

GUNNERY ROAD BAPTIST CHURCH

Constitution & Bylaws

Article I—Trust Agreement and Structure

Section 1: Trust Agreement

Whereas: The trustor is a local assembly of saved, baptized believers in Jesus Christ who hold themselves out as a church under the name of Gunnery Road Baptist Church (formally Lee Baptist Church) and are a local New Testament church founded by Jesus Christ pursuant to the Scriptures of the Holy Bible and governed solely by the precepts, commandments and ordinances contained therein and subject solely to the Lord Jesus Christ as the head of the church (Eph. 1:22; Col. 1:18);

Whereas: The trustor, a local New Testament church, acknowledges that all properties of the Church are properties of God entrusted to the Church for the use of the Church for the furtherance of the ministries of the Church pursuant to the Scriptures of the Holy Bible;

Whereas: The trustor, a local New Testament church, is desirous of holding title to God's property in the name of the Pastor of the Church as a steward of God (Tit. 1:7) and as a Trustee of the Church and now desires to formalize the terms of such trust.

Now, therefore be it declared that the Trustor, a local New Testament church in Lee County, state of Florida, hereby transfers to Pastor Terry Vance, as Trustee, all the property presently entrusted to the Church together with any property that may become subject to this Trust Agreement, the Trust Estate, to be held, administered and distributed by the Trustee as provided in this Trust Agreement as follows:

Section 2: The Trust Structure

- (A) The Trustor. The original Trustors are those registered active members of the local assembly of saved, baptized believers in Jesus Christ who hold themselves out as a church under the name Gunnery Road Baptist Church and whose names are contained in the official membership list of the Church and who are at least 18 years of age. A copy of this list is attached as exhibit "A".
- (B) Name of the Trust. The name of this trust shall be the Gunnery Road Baptist Church.
- (C) Purpose of Trust. The trust is created and shall be operated exclusively for religious purposes as a church and its integrated auxiliaries. The trust involves real property only and does not affect the normal church operation or its finances or treasury.
- (D) Nature of Church Property. All properties of the Church are held in trust by the Pastor, as Trustee, for the benefit of the active members of the Church. It is the Church's fundamental belief that all property of the Church is held in trust for their sovereign, the Lord Jesus Christ.
- (E) Rights Reserved to Trustor. The Trustor shall have the right at any time to add other property to the trust created by this Agreement and such property, when received by the Trustee, shall become a part of the Trust Estate of this trust. The Trustee may at his discretion accept additional properties from any source.
- (F) Powers of the Trustee. In his capacity as Trustee with respect to the management of the Trust

Estate, the Trustee shall be guided by the precepts, commandments and ordinances as set forth in the Scriptures of the Holy Bible which, in the event of any conflict with the powers hereinafter designated, shall prevail. This agreement is not intended to add or subtract from or to interfere in any way with the duties of the Pastor of the Church as such duties are set forth in the Scriptures of the Holy Bible.

In the administration of this trust and of the trust estate, the Trustee shall have all powers and authority necessary or available to carry out the purposes of this trust and, without limiting the generality of the foregoing, shall have the following powers and authority:

- (1) Improve, repair, manage, operate and control;
- (2) Upon specific authorization of the Trustor by majority (50% + 1 person as in 4.02.D et al, unless otherwise noted) vote, encumber or hypothecate for any trust purpose by mortgage, deed of trust, pledge or otherwise;
- (3) To carry insurance of such kinds and in such amounts at the expense of the Church Trustor as the Church may deem advisable;
- (4) Upon specific authorization of the Trustor by majority vote, commence or defend at the expense of the Church Trustor such litigation with respect to any trust provided for in this Agreement or any property of the Trust Estate as the church may deem advisable;
- (5) Upon specific authorization of the Trustor by majority vote, the Trustee shall have the power to borrow money from any person, firm or corporation, for any trust purpose on such terms and conditions as the Church may deem proper and to obligate the Church Trustor to repay such borrowed money;
- (6) Upon specific authorization of the Trustor by majority vote, to receive income, profits, rents, and proceeds of the trust fund;
- (7) Upon specific authorization of the Trustor by majority vote, to purchase, subscribe for, retain, invest, and reinvest in securities or other property wherever situated, and whether or not productive or of a wasting nature, and without any requirement for diversification as the kind or amount. The words include real or personal property, corporate shares, common or preferred, or any other interest in any corporation, association, investment trust, or investment company, bond notes, debentures, or other evidences of indebtedness or investments for a Trustee under the applicable laws; but securities or other property shall to be deemed to include shares or indebtedness of the Donor unless the same is donated to this trust;
- (8) Upon specific authorization of the Trustor by majority vote, to sell for cash or on credit, convert, redeem, exchange for other securities or other property, or otherwise dispose of any securities of other property at any time held by them;
- (9) Upon specific authorization of the Trustor by majority vote, to exercise any conversion privilege or subscription right available in connection with any securities or other property; to consent to the reorganization, consolidation, merger, or readjustment of the finances of any corporation, company or association or to the sale, mortgage, pledge, or lease of the property of any corporation, company or association any of the securities of which may at any time be held by them and to do any act, including the exercise of options, the making of agreements or subscriptions, and the payment of expenses, assessments or subscriptions which may be deemed necessary or advisable, and to hold

and retain any securities or other property which they may so acquire;

