properly extended only to regenerated persons who voluntarily accept baptism and commit themselves to faithful discipleship in the body of Christ. The church is an autonomous body, subject only to Christ, its head. Its democratic government properly reflects the equality and responsibility of believers under the lordship of Christ. Both church and state are ordained of God and are answerable to Him. They should remain separate, but they are under the obligation of mutual recognition and reinforcement as each seeks to fulfill its divine function. The church is to be responsible in the world, but its character and ministry are not to be of the world.

8. *Ordinances of the Church.* Baptism and the Lord's Supper are the two ordinances of the church. New Testament baptism is symbolic of the death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus Christ and is administered only by the immersion of believers in water in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. Baptism is not a condition of salvation or the remission of sin, but it is an act of obedience symbolizing the believer's faith in a crucified, buried, and risen Savior, the death of the believer to sin, the burial of the old life, and the resurrection to walk in newness of life in Christ Jesus. Baptism also symbolizes the death, burial, and resurrection of the physical body. Baptism is the means by which believers identify and unite with the church as God's people in the world. It acknowledges the believer's acceptance of both the privileges and responsibilities of membership in the church as the body of Christ. The only persons who qualify for baptism are those who have received the gospel, have personally accepted its truth concerning Jesus Christ, and, through an intentional and decisive act, have received Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord. Acceptance of baptism from another church is determined by the meaning, the moment, and the mode of baptism in the other church's practice, not by denominational affiliation. Biblical or believer's baptism, as taught in Scripture, is both an ordinance of this church and a personal act in which the recipient acknowledges faith in and obedience to Jesus Christ under the authority of the New Testament church.

The Lord's Supper is symbolic of the body and blood of Christ which accomplished His work of redemption. The Lord's Supper is a symbolic act of obedience whereby baptized believers, through partaking of the bread and fruit of the vine, commemorate the death of Jesus Christ and anticipate His second coming. Believers according to the teachings of the New Testament are eligible to take the Lord's Supper.

9. *The Lord's Day.* Sunday, the first day of the week, is the Lord's Day. It is a Christian institution ordained of God commemorating the resurrection of Christ from the dead and challenging believers to observe a day of rest characterized by activities commensurate with the Christian's conscience under the lordship of Jesus Christ.
10. *The Church's Continuing Task.* (a) *Worship* – an experience of communion with the living and holy God – calls for an emphasis on reverence and orderliness, on confession and humility, and an awareness of the holiness and majesty and grace and purpose of God, who is revealed as Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. (b) Every Christian's responsibility is *ministry and service*, but God, in His wisdom, calls some believers in a unique way to dedicate their lives to full-time, church-related ministry. (c) *Evangelism*, which is primary in the mission of the church and the vocation of every Christian, is the proclamation of God's judgment and grace in Jesus Christ and the call to accept and follow Him as Lord. (d) *Missions* seek the extension of God's redemptive purpose in all the world through evangelism, education, and Christian service and call for the utmost dedication on the part of Christians to this task. (e) Christian *stewardship* conceives the whole life as a sacred trust from God and requires the responsible use of life, time, talents, and substance in the service of God. (f) Christian *education* grows out of the relation of faith and reason and calls for academic excellence and freedom that are both real and responsible. The nature of Christian faith and Christian experience

and the nature and needs of persons make teaching and training imperative.

11. *Social Responsibilities.* The Christian is a citizen of both the kingdom of God and the state and, therefore, has dual responsibilities. Every Christian is obligated to use any means available, under the leadership of Jesus Christ, to improve society and establish righteousness among people. Every Christian should seek to bring the whole of society under the influence of the principles of righteousness, truth, and brotherly love, as taught by the Lord Jesus Christ. In order to promote these ends, Christians should work with all people 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.
12. *Religious Liberty.* Religious freedom is the foundation of all true freedom and is rooted in the nature of God, the nature of humanity, and the lordship of Jesus Christ. Religious liberty is ordained of God and denotes the fact that every person possesses a will with the freedom of choice to make his or her own decisions about worship, as dictated by his or her conscience. Church and state should be separate but mutually related in the normal affairs of life. Neither church nor state should exercise authority over the other. A free church in a free state is the Christian ideal, implying the right of free 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.
13. *Last Things.* God, in His own time and in His own way, will bring the world to its appropriate end. Jesus Christ will return to the earth visibly in glory; the dead will be raised; and Christ will judge all people in righteousness. The unrighteous will be consigned to hell, the place of everlasting punishment. The righteous in their resurrected and glorified bodies will receive their reward and will dwell forever in heaven with the Lord.

## **ARTICLE V COVENANT**

We, the members of Mount Yonah Baptist Church, having been led, as we believe, by the Spirit of God, to receive the Lord Jesus Christ, as our Savior, and on the profession of our faith, having been baptized by immersion in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, do now, in the presence of God and this assembly, enter into agreement with one another, as one body in Christ. Therefore, with the assistance of the Holy Spirit and with the Bible, the inspired Word of God, as our guide, we hereby covenant together as follows:

1. To walk together in Christian love.
2. To strive for the advancement of this church.
3. To promote Christian spirituality.
4. To sustain the worship, discipline, and doctrinal integrity of this church.
5. To observe the church's ordinances of believer's baptism and the Lord's Supper as authorized by this church.
6. To contribute cheerfully and regularly of God's tithes and our offerings to the support of the ministry of this church and to the spread of the gospel to all nations.
7. To encourage personal and family devotions.
8. To educate our children according to our faith.
9. To seek the salvation of unbelievers.

10. To be just in our dealings and reliable in our responsibilities and to be an example of Christian living to those around us.
11. To recognize that our bodies are the temples of the Holy Spirit and to guard against the abuse of substances and the practice of habits harmful to our bodies.
12. To preserve and strengthen our Christian witness to the world by using our influence to combat harmful practices in society.
13. To work unfailingly for the advancement of the kingdom of the Savior by witnessing in words as well as in conduct.
14. To walk in Christian harmony and watchfulness, giving and receiving assistance with meekness and affection.
15. To pray for one another and help one another in sickness and in sorrow.
16. To be slow to anger and to be always open and eager for reconciliation, seeking it without delay.
17. To agree that, if we move from this area, 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 VI STATEMENT ON MARRIAGE, GENDER, AND SEXUALITY**

We believe that God wonderfully and immutably creates each person as male or female. These two distinct, complementary genders together reflect the image and nature of God. (Gen 1:26-27.) Rejection of one's biological sex is a rejection of the image of God within that person.

We believe that the term "marriage" has only one meaning: the uniting of one biological man and one biological woman in a single, exclusive union, as delineated in Scripture. (Gen 2:18-25.) We believe that God intends sexual intimacy to occur only between a man and a woman who are married to each other. (1 Cor 6:18; 7:2-5; Heb 13:4.) We believe that God has commanded that no intimate sexual activity be engaged in outside of a marriage between a man and a woman.

We believe that any form of sexual immorality (including adultery, fornication, homosexual behavior, bisexual conduct, bestiality, incest, and use of pornography) is sinful and offensive to God. (Matt 15:18-20; 1 Cor 6:9-10.)

We believe that in order to preserve the function and integrity of Mount Yonah Baptist Church, Inc. as the local Body of Christ, and to provide a biblical role model to the Mount Yonah Baptist Church members and the community, it is imperative that all persons employed by Mount Yonah Baptist Church, Inc. in any capacity, or who serve as volunteers, agree to and abide by this Statement on Marriage, Gender, and Sexuality. (Mat 5:15; Phil 2:14-16; 1 Thess 5:22.)

We believe that God offers redemption and restoration to all who confess and forsake their sin, seeking His mercy and forgiveness through Jesus Christ. (Acts 3:19-21; Rom 10:9-10; 1 Cor 6:9-11.)

We believe that every person must be afforded compassion, love, kindness, respect, and dignity. (Mark 12:28-31; Luke 6:31.) Hateful and harassing behavior or attitudes directed toward any individual are to be repudiated and are not in accord with Scripture nor the doctrines of Mount Yonah Baptist Church, Inc.

Mount Yonah Baptist Church is a Mandated Reporter under Georgia Law. Unless a child is necessarily being assisted by a guardian, genetic males shall use male restrooms and genetic females shall use female restrooms.

Because God has ordained marriage and defined it as the covenant relationship between a man, a woman, and Jesus, Mount Yonah Baptist Church, Inc. will only recognize marriages between a biological man and a biological woman. Further, the pastor and staff of Mount Yonah Baptist Church, Inc. shall only participate in weddings and solemnize marriages between one man and one woman. Finally, the facilities and property of Mount Yonah Baptist Church, Inc. shall only host weddings between one man and one woman.

## **ARTICLE VII POLITY AND AFFILIATIONS**

Mount Yonah Baptist Church exists under the lordship of Jesus Christ, who is the head of the church, as He reveals His leadership through the Word of God and through the Holy Spirit. This church is subject to no other ecclesiastical body. The government of this church is vested in the body of believers who compose it. All internal groups created and empowered by the church shall report to and be accountable only to the church, unless otherwise specified by church action. Mount Yonah Baptist Church recognizes and sustains the obligations of mutual counsel and cooperation that are common among Southern Baptist Churches. Insofar as is practical and desirable, this church shall cooperate with and support the White County Baptist Association, the Baptist Convention of the State of Georgia, and the Southern Baptist Convention and shall evidence a spirit of cooperation and understanding in its actions and attitudes toward Christians of all denominations.

## **ARTICLE VIII ADOPTION**

Section 1. This constitution shall be formally presented to the church, and, in a business meeting not less than fourteen (14) days nor more than thirty (90) days following the presentation, the vote on adoption of the constitution shall be taken. This constitution shall be considered adopted and in immediate effect if and when two-thirds of the members present and voting in the business session in which the vote on adoption is taken shall vote in favor of adoption.

Section 2. After adoption, this constitution shall abolish, supersede, and replace any constitution that preceded it.

Section 3. A copy of this constitution shall be kept in the church office. All amendments and revisions to this constitution, after adoption by vote of the body, shall be prepared by the church clerk and incorporated into the constitution. The constitution and all amendments and revisions thereof shall be made available to church members upon request.

**ARTICLE IX  
AMENDMENTS**

Section 1. Procedure for Amendment. Amendments to this constitution shall be made by the following procedure:

- (a) Any active member of the church shall have the right to submit in writing a request for an amendment to this constitution during a church regular business meeting. The request for amendment shall be referred automatically to the Constitution and Bylaws Committee for study. The Constitution and Bylaws Committee shall bring its report concerning the request for amendment to the next regularly-scheduled business meeting.
- (b) If the Constitution and Bylaws Committee recommends the amendment, the committee shall present the proposed amendment to the church body in writing during a business meeting.
- (c) The text of the proposed amendment shall be published at least twice in the church's newsletter prior to being voted upon.
- (d) Copies of the proposed amendment shall be made available to all active church members attending the business meeting at which the amendment is voted upon.
- (e) A vote on adopting the amendment shall be taken in a business meeting not less than fourteen (14) days nor more than ninety (90) days after formal presentation of the amendment to the church body by the Constitution and Bylaws Committee.

Section 2. Adoption. An amendment shall be adopted if it receives a two-thirds vote of all active members of the church present and voting in the business session at which the vote on the amendment is taken. Upon adoption, the amendment shall become effective immediately.

**CONSTITUTION ADOPTED IN BUSINESS MEETING ON August 19, 2018.**

**BYLAWS**  
**Mount Yonah Baptist Church**  
**882 Asbestos Rd**  
**Cleveland, GA 30528**

**ARTICLE I**  
**MEMBERSHIP**

Section 1. General Provisions. Mount Yonah Baptist Church is comprised of persons who publicly profess a personal faith and belief in the Lord Jesus Christ, who have received believer's baptism, and who actively follow the Lord Jesus Christ in discipleship. Membership in this church is a sacred responsibility and requires full commitment to Jesus Christ and to the purposes of this church. The membership of this church reserves the right to determine who shall be members of this body and the conditions of such membership.

Section 2. Candidacy for Membership. Evidence of acceptance of Christ as Savior and Lord and believer's baptism are the two primary requirements for membership in this body, without regard to denominational affiliation. Any person who gives evidence of a regenerate heart and is willing to subscribe to the purpose, covenant, and confession of faith held by this church shall be accepted as a candidate for membership at any regular church service in any one of the following ways:

- (a) *By profession of faith and request for baptism.* Any person publicly professing faith in the Lord Jesus Christ may, after receiving believer's baptism, be received into membership.
- (b) *By letter.* Any person in good standing in another Baptist church may be received into membership upon receipt by Mount Yonah Baptist Church of a letter of transfer from the church in which the individual's membership was previously held.
- (c) *By statement.*
  - 1. Any person who has made a public profession of faith and has been immersed in baptism by a Baptist church, but who, because of loss of records or similarly unavoidable circumstances, cannot obtain a regular letter of transfer from that church, may be received into membership by statement.
  - 2. Any person who has made a public profession of faith and has been baptized by immersion in a church of like faith and practice may be received into membership by statement.
  - 3. Any person who has previously professed a personal faith and belief in the Lord Jesus Christ but has not received believer's baptism may be received into candidacy for membership on the condition that he or she must receive believer's baptism for acceptance into membership.
- (d) *By watchcare/Associate Member.* Any person who wishes to establish an affiliation with Mount Yonah Baptist Church but does not wish to transfer his/her membership may come under watchcare of the church. The person shall be extended many of the privileges of church members, especially nurture and care by the church membership and participation in church activities, but may not vote in business meetings of the church. They may volunteer in positions other than church officer under the supervision of a church leader. This membership shall automatically terminate when that person is no longer a resident of the White County area.

Section 3. Vote on Membership. All candidates for membership shall be voted on in a church business meeting. All candidates will be encouraged by the Pastor to give a personal testimony of faith in Christ. A candidate receiving a unanimous vote of the active members present and voting shall be included in the



membership upon completing a, b, c, or d above. When approved, the clerk shall enter the names on the roll of the church. Should a candidate for membership not be approved, the matter shall be referred to the pastor and deacons, who shall investigate and bring a recommendation to the church, convened in business meeting, within thirty (30) days.

Section 4. *New Member Orientation.* New church members, regardless of how they become members, shall be expected to participate in the new member orientation program of the church.

Section 5. *Rights of Members.* Every member of the church is entitled to vote at all elections and upon all questions submitted to the church in business meeting. Members must be present to vote; voting by proxy and absentee voting are specifically prohibited. Every member of the church is eligible for consideration for the elective offices of the church, unless otherwise stated. Every member of the church may participate in the ordinances of the church as administered by the church.

Section 6. *Membership Accountability.* It shall be the desire of this church to hold its members accountable to God and to each other, as set forth in the church covenant. The church shall emphasize to its members that every reasonable measure be taken to assist in any troubling matter. The attitude of members toward one another shall be guided by a concern for redemption rather than judgment. Should some serious condition exist which could cause a member to become a liability to the general welfare of the church, the pastor and the deacons shall meet with the member and shall take every reasonable measure to resolve the problem in accord with Matthew 18:15-17. If it becomes desirable for the church to take action to exclude the member, a two-thirds (2/3) vote of the members present and voting at a church business meeting is required, after the member has been given opportunity to speak to the church body. Upon such an affirmative vote, the church may declare the person to be no longer in the membership of the church, and the member shall be so notified by the church clerk. All such proceedings shall be pervaded by a spirit of Christian kindness and forbearance. Any person excluded from the church may be restored to membership at a later time by vote of the church in regular business meeting, upon request of the excluded person, and upon evidence of the excluded person's repentance and reformation.