- (10) Upon specific authorization of the Trustor by majority vote, to vote personally, or by general or limited proxy, any shares of stock, and similarly to exercise personally; or by general or by limited power of attorney, and any right appurtenant to any securities or other property;
- (11) To hold part or all of the trust fund uninvested;
- (12) To employ suitable accountants, agents, counsel and custodians and to pay their reasonable expenses and compensation;
- (13) To register any securities held by them in their own name or, to the extent permitted by law, in the name of a nominee with or without the addition of words indicating that such securities are held in a fiduciary capacity and to hold any securities unregistered or in bearer form; and
- (14) To make, execute and deliver all instruments necessary or proper for the accomplishment of the purpose of this trust or of any of the foregoing powers, including deeds, bills of sale, transfers, leases, mortgages, security agreements, assignments, conveyances, contracts, purchase agreements, waivers, releases and settlements.

(G) Bond and Compensation. The Trustee shall not be required to furnish any bond of surety. The Trustee shall receive no compensation for his services as Trustee under this Trust Agreement provided, however, the Pastor shall be compensated for his Pastoral duties.

(H) Resignation and Successor Trustee.

- (1) Qualifications of the Trustee: The Trustee shall be the duly elected Pastor of the Church. Should the Trustee cease to act as Pastor of the Church, then he shall cease to be the Trustee.
- (2) Resignation of a Trustee: In the event that the Trustee resigns or the Pastor/Trustee ceases to act as Pastor of the Church, then an election of a new Trustee shall be held.
- (3) Powers of Successor Trustee: Any successor Trustee selected in accordance with subparagraph (2) above shall immediately succeed to all title of the Trustee to the Trust Estate and to all powers, rights, discretions, obligations and immunities of the Trustee under this Trust Agreement with the same effect as though such successor Trustee were originally named as Trustee in this Agreement.
- (4) Interim Trustee: In the event that the Pastor is unable to fulfill his duties as Trustee or has resigned, the congregation may elect an Interim Trustee by majority vote of those active members present who are eligible to vote to serve for a period of time not exceeding six (6) months.

Article 2—The Church Structure

Section 1: statement of faith

- (A) The Holy Scriptures. We believe in the verbal plenary inspiration of the Scriptures in the original manuscripts. The Scriptures are inerrant, infallible and God-breathed and are, therefore, the final authority for faith and life. The sixty-six books of the Old and New Testaments are the complete and divine revelation of God to Man. The Scriptures shall be interpreted according to their normal grammatical-historical meaning (2 Tim. 3:16-17; 2 Pet. 1:20-21).
- (B) Dispensationalism. We believe that the Scriptures interpreted in their natural, literal sense reveal divinely determined dispensations or rules of life that define man's responsibilities in successive ages. These dispensations are not ways of salvation but rather are divinely ordered stewardships by which God directs man according to His purpose. Three of these dispensations—the law, the church, and the kingdom—are the subjects of detailed revelation in Scripture (Gen. 1:28; 1 Cor. 9:17; 2 Cor. 3:9-18; Gal. 3:13-25; Eph. 1:10; 3:2-10; Col. 1:24-25, 27; Rev. 20:2-6).
- (C) The Godhead. We believe in one triune God, eternally existing in three persons—Father, Son, and Holy Spirit—each co-eternal in being, co-identical in nature, co-equal in power and glory, and having the same attributes and perfections (Deut. 6:4; Matt. 28:19; John 14:10, 26; 2 Cor. 13:14).
- (D) The Person and Work of Christ.
- (1) We believe that the Lord Jesus Christ, the eternal Son of God, became man, without ceasing to be God, having been conceived by the Holy Spirit and born of the virgin Mary in order that He might reveal God and redeem sinful men (Isa. 7:14; 9:6; Luke 1:35; John 1:1-2, 14; 2 Cor. 5:19-21; Gal. 4:4-5; Phil. 2:5-8).
 - (2) We believe that the Lord Jesus Christ accomplished our redemption through His death on the cross as a representative, substitutionary sacrifice, and that our justification is made sure by His literal, physical resurrection from the dead (Acts 2:18-36; Rom. 3:24-25; Eph. 1:7; 1 Pet. 2:24; 1 Pet. 1:3-5).
 - (3) We believe that the Lord Jesus Christ ascended to Heaven and is now exalted at the right hand of God where, as our High Priest, He fulfills the ministry of Representative, Intercessor, and Advocate (Acts 1:9-10; Rom. 8:34, Heb. 9:24; 7:25; 1 John 2:1-2).
- (E) The Person and Work of the Holy Spirit.
- (1) We believe that the Holy Spirit is a Divine person, equal and of the same nature to the Father and Son; He convicts the world of sin, of righteousness, and of judgment; that He is the Supernatural Agent in regeneration, baptizing all believers into the body of Christ; and that He indwells and seals them unto the day of redemption (John 16:8-11; Rom. 8:9; 1 Cor. 12:12-14; 2 Cor. 3:6; Eph. 1:13-14).
 - (2) We believe that He is the Divine Teacher Who assists believers to understand and appropriate the Scriptures. It is the privilege and duty of all the saved to be filled with the Spirit, the evidences being love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, and temperance (Matt. 28:19-20; John 3:5-7; 14:16-17, 26; 16:7-15; II Cor. 13:14; Gal. 5:22-23; Eph. 1:17-18; 2:18; 5:18; I Pet. 1:23; 1 John 2:20, 27).
 - (3) We believe that God is sovereign in the bestowal of spiritual gifts to every believer. God