Section 7. *Termination of Membership.* Membership shall be terminated in any one of the following ways:

- (a) Death of the member.
- (b) Transfer by letter to another Baptist church. No letter of membership shall be granted to an individual.
- (c) Reasonable evidence of membership in another church.
- (d) Exclusion from membership by action of this church as set forth in Article I, Section 6, of these bylaws, provided every reasonable measure has already been taken to assist the member and keeping in mind that the attitude of church members toward one another is to be guided by a concern for redemption rather than judgment.

Section 8. *Membership Records.* Members are accepted into or dismissed from membership in the Mt Yonah Baptist Church at regular church business meetings. At such times, their names, along with the dates and methods of their acceptance or dismissal, shall be entered on the official membership roll of the church kept by the church clerk and on a duplicate roll kept in the church office by the office staff. A printed membership report shall be presented at each regular church business meeting, with careful notation of additions to and terminations of membership.

Members who move to another community are expected, as soon as possible, to transfer their memberships to churches of like faith and practice in their new home communities, where they may continue to exercise the duties of Christian discipleship.

The church shall have two classes of members:

1. The first class of members shall be referred to as the "active members". This class shall consist of all members who have attended a regular or special meeting of the Church or have

made a substantial contribution to the Church within the last twelve months. Active members are eligible for consideration by the membership as candidates for elective offices in the Church.

2. The second class of members shall be referred to as the “inactive members”. This class shall consist of those members who once were members on the active members list, but whose names are transferred from the active membership list to the inactive membership list by the Church, when those members are no longer active as defined above. Inactive members are not eligible for consideration by the membership as candidate for elective offices in the Church.
3. The clerk, assisted by the secretary, shall annually, or as needed, inspect the active membership list and identify those members who have not been active in the Church during the past twelve months. The determination of the deacons to transfer a member to the inactive list shall be final.
4. Any member whose name appears on the inactive membership list may request that his or her name be transferred to the active membership list by making such request to the Church office after becoming active in the Church again. Such transfer to active list shall be made by the deacons effective thirty days after the request is made by the member.

Section 9. Firearms. In accordance with and pursuant to the provisions of the Georgia Safe Carry Protection Act and OCGA § 16-11-127(b)(4), as the governing body or authority of Mount Yonah Baptist Church we hereby approve and permit the carrying of weapons and guns by license holders on the property of Mount Yonah Baptist Church. At such times that Mount Yonah Baptist Church is being used as a polling place, this approval shall be temporarily suspended.

Section 10. Bathrooms. Bathrooms shall be used by the biological sex indicated. Small children needing help may be accompanied by an assistant.

Section 11. Child Protection. Mount Yonah Baptist Church has a zero tolerance policy for child abuse and neglect in any form. Staff and direct volunteers working with children and youth will adhere to the Child Protection Policy as outlined in the Policy and Procedures Manual.

Section 12. Sexual Harassment. Mount Yonah Baptist Church has a zero tolerance policy for sexual harassment. Staff, volunteers and members will adhere to the sexual harassment policy.

## **ARTICLE II CHURCH OFFICERS AND STAFF**

Section 1. General Provisions. All who serve as officers of the church and those who serve on church committees shall be active members of this church. The officers of this church are as follows: pastor, ministerial staff, deacons, clerk, treasurer, and trustees. The pastor, ministerial staff, and deacons shall be elected as set forth in Article II, Sections 2, 3, 4(a), and 5. The Registered Agents for the Corporation shall be the Clerk (Sec), Treasurer (CFO) and the Pastor (CEO).

The clerk and treasurer shall be nominated annually by the Nominating Committee and elected by the church body, provided the nominees for these positions have been members of the church for at least one year. The trustees shall be nominated and elected as set forth in Article II, Section 8, of these bylaws.

Section 2. Pastor.

- (a) *Call of Pastor.* Whenever a vacancy in the pastorate occurs, a pastor shall be called by the church. The call of a pastor shall take place in a business meeting especially called for that purpose and shall be for an indefinite term of service. An announcement of the business meeting and its purpose shall be published in the church’s newsletter, and an announcement made in at least two church services no less than one week prior to the business meeting to call a pastor.

(b) *Procedure for Calling a Pastor.* When a vacancy occurs in the pastorate of the church, the Nominating Committee shall nominate a Pastor Search Committee, comprised of no fewer than seven (7) and no more than eleven (11) church members within thirty (30) days of the date the vacancy is announced. The nominees for the Pastor Search Committee shall be representative of the various organizations of the church and of the membership at large.

Nominations to the Pastor Search Committee shall be presented by the Nominating Committee to the church membership for election in a business meeting. Should any person nominated not be elected, the Nominating Committees shall submit another nomination until, in this manner, a Pastor Search Committee of no fewer than seven (7) and no more than eleven (11) members shall be elected.

The Chairperson of the Nominating Committee shall convene the initial meeting of the Pastor Search Committee and serve as its temporary chairperson until the Pastor Search Committee elects its own officers.

It is the responsibility of the Pastor Search Committee to construct a profile of the church and its needs, to obtain information about all candidates regarding spirituality, doctrinal beliefs, education, experience, and compatibility and to recommend to the church the most suitable person available for the position. The Pastor Search Committee recommends the pastor's compensation for approval by the church.

A candidate for a call shall be invited to the church for a weekend, during which he shall attend a fellowship, which will afford all church members the opportunity to meet him and his family, and he shall deliver a sermon to the church membership. At the conclusion of that service, the church shall meet in called business meeting in which a vote by written, secret ballot shall be taken on whether to call the candidate. An affirmative vote of at least eighty-five percent (85%) of the membership present and voting in the church business meeting shall be required to constitute a call.

(c) *Responsibilities of Pastor.* Under the leadership of the Holy Spirit and in a spirit of servanthood, the pastor shall have oversight of and care for the general welfare of the church. He shall be a non-voting member of the body of active deacons and of all committees and church organizations. He shall be empowered to convene special meetings of the deacons, committees, and church organizations as he may deem appropriate. He shall conduct religious services, administer church ordinances, and minister to the church body and to the community. He shall serve as moderator for the church. He shall have special charge of the pulpit ministry of the church and arrange for workers to assist in revival and other special services, programs, and meetings of the church. The pastor shall serve as administrative leader of the church and as chairman of the Church Council.

In the event the church is without a pastor, or during an interim pastorate, the body of active deacons shall recommend to the church body in business meeting an interim chief administrator to oversee the administration of church affairs during the interim.

(d) *Procedure for Termination of a Pastorate.* A pastorate may be terminated in either of the following ways:

- (1) *By Resignation of Pastor.* A pastor may resign the office by giving thirty (30) days' written notice to the church.
- (2) *By Declaration of Vacancy.* The church may declare the office of pastor vacant at a business meeting, called for that purpose, provided the provisions for calling such a meeting as set forth in these bylaws have been met. Before steps to terminate the service of a pastor are initiated, the chairperson of the deacons and at least two other deacons currently serving on the active deacon body, who shall be selected by the entire deacon body, shall meet with the pastor to discuss any causes for disagreement, in an attempt to bring about reconciliation and resolution between the pastor and the body of the church. Should reconciliation be deemed unachievable, a business meeting for the purpose of dismissal of the pastor shall be called upon by either (a) a written recommendation signed by 75% of the currently-serving deacons, or (b) a written petition signed by not less than one-fourth (1/4) of the active members of the church, provided the signatures have been counted and validated by the church clerk. The chairperson of the Personnel

Committee shall preside at such a business meeting. A vote on the issue of declaring the office of pastor vacant shall be conducted by written, secret ballot by members present and voting at said business meeting at which the issue of dismissal of the pastor is deliberated. A vote of at least 85.0% of members present and voting in said business meeting is required for dismissal. In the event a pastor is dismissed, a recommendation concerning compensation for the dismissed pastor shall be brought to the church at the same business meeting by the Personnel Committee in conjunction with the Finance Committee.