uniquely uses evangelists, pastors, and teachers to equip believers in the church to do the work of the ministry (Rom. 12:3-8; 1 Cor. 12:4-11, 28; Eph. 4:7-12).

- (4) We believe that God the Holy Spirit is sovereign in the bestowing of all His gifts for the perfecting of the saints today, and that speaking in tongues and the working of sign miracles in the beginning days of the church were for the purpose of pointing to and authenticating the apostles as revealers of divine truth, and were never intended to be characteristic of the lives of believers (1 Cor. 12:4-11; 13:8-10; 2 Cor. 12:12; Eph. 4:7-12; Heb. 2:1-4).

(F) The Total Depravity of Man. We believe that man was created in the image and likeness of God, but that in Adam's sin the human race fell, inherited a sinful nature, and became alienated from God. Man is totally depraved and, of himself, utterly unable to remedy his lost condition (Gen. 1:26-27; Rom. 3:22-23; 5:12; 6:23; Eph. 2:1-3; 4:17-19).

(G) Salvation

- (1) The Atonement. We believe in the single substitutionary sacrifice of the Lord Jesus Christ for sinners, One for all, and once for all; that salvation is wholly of divine grace apart from any works of merit of the sinner; that it is provided in the atonement of Jesus Christ, wrought by God, and is received by a sinner when he repents towards God and puts his trust in the Lord Jesus Christ as his own personal Savior; that all who receive the Lord Jesus Christ by personal faith as Savior, are thereby born again, and have eternal life through the indwelling Christ; and that unbelievers will suffer eternally for their sins (Psa. 49:7; Jonah 2:9; Mark 1:14-15; Luke 13:3; 24:46-47; John 1:11-13; 3:16, 18, 36; 5:24; 8:24; Acts 16:31; 17:30-31; 20:20-21; Rom. 4:2-5; 5:8; 10:9-10; II Cor. 5:14; Gal. 6:15; Eph. 2:8-10; I Tim. 4:10; Titus 3:4-7; Heb. 10:10; I John 5:11-12; Rev. 21:8).
- (2) The Eternal Security and Assurance of Believers. We believe that all the redeemed, once saved, are kept by God's power and thus are secure in Christ forever (John 6:37-40; 10:27-30; Rom. 8:1; 8:38-39; I Cor. 1:4-8; I Pet. 1:5). We believe that it is the privilege of believers to rejoice in the assurance of their salvation through the testimony of God's Word and through the testimony of their own sanctification but never as excuse to sin "that grace may abound" (Rom. 6:1-4; 13:13-14; II Cor. 13:5; Gal. 5:13; Tit. 2:11-15).
- (3) Sanctification. We believe regeneration is a one-time event in the life of the believer, sanctification is a continuing process by which God gradually transforms him into the image of Christ. With God's help, the believer actively participates in this process by responding in obedience to God's Word and the Holy Spirit. This process is completed when believers join Christ in heaven, perfected in holiness (John 17:17; II Cor. 3:18; Eph. 5:26; Phil. 1:6; 2:12-13; I John 3:2; Acts 20:32).
- (4) The Flesh Principle. We believe that every saved person has been given the necessary provisions for victory of the spiritual nature over the carnal and fleshly nature through the power of the indwelling Holy Spirit, and, that all claims to the eradication of the flesh *in this life* are unscriptural (Rom. 5:15-21; Rom. 6:13; 8:12-13; Gal. 5:16-25; Eph. 4:22-24; Col. 3:10; I Pet. 1:14-16; I John 3:5-9).

(H) The Church

- (1) We believe that the church, which is the body and the espoused bride of Christ, is solely made up of born-again believers. We believe that Christ gave Himself for the church and

that He is the only true Head of the organism (1 Cor. 12:12-14; 2 Cor. 11:2; Eph. 1:22-23; 5:25-27; Col. 1:18).

(2) We believe that the establishment and continuance of local churches is clearly taught and defined in the New Testament. We believe that a local New Testament church is a body of believers in Christ that have followed the Lord in believer's baptism and associated together under the direction and government of the Holy Spirit for worship, instruction, fellowship, service and the spread of the gospel to the uttermost part of the earth (Matt. 16:17-18; 28:18-20; Acts 14:27; 20:17, 28-37; 1 Cor. 3:9-17; Eph. 1:22-23; 2:19-22; 5:25-27; 1 Tim. 3:1-13; Tit. 1:5-11).

(3) We believe in the autonomy of the local church free of any external authority or controls. Any affiliations, societies, organizations, associations, or agencies this church affiliates with to further the objectives stated in the Purpose Statement are not authoritative in matters of church practice or belief (Acts 13:1-4; 15:19-31; 20:28; Rom. 16:1, 4; 1 Cor. 3:9, 16; 5:4-7, 13; 1 Pet. 5:1-4).

(4) We recognize water baptism by immersion and the Lord's Supper as the Scriptural ordinances of obedience for the church in this age. (Matt. 28:19-20; Acts 2:41-42; 8:36-38; 1 Cor. 11:23-26)

(I) Separation. We believe that Scripture commands God's people to be holy, set apart to Him and from all polluting influences, including sin, disobedient brethren, and false teachers.

(1) Personal. Individual believers are the temple of the Holy Spirit and so must be pure from sin. They are not to be unequally yoked together with unbelievers nor found to be friends of the world (II Cor. 6:14-7:1; I John 2:15-17; James 4:4).

(2) Ecclesiastical. The church as a whole must separate from those who teach false doctrine and attempt to subvert the saints (Rom. 16:17; II Thess. 3:6-15; II John 9-11; II Cor. 6:14-18).

(J) The Return of Christ. We believe in that blessed hope, the personal, imminent return of Christ.

(1) Rapture. Jesus Christ will rapture His church prior to the seven-year tribulation period (John 14:1-3; I Cor. 15:51-53; I Thess. 1:10; 4:13-18; Tit. 2:13; Rev. 3:10).

(2) Second Coming. At the end of the Tribulation, Christ will personally and visibly return with His saints, to establish His earthly Messianic Kingdom, which was promised to the nation of Israel (Ps. 89:3-4; Dan. 2:31-45; Zech. 14:4-11; Rev. 19:11-16; 20:1-6).

(K) The Eternal State.

(1) We believe in the bodily resurrection of all men, the saved to eternal life, and the unsaved to judgment and everlasting punishment (Dan. 12:1-2; Matt. 25:46; John 5:28-29; 11:25-26; Rev. 20:5-6, 12-13).

(2) We believe at death that the souls of the redeemed are absent from the body and present with the Lord where in conscious bliss they await the first resurrection when spirit, soul, and body are reunited to be glorified forever with the Lord (Luke 23:43; 2 Cor. 5:8; Phil. 1:23; 3:21; 1 Thess. 4:16-17; Rev. 20:4-6).

(3) We believe that after death the souls of unbelievers remain in conscious punishment and torment until the second resurrection when with soul and body reunited, they shall appear

at the Great White Throne Judgment and shall be cast into the Lake of Fire not to be annihilated but to suffer everlasting conscious punishment and torment (Matt. 25:41-46; Mark 9:43-48; Luke 16:19-26; 2 Thess. 1:7-9; Jude 6-7; Rev. 20:11-15).