- (e) *Performing Marriages.* The pastor shall only perform marriages in accordance with Biblical principle, whether at Mount Yonah Baptist Church or at another location.

Section 3. Interim Pastor.

- (a) *Call of Interim Pastor.* Whenever a vacancy in the pastorate occurs, the body of active deacons shall arrange for supply of the pulpit until it is deemed advisable to call an interim pastor. An interim pastor shall be called by the church in a business meeting especially called for that purpose.
- (b) *Procedure for Calling an Interim Pastor.* If the call of an interim pastor is deemed advisable, the Personnel Committee shall consider candidates for the position of interim pastor and shall recommend to the church, convened in business meeting, the most suitable candidate for the position of interim pastor and shall report to the church terms of the agreement with the candidate, including compensation, expectation of duties to be carried out, and length of service of the interim pastor. In said business meeting, an affirmative vote of at least 85.0% of the active members present and voting shall constitute a call of the candidate as interim pastor and approval of terms of the agreement with the interim pastor. If a person elected as interim pastor is unable to lead all of the regular services of the church, it shall be the responsibility of the body of active deacons to recommend a suitable person to lead those services which the interim pastor is unable to lead during the term of the interim pastorate. Upon the expiration of the term of an interim pastor, the body of active deacons shall arrange for supply of the pulpit until the arrival of the new pastor.

Section 4. Church Staff. The church staff shall be made up of ministerial staff and non- ministerial staff. The pastor and the Personnel Committee of the church shall study the need for church staff positions, both ministerial and non-ministerial, shall prepare job descriptions for staff members, and shall recommend the creation, deletion, and/or filling of positions to the church. The Personnel Committee and the pastor shall conduct an annual review of salaries and benefits for all church employees and make recommendations for salaries and benefits to the Finance Committee.

- (a) *Ministerial Staff.* The ministerial staff, under the supervision of the pastor, shall serve for indefinite terms and shall share leadership, teaching, visitation, and other ministries with the pastor. They shall have general oversight duties in such program areas as their gifts allow.
  - (1) *Procedure for Calling a Member of the Ministerial Staff.* The Personnel Committee and the Pastor shall solicit and review resumes, interview the candidate(s), and agree on their choice of candidate. With the concurrence of the pastor, the Personnel Committee, and the Finance Committee, the Personnel Committee shall bring to the church, convened in business meeting, a recommendation concerning compensation for the staff member.

Upon agreement by the Pastor and the Personnel Committee on the choice of a candidate, that candidate shall be invited to the church for a weekend, during which the candidate shall attend a fellowship to which the church membership is invited to meet the candidate.

In accordance with the stipulations of these bylaws, the church shall then meet in business meeting, and a written, secret ballot vote shall be taken on whether or not to call the

candidate. An affirmative vote of at least 85.0% of the active membership present and voting during the business meeting is required to constitute a call.

- (2) *Procedure for Termination of Service of a Member of the Ministerial Staff.* The service of a member of the ministerial staff may be terminated either by resignation of the staff member or by dismissal action taken by the church.
  - (A) *Resignation.* A ministerial staff member may submit a written resignation to the church, after first submitting a copy to the pastor, giving thirty (30) days' written notice of intent to terminate service.
  - (B) *Dismissal.* The church may dismiss a member of the ministerial staff in a church business meeting called in accordance with these bylaws. Before steps to dismiss a member of the ministerial staff can be initiated, the pastor, the chairman of the deacons, and at least two other active deacons, who shall be selected by the entire deacon body, shall meet with the ministerial staff member to discuss any causes of disagreement, in an attempt to bring about reconciliation and resolution between the ministerial staff member and the body of the church. Should reconciliation be deemed unachievable, steps to initiate the dismissal of the ministerial staff member may be taken in one of the following ways: (1) a recommendation from the pastor and the Personnel Committee may be brought to the church in a business meeting, OR (2) two-thirds of the active deacons may bring a recommendation to the church, OR (3) not less than one-fourth (1/4) of the resident members of the church may sign a written petition to initiate such action, presenting the petition to the church clerk for counting and validation of the signatures. A vote on whether to dismiss the ministerial staff member shall take place in a church business meeting by written, secret ballot. An affirmative vote of at least 85.0% of the membership present and voting in the business meeting shall be required for dismissal.
  - (C) *Conflict of Interest.* Ministerial Staff members may not serve as a deacon or on the Personnel or Finance committees. Any staff affected may serve the remainder of their term.

- (b) *Non-Ministerial Staff.* When a vacancy occurs in a non-ministerial staff position the Personnel Committee shall search for candidates and recommend, with concurrence of the pastor, a person for election by the church in business meeting. The service of non-ministerial staff members may be terminated (a) by resignation of the staff member with fifteen (15) days' written notice or (b) by the Personnel Committee, in concurrence with the pastor and the body of active deacons.

Section 5. Deacons. The church shall elect deacons by ballot as described below. The number of deacons shall be determined by the church upon the recommendation of the pastor & deacons.

Deacons shall serve on a rotation basis. Each year the assigned term of one-third of the number of deacons shall expire, and election shall be held to fill the vacancies. In the case of death or removal or incapacity to serve, the church may elect a deacon to fill the unexpired term. After serving a term of three years' assignment, a deacon shall be eligible for reelection only after the lapse of at least one year. There shall be no obligation to accept as an active deacon one who has been a deacon in another church, but if such a person is elected by this church as a deacon, his previous ordination by another church of like faith and order shall suffice for this church.

- (a) *Deacons' Duties.* In accordance with the meaning of work and the practice in the New Testament, deacons are to be servants of the church. Their task is to assist the pastor in performing the ministerial task of the church. Those may include but are not limited to:

- (1) Assist the Senior Pastor in leading the church to fulfill its mission & ministries,

- (2) Proclaim the gospel to believers and unbelievers,
- (3) Caring for the church's members and other persons in the community.

(b) *Scriptural Qualification.* Deacons shall be men who meet the Biblical qualifications in I Timothy 3:8-13. These qualities should be found in some measure in all deacons.:

- (1) **“Likewise, deacons must be reverent”** (1 Tim 3:8). We understand this to mean the attitudes and conduct of the deacon wins the admiration of others. It refers to a respectable, well thought of person. As a highly visible church officer, deacons are expected to be role models of Christian character & living.
- (2) **“not double tongued”** (1 Tim 3:8) A deacon should be in control of his tongue. He should speak out for righteous causes. His word should be trusted. He will refrain from gossip, slander, tale-bearing, profanity, and idle talk about persons.
- (3) **“Not given to much wine”** (1Tim 3:8). Deacons must be stewards of good influence. Their lives should be free from any excess use of wine (or any other substance) that would damage any aspect of a person's reputation or service to God.
- (4) **“Not greedy for money”** (1 Tim 3:8). A deacon must not be obsessed with material possessions. He will acknowledge God's ownership and his own responsibility to be a faithful, generous steward. A deacon should tithe through the church and be generous in support of the gospel wherever there are needs for Christian ministries.
- (5) **“holding the mystery of the faith with a pure conscience”** (1 Tim 3:9) Sound doctrinal conviction should characterize a deacon. He should be convinced and committed in his faith to the entire fixed body of scriptural beliefs as found in the Old and new Testament.
- (6) **“But let these also first be tested; then let them serve as deacons, being found blameless”** (1 Tim 3:10). A deacon must be examined by both the Elder(s) and congregation of the church to determine if he meets the scriptural qualifications. A deacon should have a proven track record of faithful attendance and the study of God's Word.
- (7) **“Likewise, their wives must be reverent, not slanders, temperate, faithful in all things.** (1 Tim 3:11) We recognize that many conservative brothers and sisters in Christ interpret this text to mean women instead of wives. It is our belief that Paul is writing of the deacon's wife, and not female deacons. The deacon's wife (if married) must be a respectable, well thought of person. They must have control of their tongue and not be given to gossip or other slanderous talk. They must not be given to much wine (or any other substance) that would damage their husband's reputation or service to God. They must be faithful active members of God's church and support their husbands' ministries.
- (8) **“Let deacons be the husbands of one wife, ruling their children and their own house well.”** (1Tim 3:12). We understand this scripture to mean the deacon must be a “one-woman man”. His life and conduct must be dedicated to only one woman. His life must be free from any adulterous affairs (including the use of pornography).
  - (a) A man whose wife commits adultery, abuse, or abandonment and that has been divorced

under the guidelines of Matt 19:9 (sexual immorality), 1 Cor 7:15 (abandonment by spouse, or abuse by spouse), may serve as a deacon provided a sufficient period of time as elapsed since the divorce, and he has a good reputation in the community.