- L) The Personality of Satan. We believe that Satan is a person, the author of sin and the cause of the Fall of Man; that he is the open and declared enemy of God and man; and that he shall be eternally punished in the Lake of Fire (Job 1:6-7; Isa. 14:12-17; Matt. 4:2-11; 25:41; Rev. 20:10).
- M) Creation. We believe that the Genesis account of creation is neither allegory nor myth but a literal, historical account of God's creation of the universe in six literal, 24-hour periods. We reject evolution, the Gap Theory, the Day-Age Theory, the Framework Hypothesis, and Theistic Evolution as unscriptural theories of origin (Gen. 1-2; Ex. 20:11).
- N) Civil Government. We believe that God has ordained and created all authority consisting of three basic institutions: 1) the home, 2) the church, and 3) the state. Every person is subject to these authorities but all (including the authorities themselves) are answerable to God and governed by His Word. God has given each institution specific biblical responsibilities and balanced those responsibilities with the understanding that no institution has the right to infringe upon the other. The home, the church, and the state are equal and sovereign in their respective biblically assigned spheres of responsibility under God. We believe that we must obey the state unless it requires us to act contrary to our faith at which time we must obey God rather than the state. The purpose of this trust is to further the ministry of our Lord Jesus Christ, our Sovereign. Since the property held in trust is for our Sovereign, the state has no power to tax our Sovereign's property. The state and the church are separate. (Matt. 22:15-22; Acts 5:29; Rom. 13:1-7; Eph. 5:22-24, Titus 3:1-2; Heb. 13:17, 1 Pet. 2:13-14)
- O) Human Sexuality
 - (1) Marriage. We believe that Scripture defines marriage as a life-long, exclusive covenant between one naturally born man and one naturally born woman for the purpose of glorifying God and reflecting Christ's love. God actively establishes the marriage covenant by spiritually joining the couple and empowering them for service together (Gen. 2:24; Rom. 7:2; I Cor. 7:10; Eph. 5:22-23).
 - (2) Human Sexuality. We believe that God has reserved all sexual activity to the marriage covenant as defined above. Scripture teaches that all forms of homosexuality, lesbianism, bisexuality, pansexuality, bestiality, incest, fornication, adultery, and pornography are sinful perversions of God's plan for sexual intimacy. God disapproves of and forbids any attempt to alter one's gender by surgery or appearance (Gen. 2:24; 19:5, 13; 26:8-9; Lev. 18:1-30; Rom. 1:26-29; I Cor. 5:1; 6:9; I Thess. 4:1-8; Heb. 13:4).
- (P) Family Relationships
 - 1) We believe that men and women are spiritually equal in position before God but that God has ordained distinct and separate spiritual functions for men and women in the home and the church. The husband is to be the leader of the home, and men are to be the leaders (elders and deacons) of the church. Accordingly, only men are eligible for licensure and ordination by the church (Gal. 3:28; Col. 3:18; 1 Tim. 2:8-15; 3:4-5, 12).
 - 2) We believe that God has ordained the family as the foundational institution of human society. The husband is to love his wife as Christ loves the church. The wife is to submit herself to the Scriptural leadership of her husband as the church submits to the headship of

Christ. Children are an heritage from the Lord. Parents are responsible for teaching their children spiritual and moral values through consistent lifestyle example and appropriate discipline, including scriptural corporal correction (Gen. 1:26-28; Ex. 20:12; Deut. 6:4-9; Ps. 127:3-5; Prov. 19:18; 22:15; 23:13-14; Mk. 10:6-12; 1 Cor. 7:1-16; Eph. 5:21-33; 6:1-4, Col. 3:18-21; Heb. 13:4, 1 Pet. 3:1-7).

- 3) Divorce and Remarriage. We believe that God designed marriage to be a permanent union, extending until the death of a spouse. God disapproves of divorce. Although divorced persons may serve in the church and be greatly used of God, they are not eligible for the offices of elder or deacon (Mal. 2:14-17; Matt. 19:3-12; Rom. 7:1-3; I Tim. 3:2, 12; Titus 1:6).

(Q) Abortion. We believe that human life begins at conception and that the unborn child is a living human being. Abortion constitutes the unjustified, unexcused taking of unborn human life. Abortion is murder. We reject any teaching that abortions due to rape, incest, birth defects, gender selection, birth or population control, or the physical or mental wellbeing of the mother are acceptable (Job 3:16; Ps. 51:5; 139:14-16; Isa. 44:24; 49:1, 5; Jer. 1:5; 20:15-18; Luke 1:44).

(R) Euthanasia. We believe that the direct taking of an innocent human life is a moral evil, regardless of the intention. Life is a gift of God and must be respected from conception until natural death. Thus, we believe that an act or omission which, of itself or by intention, causes death in order to eliminate suffering constitutes a murder contrary to the will of God. Discontinuing medical procedures that are extraordinary or disproportionate to the expected outcome can be a legitimate refusal of over-zealous treatment (Ex. 20:13, 23:7; Matt. 5:21; Acts 17:28).

(S) Evangelization. We believe that it is the heart's desire of the Almighty God to save sinners, that He has committed Himself to the faithful witness of His redeemed children to reach them with the gospel, and that He has commissioned His people to be diligent and zealous in proclaiming the saving message of Jesus Christ throughout all the world so that sinners may be persuaded to repent of their sins, to believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and to be saved (Matt. 28:19-20; Mark 16:15-16; Luke 24:46-48; Acts 1:8; I Tim. 2:3-6; II Pet. 3:9).