- (b) These same principles apply to a single man that marries a woman who was previously divorced under the above listed guidelines.
- (c) We further recognize that 2 Cor. 5:17 declares all sins to be in the past and that we are new creations in Christ. A man that was divorced prior to his salvation outside of biblical guidelines, and over a period of time has proved that he is a new creation in Christ, may serve as a deacon.

(c) *Deacon Elections.*

On the last Sunday in July and the first Sunday in August, a list of qualified men nominated for the office of deacon will be available to church members.

On the second Sunday of August, the active members will be asked to select deacons from the list of qualified men. The ballots will be counted by the deacons rotating off. The deacons will count the votes and deliver to the Pastor a list of nominees with the number of votes. The Pastor will inform the nominees and announce to the church the names of those elected. The deacons will elect a chairman annually.

Section 6. *Clerk.* The duties of the clerk include, but are not limited to, the following:

- (a) Keeping appropriate records of all of the formal actions of the church.
- (b) Keeping a roll containing the names of members, with dates of admission and dates of termination of membership, as well as a record of baptisms.
- (c) Issuing any letters of exclusion from membership as voted upon by the church body, as well as any official letters dealing with termination of employment of church officers and/or staff.
- (d) Giving legal notice of all church meetings wherein such legal notice is necessary and appropriate.
- (e) Being responsible for the oversight and safekeeping of official church records. Such oversight and safekeeping may be delegated to the church office staff as is deemed prudent and appropriate.
- (f) Being responsible for various other duties as outlined in these bylaws and as requested by the church body.

Section 7. *Treasurer.* The treasurer shall work with the Budget/Finance Committee to ensure the following:

- (a) A budget is properly prepared and presented to the church before the beginning of each fiscal year.
- (b) Shall see that membership, contribution and financial records are kept in accordance with law, IRS requirements, and the stipulations of these Bylaws.
- (c) The treasurer shall work closely with the Pastor, Council, Finance Committee, and Church staff to develop and recommend policies and procedure related to receiving, accounting, disbursing and reporting Church finances.
- (d) The treasurer shall have the duties of financial secretary and ensure following prescribed procedures in recording and reporting all financial transaction.
- (e) Receive and pay out, upon receipt of vouchers approved and signed by authorized personnel, all money or things of value paid or given to the church.
- (f) Have charge and custody of and be responsible for all funds and securities of the Church. All

funds received for any and all purposes shall pass through the hands of the church treasurer and be properly recorded on the books of the church.

- (g) Keep an itemized account of all receipts and disbursements. Ensure funds are accurately distributed and divided as designated.
- (h) A written report is given to the congregation of the financial condition of the church at each regular business meeting.
- (i) The physical safety of all deposits is ensured.
- (j) Being responsible for the oversight of all financial records. Such oversight may be delegated to the church secretary as is deemed prudent and appropriate.
- (k) The treasurer shall serve as an ex-officio non-voting member of the Finance Committee.
- (l) The treasurer and assistant treasurer shall be bonded and shall sign checks as required. The church paying the bond.
- (m) Personnel handling contributions are following established procedures in the accurate accounting of individual contributions. The counting committee and secretary shall be bonded, the church paying the bond.
- (n) In the absence of the treasurer, the assistant treasurer shall fulfill the treasurer's duties.
- (o) A public accountant or an auditing committee may annually audit the treasurer's report and records. The treasurer and assistant treasurer may not serve on the auditing committee. Said audit must be performed before records are accepted at Conference.
- (p) Upon rendering the annual account, at the end of each fiscal year, and its acceptance and approval by the church, the Treasurer shall deliver the records to the church clerk who shall keep and preserve the account as a part of the permanent records of the church.

Section 8. Trustees. The church shall have a rotating group of three trustees. Each year the Nominating Committee shall recommend to the church body in business meeting a person to fill the trustee vacancy created by the rotation procedure. A nominee for the position of trustee must have been a member of this church for at least two years. After an opportunity for nominations from the floor, the trustee shall be elected by the church and shall join the other trustees already serving. The trustees of the church shall serve as officers of the church corporation. They shall have no power to buy, sell, mortgage, lease, or transfer any church property without a specific vote of the church membership authorizing each action. It shall be the function of the trustees to affix their signatures to legal documents involving the sale, mortgaging, rental, or purchase of property, or any other legal documents whereupon the signatures of the trustees or corporate officers are required. These responsibilities shall involve no personal liability on the part of the trustees. The trustees shall keep written minutes of their meetings, copies of which shall be filed in the church office and preserved as official church records.

### **ARTICLE III INDEMNIFICATION**

Section 1. Right to Indemnification. The Church shall indemnify any director or officer to the fullest extent under the Georgia Nonprofit Corporation Code who was or is a party to any threatened, pending, or completed action, suit, or proceeding, whether civil, criminal, administrative, or investigative, including all appeals for breach of duty of care or other duty as a director or officer. Indemnification shall be against all expenses, including without limitation, attorney's fees, court costs, expert witness fees, judgements, decrees, and fines actually paid by the person in settlement of any action, suit or proceedings provided that the Trustees shall first have determined, in its sole judgment, that the person acted in good faith and in a manner that he or she reasonably believed to be in the best interests of the Corporation. The termination of any action, suit, or proceeding by judgment, order settlement, conviction, or on a plea of nolo contendere or its equivalent, shall not of itself create a presumption that the person did not act in good faith.



Section 2. Limitations to Right of Indemnification. No indemnification shall be made to a director or officer:

- (a) For any appropriation, in violation of his duties, of any business opportunity of the corporation;
- (b) For acts or omissions which involve intentional misconduct or a knowing violation of the law;
- (c) For the type of misconduct as set for in Code Section 14-2-831; or
- (d) For any transaction from which the director or officer received an improper personal benefit.

Section 3. Advancement of Expenses. Expenses incurred in defending a civil suit or criminal action, suit or proceeding may be paid by the Church in advance of the final disposition of the action, suit or proceeding as authorized by the Trustees, or receipt, by the Trustees, of an undertaking by or on behalf of the director or officer involved to repay the expenses if it is ultimately determined that the person is not entitled to be indemnified by the Church as authorized by this Article.

Section 4. Indemnification Not Exclusive. The indemnification provided by the Article shall not be deemed to be exclusive of any other rights to which any person indemnified may be entitled under any Bylaw, agreement, vote of the Church members or disinterested directors or otherwise. The indemnification provided by this Article shall be deemed exclusive of any other power to indemnify or right to indemnification that the Church or any person referred to in the Article may have or acquire under the laws of the State of Georgia. Indemnification shall continue and inure to the benefit of the heirs, executors, and administrators of any person entitle to indemnification under this Article.

Section 5. Liability Insurance. The Church may purchase and maintain insurance on behalf of any person who is or was a director, officer, or designated agent of the Church against any liability asserted against, and incurred by that person whether or not the Church would have the power to indemnify him or her under the provisions of the Article or of the Georgia Nonprofit Corporation Code.

Section 6. Expansion of Powers. If either the Georgia Nonprofit Corporation Act or the Georgia Business Corporation Act is amended in the future to expand or increase the power of the Church to indemnify, to pay expenses in advance of final disposition, to enter into contracts, or to expand or increase any similar or related power, then, without any further requirement of action by the Directors of this Corporation, the powers described in this Article shall be expanded and increased to the fullest extent permitted by the Georgia Nonprofit Corporation Act and the Georgia Business Corporation Act, as so amended.