(T) Giving. We believe that since every Christian is a steward of the portion of God's wealth entrusted to him that he is obligated to financially support his local church. However, we shall preach, teach, and practice the Scriptural principle of voluntary tithes and offerings, stressing the motive of love, the aim as the glory of God, the purpose as the work of the ministry and world evangelization, and the attitude of cheerfulness. We believe that a Christian relinquishes all rights to direct the use of his tithe or offering once the gift has been made (Gen. 14:20; Prov. 3:9-10; Acts 4:34-37; 1 Cor. 16:2; 2 Cor. 9:6-7; Gal. 6:6; Eph. 4:28; 1 Tim. 5:17-18; 1 John 3:17).

Section 2: Purpose of the Church

Our purpose is to glorify God by conducting a self-supporting Baptist Church in accordance with the Word of God, by promoting the worship of God, by assembling in accordance with the Word of God, by promoting the worship of God, by assembling for prayer and spiritual fellowship, by preaching and teaching the whole counsel of God, by administering the ordinances, by seeking to win the lost to Christ, by carrying on a worldwide missionary program, by standing for the biblical faith, by ordaining qualified men of like faith to the Gospel ministry, by establishing other independent Baptist churches, by maintaining a testimony of godliness and good works in the community, and by exercising biblical discipline.

Section 3: Authority of The Statement of Faith

The Statement of Faith does not exhaust the extent of our faith. The Bible itself is the sole and final source of all that we believe. We do believe, however, that the foregoing Statement of Faith accurately represents the teachings of the Bible and, therefore, is binding upon all members. All literature, whether print or electronic, used in the church shall be in complete agreement with the Statement of Faith.

Section 4: Covenant

Having, as we trust, been brought by divine grace to repent and believe in the Lord Jesus Christ and to give up ourselves to him, and having been baptized upon our profession of faith, in the name of the Father and of the Son and the Holy Spirit, we do now, relying on His gracious aid, solemnly and joyfully renew our covenant with each other.

We will work and pray for the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.

We will walk together in brotherly love, as becomes the members of a Christian Church, exercise an affectionate care and watchfulness over each other and faithfully admonish and entreat one another as occasion may require.

We will not forsake the assembling of ourselves together, nor neglect to pray for ourselves and others.

We will privately read and study God's Word, that we might grow in our knowledge of Him and our ability to minister to others.

We will endeavor to bring up such as may at any time be under our care, in the nurture and admonition of the Lord, and by a pure and loving example to seek the salvation of our family and friends.

We will rejoice at each other's happiness and endeavor with tenderness and sympathy to bear each other's burdens and sorrows.

We will seek, by Divine aid, to live carefully in the world, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, and remembering that, as we have been voluntarily buried by baptism and raised again from the symbolic grave, so there is on us a special obligation now to lead a new and holy life.

We will work together for the continuance of a faithful evangelical ministry in this church, as we sustain its worship, ordinances, discipline, and doctrines. We will contribute cheerfully and regularly to the support of the ministry, the expenses of the church, the relief of the poor, and the spread of the Gospel through all nations.

We will, when we move from this place, 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.

May the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with us all. Amen.

Article 3—Membership

Section 1: Qualifications For Membership

To qualify for membership in Gunnery Road Baptist Church, a person must be a believer in Jesus Christ who gives evidence of regeneration, who has been baptized in obedience to Jesus Christ following his or her regeneration, and who wholeheartedly believes in the Christian faith as revealed in the Bible. Each must take the pre-membership class. Each must agree to submit to the teaching of Scripture as expressed in the Statement of Faith and must promise to keep the commitments expressed in the Church Covenant. The Pastor and/or elders shall be responsible for determining each person's qualification for membership. In making this determination, they may rely on a person's profession of faith or such other evidence as the pastor and/or elders deem appropriate.

Section 2: Admission of Members

- (A) To be admitted into church membership, applicants shall be recommended by the Pastor for admission. Each candidate for membership shall give his or her testimony of salvation to the church in assembly and shall be received into the fellowship by the vote of the congregation, and at that point relinquish their membership in other churches.
- (B) Active Membership Status
 - (1) To maintain an active membership status in the Gunnery Road Baptist Church, a member must attend at least six regular services per month. If a member does not attend at least six regular services per month, the he or she shall immediately become inactive and is not eligible to vote in any business meeting.
 - (2) Active members shall maintain their active membership if during the time they were unable to maintain their attendance they were either: on vacation, disabled, ill, or detained by unavoidable circumstances.
 - (3) Inactive members may be restored to active status by consistent attendance to six regular services and by action of the pastor and/or elders.
- (C) Associate Membership. For part time resident who reside locally on an extended but temporary basis, Gunnery Road Baptist Church offers associate membership. Associate members retain their church membership at home but also enjoy the benefits of local church membership here for the duration of their residence (except they do not vote in church business meetings). The qualifications and procedures above apply for associate members.

Section 3: Duties of a Member

On becoming a member of this church, in addition to the covenant contained in Section 2.04, each member further covenants to love, honor, and esteem the pastor; to pray for him; to recognize his authority in the spiritual and day-to-day affairs of the church; to cherish a brotherly love for all members of the church; to support the church with prayer, tithes, offerings, and other financial support as the Lord enables; and in accordance with Biblical commands, to support through a lifestyle walk affirming the beliefs and practices of the church.

Only those shall be entitled to serve in the ministries of the church who are members of this congregation; non-members may serve on an ad-hoc basis with the approval of the pastor and/or elders. Notwithstanding, non-members may serve the church for purposes of administration and professional consultation.

Section 4: Privileges of Membership

- (A) Only members at least eighteen years of age who are physically present at a duly called meeting of the church shall be entitled to vote. There shall be no proxy or absentee voting. The eligible membership of the church may only exercise voting privileges in those areas that are defined and limited by these bylaws. Members may not vote to initiate any church action; rather the vote of a member is to confirm and ratify the direction of the church as determined by the pastor and the elders.
- (B) This congregation functions not as a pure democracy but as a body under the headship of the Lord Jesus Christ and the direction of the pastor as the under-shepherd with the counsel of the elders. Determinations of the internal affairs of this church are ecclesiastical matters and shall be determined exclusively by the church's own rules and procedures. The pastor shall oversee and/or conduct all aspects of this church. The elders shall give counsel and assistance to the pastor as requested by him.
- (C) Membership in this church does not afford the members with any property, contractual, or civil rights based on principles of democratic government. Although the general public is invited to all of the church's worship services, the church property remains private property. The pastor (or in his absence an individual designated by the elders) has the authority to suspend or revoke the right of any person, including a member, to enter or remain on church property. If after being notified of such a suspension or revocation, the person enters or remains on church property, the person may, in the discretion of the pastor (or in his absence, an individual designated by the elders) be treated as a trespasser.

Section 5: Discipline of a Member

- (A) Membership in Gunner Road Baptist Church shall be subject to revocation upon the recommendation of the Pastor and/or Elders after Scriptural discipline has failed to correct unscriptural and hurtful conduct and doctrine. Any member consistently neglectful of his or her duties or guilty of conduct by which the name of our Lord Jesus Christ may be dishonored and so opposing the welfare of the church shall be subject to the admonition of the pastor and/or elders and the discipline of the church according to the instructions of our Lord in Matthew 18:15-17 and the example of Scripture. Church discipline, then, should be ordinarily contemplated after individual private admonition has failed.

Church discipline can include admonition by the pastor, elders and/or congregation; suspension from communion; deposition from office; and excommunication (Matt. 18:15-17; 2 Thess. 3:14-15; 1 Tim. 5:19-20; 1 Cor. 5:4-5).

- (B) Purpose.

- (1) The purpose of discipline should be: for the repentance, reconciliation, and spiritual growth of the individual disciplined (Prov. 15:5, 9; 1 Cor. 4:14; 1 Tim. 3:4-5; Heb. 12:7-14; 1 Cor. 4:5; Gal. 6:1-5; 2 Thess. 3:6,14-15; 1 Tim. 1:20; Titus 1:13-14);

- (2) For the instruction in righteousness and for the good of other Christians, as an example to them (Prov. 13:20; Rom. 15:14; I Cor. 5:11-12; Col. 3:16; I Thess. 5:14; I Tim. 1:19-20; James 1:22);
 - (3) For the purity of the church as a whole (I Cor. 5:6-7; II Cor. 13:10; Eph. 5:26-27; II John 10);
 - (4) For the good of our corporate witness to non-Christians (Matt. 5:13-16; Eph. 5:11; I Tim. 3:7; II Pet. 2:2); and
 - (5) Supremely for the glory of God by reflecting His holy character (Deut. 5:11; Isa. 52:11; Matt. 5:16; Rom. 2:24; II Cor. 6:14-7:1; I Pet. 2:12).
- (C) Restoration. Upon confession to God of personal offenses and giving satisfactory evidence of repentance, those who have been excluded from the membership of the church may have their membership restored. This is the ultimate goal of all church discipline.

Section 6: Transfer of Membership

Members not under the disciplinary process of Section 3.04 may request that letters of transfer be sent to another church of like faith.

Section 7: Termination of Membership

- (A) The church shall recognize the termination of a person's membership following his or her death. The church shall also terminate a person's membership after he or she has voluntarily resigned (verified by their failure to attend regular services) from Gunnery Road Baptist Church or joined with another church.
- (B) Membership may also be terminated as an act of church discipline (ordinarily, but not necessarily, at the recommendation of the Pastor and/or elders) upon the majority vote of the members present at any regular or special meeting of the members.
- (C) The church shall have the authority to refuse a member's voluntary resignation or transfer of membership to another church, either for the purpose of proceeding with a process of church discipline, or for any other biblical reason.