Section 7. Severability. If any provision of this Article or any application thereof shall be invalid, unenforceable or contrary to applicable law, the remainder of this Article, or the application of such provision to persons or circumstances other than those as to which it is held invalid, unenforceable or contrary to applicable law, shall not be affected thereby and shall continue in full force and effect.

Section 8. Applicable Law. For the purposes of this Article, “applicable law” shall at all times be construed as the applicable law in effect at the date indemnification may be sought, or the law in effect at the date of the action, omission or other event giving rise to the situation for which indemnification may be sought, whichever is selected by the person seeking indemnification.

## **ARTICLE IV ORDINANCES OF THE CHURCH**

Section 1. Baptism. Christian baptism is the immersion of a believer in water in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. The pastor or any other pastor designated baptized believer shall perform baptism on behalf of this church. Baptism shall be administered as soon as possible after the believer’s public confession of faith and shall be administered at any regular worship service.

Section 2. *The Lord's Supper.* The Lord's Supper shall be observed at least quarterly. The pastor, the church staff, and the deacons shall plan and administer the Lord's Supper.

## **ARTICLE V CHURCH MEETINGS**

Section 1. *Regular Worship Services.* The church shall hold regular worship services open to all persons for the purpose of worship, prayer, preaching, instruction, evangelism, training, and fellowship each Sunday and Wednesday. Should circumstances so dictate, the pastor or ministerial staff members or the chairman of the active deacon body may approve the cancellation or re-scheduling of services.

Section 2. *Special Worship Services.* All special worship services essential to the promotion of the purpose and objectives of the church shall be placed on the church calendar, published in the church's newsletter, at least one (1) week before the services are held, and announced at all services on the Sunday prior to the conducting of the special services.

Section 3. *Regular Business Meetings.* The church body shall meet in regular business meeting once a quarter for the purpose of transacting the business of the church, accepting and dismissing members, and hearing reports from the various church programs and ministries.

If the Regular Meeting is rescheduled:

- a. Electronic notification shall be attempted if possible.
- b. At least 7 days notification shall be given for the new meeting date.
- c. Notification shall be made through church announcement and electronic notification shall be attempted.

Section 4. *Called Business Meetings.* A business meeting may be called for a special purpose. Notice of the subject to be considered, the date and time, and the specific location of the called business meeting must be announced from the pulpit at all Sunday services on a Sunday at least one week prior to the meeting and shall be published in the church's bulletin, during the week before the meeting is held. In a called business meeting, only the subject announced as the purpose for the meeting may be considered; no other items of business may be introduced.

Section 5. *Procedures for Conduct of Business Meetings.* A quorum in either a regularly- scheduled business meeting or a called business meeting shall consist of those church members who attend the business meeting. Except when otherwise specified in these bylaws or stipulated by parliamentary procedure, a simple majority (more than 50.0%) of the membership present and voting on any matter shall constitute approval of the matter. Unless otherwise stipulated in these bylaws, all secret ballots shall be counted immediately following the vote in the presence of the church body. The moderator shall appoint persons to count the ballots, and the results shall be announced immediately after the count is completed. All secret ballots shall be secured in the church office for a period of three months from the date of the vote, after which time they shall be destroyed.

Section 6. *Notice of Meetings.* A written or e-mail notice of annual or special business meetings of the members, stating the time, the place, and in case of special business meetings, the object or objects of the meetings shall be given by or at the direction of the Clerk to each active member of record entitled to vote at the meeting. The record date for the determination of members who are entitled to vote at a meeting of members shall be the close of business on the date preceding the date on which notice is given. Notice shall be mailed or electronically given (e-mail, phone, etc.) not more than sixty (60) nor less than seven (7) days before the date fixed for the meeting to the member's contact information on the books of the Church.

Notice shall be deemed to have been given on the day mailed or electronically sent. No failure or irregularity of notice of meeting shall invalidate the meeting or any proceeding or action taken at the meeting, and actual attendance at any meeting without protest prior to commencement of the meeting shall constitute a waiver. Notice of business meetings may be waived by any member or by all members, pursuant to law.

Section 7. Waiver of Notice. The transactions of any meeting of the Members of the Church, however called and noticed or wherever held, shall be as valid as though taken at a meeting duly held after regular call and notice if either before or after the meeting, each of the Members not present signs a written waiver of notice, a consent to holding the meeting, or approves the minutes. The waiver of notice or consent shall specify the purpose of the meeting. All waivers, consents, and approvals shall be filed with the corporate records or made a part of the minutes of the meeting. Notice of a meeting need not be given to any Member who attends the meeting without protesting before or at its commencement about the lack of notice.

Section 8. Rules of Procedure. The most recent edition of *Robert's Rules of Order* shall be the authority in matters of parliamentary procedure governing the deliberations in all church business meetings, except when superseded by provisions of the constitution and bylaws of the church.

Section 9. Moderator. The pastor shall moderate all business meetings. In the absence of the pastor, either the associate pastor or the chairman of deacons shall serve as acting moderator. In the absence of all three of these, the church clerk shall call the church to order, and an acting moderator shall be elected.

## **ARTICLE VI CHURCH PROGRAMS AND MINISTRIES**

Section 1. General Provisions. All internal groups created and empowered by the church shall be accountable to and report directly to the church body, unless otherwise specified by church action. All programs and ministries of the church shall be approved by the church and shall be subject to church coordination and general supervision. All program officers shall be elected by the church body, to whom these officers shall report on a regular basis regarding program activities and outcomes. All program leaders must be members of this church and shall serve for one-year terms. The program year for all church programs shall be from September 1 through August 31.

The church shall plan and organize such ministries as it deems necessary. All ministries are subject to coordination and scheduling by the Church Council. Ministry leaders should be members of this church.

Exceptions to committee member and committee leadership membership requirement of 1-year may be made by interview to Pastor, deacons, and Nominating Committee when no qualified church members are available for the specific position.

People may volunteer under a member at events without being a member themselves.

Section 2. Church Council.

The Church Council shall meet regularly to schedule and coordinate the work of the church. The Church Council shall consist of church members holding the following positions: pastor (chairman of council), ministerial staff members, church clerk (secretary of council), Treasurer, WMU director, Men's Ministry director, Sunday School director, chairman of deacons, and chair of Budget and Finance Committee. From time to time, the Church Council may request other leaders to attend the council meetings.

The primary function of the church council shall be to recommend to the church suggested objectives and church goals; to review and coordinate ministry and program plans recommended by the church officers, organizations, and committees; to recommend to the church the use of leadership, calendar time and other resources according to program priorities; and to evaluate achievements in terms of church objectives and goals.

- (a) In the event the Pastor is unavailable to chair, the Council shall elect a chair from the members present.
- (b) The Clerk shall take minutes of the meetings, which shall be part of the permanent record of the Church.
- (c) All matters agreed upon by the council which call for action not already approved shall be referred to the church for approval or disapproval.

Section 3. Church Programs. All organizations related to the church programs shall be under church control, all officers being elected by the church and reporting regularly to the church, and all activities subject the church coordination and approval. Programs and descriptions shall be found in the Policy and Procedure Manual.

- (a) *Sunday School.* The Sunday School program shall be the Bible-teaching organization and evangelistic outreach of the church. It shall be organized as appropriate for all ages and shall be under the direction of the Sunday School director and other officers elected by the church, with help from appropriate advisory committees. The Sunday School Director shall supply to the nominating committee recommendations for Sunday School staff for the coming year, to be elected. Prospective Sunday School teachers should be an active member of the church for one year. This requirement may be waived by interview with pastor and deacons.
- (b) *Music Organization.* Under the direction of the church-elected music director, the Music ministry shall be the music education, training and performance organization of the church. Its task shall be to teach music, training persons to lead, sing and play music, provide music in the church and community, provide and interpret information regarding the work of the church and denomination. The church music program may have officers and organization as the program requires.

## **ARTICLE VII CHURCH COMMITTEES**

Section 1. General Provisions. The church shall establish such standing and *ad hoc* committees as it deems necessary to fulfill its stated purpose. Members of all committees shall be active members of Mount Yonah Baptist Church. The pastor shall be a non-voting member of each committee.

Section 2. Creation of Committees. Whenever the creation of a new committee, either standing or *ad hoc*, becomes available, except in cases as otherwise designated in these bylaws [Article II, Sections 2(b), 3(b) and 4(a)], the pastor shall bring to the church body in business meeting a recommendation concerning the responsibilities of the committee. If the church body votes to establish the new committee, the Nominating Committee shall nominate members of the church to make up the committee, including a recommendation for chairperson of the committee. The members of the newly-created committee shall be elected by the church in business meeting. Unless otherwise designated committees shall comprise 6 members.

Section 3. Standing Committees. Standing committees shall serve on the program year (September 1 through August 31). The terms of members of all standing committees, unless otherwise designated, shall be for three years, set up on a rotation basis with one-third of the members on each committee elected annually to replace the members whose terms expire that year. Members of standing committees who have served a three-year term shall not be eligible to serve again on the same committee until one year has passed. When a new standing committee is formed, one-third of the members shall be elected for a one-year term, one-third for a two-year term, and one-third for a three-year term. The chairperson and secretary of each standing committee shall be designated annually by those committees, preferably a person who has served at least one year on the committee. All standing committees are accountable to the church body and shall report regularly to the church in business meeting. A standing committee may be disbanded only by vote of the church body and amendment to the bylaws, removing that committee from

the list of the church's authorized standing committees. Each standing committee shall meet at least once each quarter and the secretary of the committee shall keep written minutes of its meetings, copies of which shall be filed in the church office and preserved as official church records.

Section 4. *Ad Hoc Committees.* An *ad hoc* committee serves until the task for which it was elected has been completed. It shall make its report to the church body, and then it shall be disbanded and have no further responsibilities.

Section 5. *Duties and Responsibilities.* The duties and responsibilities of all church committees shall be set forth in detail in a Church Policies and Procedures Manual. All notable changes in committee operating procedures require approval of the Church.

Section 6. *Authorized Standing Committees.* The following standing committees are authorized by the church:

- (a) Nominating Committee
- (b) Personnel Committee
- (c) Budget/Finance
- (d) Counting Committee, non-rotating
- (e) Constitution/Bylaws
- (f) Properties and Grounds Committee
- (g) Security Committee
- (h) Child Protection Committee
- (i) Transportation Committee
- (j) Kitchen Committee

Section 7. *Committee Descriptions.*

- (a) *Nominating Committee.* The Nominating Committee, recommended by the Deacons in May and elected annually by the Church, shall act on behalf of the Church to nominate individuals to fill positions, including Committee members and church elected leadership positions. This Committee shall first approve the individual considered for a position before approaching the individual for recruitment. The Nominating Committee shall present to the Church for election all who accept the invitation to serve. No committee member nominations shall be allowed from the floor; the Nominating Committee shall have to consider the person and present them for a vote. The Nominating Committee shall have the authority to establish or dissolve all church committees subject to the approval and/or recommendation of the Church.
- (b) *Personnel Committee.* The Personnel Committee assists the Church in matters related to volunteer and employed personnel administration, including those called by church action. Their work includes such areas as determining staff needs, employment, salaries, benefits, other compensation, policies, job descriptions, and personnel services.
- (c) *Budget/Finance Committee.* The Finance Committee and treasurer develop and recommend an overall stewardship development plan, the Church budget, and budget subscription plans. It advises and recommends in the administration of the gifts of Church members and others, using sound principles of financial management. The Finance Committee works with the treasurer in the preparation and presentation to the Church of required reports regarding the financial affairs of the church. The Budget and Finance Committee will oversee an annual audit of the treasurer's report and records.
- (d) *Counting Committee.* The Counting Committee works with the treasurer to ensure proper procedures are adhered to when counting and depositing the weekly tithes and offerings. The Counting Committee is a non-rotating committee, but members must be voted on yearly to be

bonded.

- (e) *Constitution/Bylaws Committee.* The Constitution and Bylaws Committee will consider all proposed changes to the constitution and bylaws at a regular business meeting according to the bylaws. They will also monitor the actions of the church to assure conformity to the provision of this constitution and bylaws. They are responsible for maintaining and updating the bylaws and amendments. This is a 3-member committee.
- (f) *Property and Grounds Committee.* The Property and Grounds Committee assists the Church in matters related to properties administration. Its work includes such areas as maintaining all Church properties for ready use, recommending policies regarding use of properties.
- (g) *Security Committee.* The Security Committee develops and recommends a safety plan for the church, to encompass evacuation plans, safety procedures, threat assessment, and training of the committee members.
- (h) *Child Protection Committee.* The Child Protection Committee develops the policies and procedures for the Child Protection Policy. It oversees the training and background investigations of those wishing to work with juveniles 17 and under in all areas of the church. It shall designate certain individuals as the Designated Mandated Reporters for the Church. This is a non-rotating committee that has at least 4 and may exceed 6 members.
- (i) *Transportation Committee.* Responsible for the administration of the Transportation Policy and approval of those on the Transportation Team.
- (j) *Kitchen Committee.* The Kitchen Committee is assigned responsibility for monitoring and managing the Kitchen and food service activities and areas and recommending policies related to this ministry.

Section 7. Removal. Removal from committee may occur upon request by member, termination of membership, membership deemed inactive, termination of committee, upon discipline by Church.

Section 8. Vacancy. Vacancy in committee shall be filled by nomination of Nominating Committee and Church vote at next regular business meeting. If vacancy cannot be filled, position may stand vacant.

## **ARTICLE VIII CHURCH FINANCES**

Section 1. Accountability. All tithes, offerings, and other income of the church shall be managed and dispersed by basic Biblical stewardship practices. It is solely the right and responsibility of the church to establish all designated funds for the benefit of any part of the church's operation, and the church will accept no monies designated for specific funds unless the funds have been established by the Budget/Finance Committee in meeting or the Church body in business meeting. Each member of the church is encouraged to tithe prayerfully, joyfully, and systematically through the unified church budget account. In addition, each member is encouraged to give offerings above the tithe through the several mission offerings and other funds of the church.

Section 2. Fiscal Year. The church's fiscal year shall run concurrently with the calendar year – from January 1 through December 31.

Section 3. Church Planning and Budgeting. The Finance Committee shall be responsible for the general supervision of the administration of the financial resources of the church. The Finance Committee shall work in cooperation with the church staff, program directors, and church committees to prepare and submit annual budget requests to the church. The proposed budget shall be made available the first Sunday of

November and shall be presented for approval at the November business meeting. The budget shall be approved by the church in called business meeting no later than December 31 of each year, if necessary. The Finance Committee shall meet at least one time each quarter during the year to monitor cash flow, to ensure accountability and oversight of the financial situation of the church, and to make any needed recommendations to the church in business meeting. The church treasurer shall be a non-voting member of the Finance Committee.

Section 4. Procedures, Responsibilities, and Reporting. All monies of the church shall be deposited to, transferred within, or withdrawn from the established accounts governed by the policies of the church. The Finance Committee shall be responsible for the stewardship of these accounts in accordance with church policies. A printed statement of the beginning balance, revenues, expenditures, and the closing balance for each account shall be presented by the chairman of the Finance Committee or treasurer at each regular business meeting.

The financial procedures are outlined in the Financial Policies.

Section 5. Signatures on Checks. All checks issued by the church from any account shall bear the signatures of either the church treasurer or the assistant treasurer.

Section 6. Requests for Funds. Any request for the expenditure of funds not previously approved in the budget shall be made to the Finance Committee or treasurer. If the Finance Committee approves the request, the Finance Committee shall present the request to the church body in business meeting. In the event of an immediate need of any emergency nature, the Finance Committee shall be authorized to approve the expenditure and report it to the church in the next business meeting.

## **ARTICLE IX CHURCH POLICIES AND PROCEDURES MANUAL**

Section 1. General Provisions. Recognizing the need for the consistent and uniform application of policies and procedures in the on-going functioning of the church, the church shall provide for the orderly preparation and maintenance of a Church Policies and Procedures Manual. The manual shall include, but not be limited to, personnel policies; financial policies; job descriptions for all church staff positions, deacons, church officers, and committees in the church; organizational charts to show lines of responsibility and accountability in the administration of the church; church use and facility policies; motor vehicle policies; and nursery policies.

Documentation shall be based on church action of record and/or precedent when no church action has occurred or is required. The manual shall be maintained in the church office under the direction of the pastor. It shall be made available for use by any individual member of group of members as the need arises.

## **ARTICLE X LIMITING LANGUAGE**

Section 1. Conflicts of Interest. Any member of the Staff, Council, church member who has a potential conflict of interest with respect to any proposed transaction of the corporation shall promptly disclose to the remaining members of the voting members all material facts relating to the potential conflict of interest. The voting members will not be precluded from approving any transaction in which a member of the body may have a conflict of interest if the following conditions are met: (1) the member in question refrains from participating in any deliberations or decisions relating the transaction, and (2) a majority of the remaining member determine after due investigation that enter into the transaction will be in the best interest of the corporation.

Section 2. Limitation on Private Inurement. The property of the corporation is irrevocably dedicated to nonprofit purposes. No part of the net earnings or assets of the corporation shall inure to the benefit of, or be distributed to its members, directors, trustees, officers or other private persons, except that the corporation shall be authorized and empowered to pay reasonable compensation for services rendered and to make payments and distributions in furtherance of the purposes of the corporation.

Section 3. Limitation on Political Activity. No substantial part of the activities of the corporation shall be the carrying on of propaganda, or otherwise attempting to influence legislation, and the corporation shall not participate in, or intervene in (including the publishing or distributing of statements) any political campaign on behalf of or in opposition to any candidate for public office.

Section 4. Limitation upon Dissolution. Upon dissolution of the corporation, after payment of any outstanding liabilities, assets shall be distributed to the White County Baptist Association and Georgia Baptist Mission Board to assist with current or future church planting projects.

Section 5. Limitation upon Merger. Upon merger of Mt Yonah Baptist Church with another church, the following criteria shall determine to what party the assets shall be distributed.

- (a) Should the merger of the Mt Yonah Baptist Church with another church result in a church that is affiliated in good standing the Georgia Baptist Convention, the net assets of Mt Yonah Baptist Church shall be distributed to the resulting church.
- (b) Should the merger of Mt Yonah Baptist Church with another church result in a church that is not affiliated in good standing with the Georgia Baptist Convention, the assets of Mt Yonah Baptist Church shall be distributed to the Georgia Baptist Convention.

Section 6. Other Limitations. Notwithstanding any other provision of these bylaws, the corporation shall not carry on any other activities not permitted to be carried on (a) by a corporation exempt from federal income tax under section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code, or the corresponding section of any future tax code, or (b) by a corporation, contributions to which are deductible under section 170(c)(2) of the Internal Revenue Code, or the corresponding section of any future federal tax code.

## **ARTICLE XI ADOPTION**

Section 1. General Provisions. These bylaws shall be considered adopted and in immediate effect if and when two-thirds (2/3) of the active members present and voting at the business meeting at which the vote is taken to adopt the bylaws shall vote in favor of adoption. This vote shall be taken not less than fourteen (14) days and not more than thirty (90) days after formal presentation of these bylaws to the church. Once adopted, these bylaws shall abolish, supersede, and replace all bylaws which preceded them.

Section 2. Maintenance of Bylaws. A copy of these bylaws shall be kept in the church office. All amendments and revisions to these bylaws, after passage by church vote, shall be prepared by the church clerk and incorporated into the bylaws of the church. The bylaws, and all amendments and revisions thereof, shall be made available to church members upon request. Bylaws Committee is to ensure the maintenance of the bylaws.

## **ARTICLE XII AMENDMENTS**

Section 1. Procedure for Amendment. Amendments to these bylaws shall be made by the following procedure:

- (a) Any active member of the church shall have the right to submit in writing a request for an



amendment to these bylaws during a church business meeting. The request for amendment shall be referred automatically to the Constitution and Bylaws Committee for study. The Constitution and Bylaws Committee shall bring its report concerning the request for amendment to the next regularly-scheduled business meeting.

- (b) If the Constitution and Bylaws Committee recommends the amendment, the committee shall present the proposed amendment to the church body in writing during a business meeting.
- (c) The text of the proposed amendment shall be published at least twice in the church's newsletter prior to being voted upon.
- (d) Copies of the proposed amendment shall be made available to all active church members attending the business meeting at which the amendment is voted upon.
- (e) A vote on adopting the amendment shall be taken in a business meeting not less than fourteen (14) days nor more than ninety (90) days after the formal presentation of the amendment to the church by the Constitution and Bylaws Committee.

### **CERTIFICATE OF CLERK**

I, the undersigned, certify that I am the presently elected and acting Clerk of the Mount Yonah Baptist Church, a Georgia Nonprofit Corporation, and that the Bylaws, consisting of 26 pages plus deacon candidate addendum, are the Constitution and Bylaws of this Church as adopted by a vote of the Church members on the 19<sup>th</sup> day of August, 2018.

Executed at Mt Yonah Baptist Church, this day of \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Cheryl Mize, Clerk

## Deacon Candidate Questionnaire

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Dear Brother,

You have been nominated to fill the office of Deacon in the church. This nomination indicates the great trust and confidence the congregation has in you. The qualifications for Deacons and Elders of the church are very similar and Paul was just as concerned the church select a biblically qualified Deacon as he was in selecting a biblically qualified Elder. To help the congregation finalize its selection, please answer the following questions.

1. Have you read the requirements for a Deacon as defined in 1 Tim 3:8-12? Do you meet these requirements as Mt Yonah Baptist Church understands them as defined in section 5 of our by-laws?

Yes      No

2. How are you reflecting Christ-like attributes each day so as to be a role model to others?

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3. All deacons are required to “hold the mystery of the faith with a pure conscience.” We understand this means you are living a life of sound doctrinal conviction that involves a growing knowledge of Christ and conduct that is in alignment with your profession. Please explain how you are pursuing Christ and growing in His knowledge and love each day.

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4. Deacons are required to be generous in their giving of their time, talent, and resources. Mt Yonah Baptist church believes that tithing is a scriptural principle that should be followed. Please answer the following questions:

- Do you currently tithe to the church and is it reflected in the churches record of giving?

Yes.      No

- How have you been involved with the different ministries of the church outside of Sunday morning over the past year?

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5. As a Deacon, you are a servant leader and will be expected to be present at all services of the church. Are you able to attend Sunday morning and Wednesday evening services?

Yes. No

6. Have you been married before? Yes. No.

7. Are you a widower? Yes No

8. Are you divorced? Yes. No

9. Was your divorce prior to salvation? Yes. No

- Date of divorce \_\_\_\_\_ Date of salvation \_\_\_\_\_

If divorced, please provide detailed information that lead to your divorce, (this information will be kept confidential.)

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10. Is your wife (if married) in agreement with your service as a deacon in the church? Yes.

No

11. Is there anything in your life that would hinder you from serving, or reflect poorly on the church, should you be elected? Yes. No

Explain if necessary: \_\_\_\_\_

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12. Deacons that are fathers must be able to care for and lead his children. He must provide for them both financially, emotionally, and spiritually. Tell us how you lead your family in the study of God's Word and worship.

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Please provide a detailed written testimony of your salvation including any dates you recall:

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