Article 4 – Meetings

Section 1: Regular Meetings

Worship services shall be held each Lord's Day (Sunday) and may be held throughout the week as the church determines. These meetings shall include: Sunday services, morning and evening; Midweek prayer and Bible study, Baptismal services, the Lord's Table, and special emphasis meetings such as missionary conferences, Bible conferences, evangelistic meetings as the Pastor and/or elders schedule.

Section 2: Business Meetings

- (A) Business and special meetings may be called by the Pastor or with his approval at any time; the Pastor shall give public notice of such meeting and the purpose of the meeting from the pulpit no less than one Sunday in advance of meetings with major business items.

- (B) Annual business meetings shall be held in January. The church fiscal year shall begin on January 1 and conclude December 31. Meetings shall be called as necessary to carry out the business of the church.
- (C) Moderator of all meetings shall be the Pastor. If the church is without a pastor one of the elders shall serve as the moderator, or if the Pastor is unable to attend, he may appoint a moderator.
- (D) Members must be 18 years of age, in good standing, and active in status according to 3.02-A to be eligible to vote. A quorum shall be those in attendance at the meeting following proper public notification.

Article 5 – Church Leadership

Section 1: Church Officers

The officers of Gunnery Road Baptist Church shall be comprised of the following and shall be elected by the congregation from its membership as the need may arise and under the guidance of the Holy Spirit:

- (1) Administration – Pastor and Elders
- (2) Service – Deacons

Section 2: Qualifications of Church Officers

The officers of Gunnery Road Baptist Church shall be elected from among the members who give evidence of the qualifications laid down in the Word of God. All officers must be members of this church prior to assuming their responsibilities. The qualifications include personal endowments (Rom. 12:1-8; I Cor. 12:1-14:40; Eph. 4:1-16) and moral and spiritual standards (I Tim. 3:1-13; Titus 1:5-11).

Section 3: Duties of Elders

- (A) Subject to the will of the congregation, the elders shall oversee the ministry and resources of the church. In keeping with the principles set forth in Acts 6:1-6 and I Peter 5:1-4, the elders shall devote their time to prayer the ministry of the Word by teaching and encouraging sound doctrine, and shepherding God's flock.

The elders of the church should pray for the members of the church (James 5:14, Acts 6:4); they shall preach and teach the Word of God to the congregation (I Tim. 3:2, 4:2); they shall shepherd the flock (I Pet. 5:2); they shall watch over themselves, their families, and the church body (Acts 20:28, I Pet. 5:2); they shall set a good example (Tit. 1:7-9, I Pet. 5:3); and they shall raise up elders (2 Tim. 2:2).

- (B) The pastor shall be an elder. He shall perform the duties of an elder and shall be recognized as particularly gifted and called to the full-time ministry of preaching and teaching.

He shall preach on the Lord's Day, administer the ordinances of baptism and the Lord's table, and perform such other duties as usually pertain to that office or as set forth in the constitution.

The pastor is not to be self-willed or tyrannical. He is to love the church and unselfishly make decisions for the welfare of the church. The pastor shall lead the elders in establishing the direction of the church as a "first among equals." He does have great authority as the under-shepherd (Heb.

13:17; I Tim. 3:1-7), however, he is not to abuse that authority by becoming a “lord” over God’s heritage (I Pet. 5:3).

The pastor shall remain in his position until such a time as he is led elsewhere, is deceased, is incapacitated, or is rejected by a $\frac{3}{4}$ majority vote of the congregation. A vote may be taken at any regular business meeting. In the absence or incapacity of the pastor the elders shall assume the responsibility for his duties any of which can be delegated.

- (C) The church may call additional elders whose relationship to the pastor is that of associate. They shall perform the duties of elders and shall be recognized as particularly gifted and called to the ministry of preaching and teaching. They shall assist the pastor in the performance his regular duties and shall perform any other duties as usually pertain to the office of pastor.

Their call shall be subject to triennial reaffirmation.

Section 4: Duties of Deacons

The office of deacon is described in I Timothy 3:8-13 and Acts 6:1-7. Deacons are men who are giving of themselves in service to the church and who possess particular gifts of service.

- (A) Deacons shall be recommended by the elders and confirmed by a majority vote at a regular business meeting. The term of service shall be two years with the possibility of annual reaffirmation thereafter.
- (B) Deacons shall care for the temporal needs of members, attend to the accommodations for public worship, and encourage and support those able to help others and those with gifts of administration.
- (C) The Pastor shall be the moderator for all deacon’s meetings. Meetings shall be called as necessary to carry out the business of the church.
- (D) Any deacon who is remiss in his responsibilities or who’s life or family brings reproach to his office will be dismissed from his responsibilities.
- (E) Deacon Emeritus shall be a position of honor recognizing a lifetime of faithful service, but due to age or infirmity is no longer expected to perform the regular duties of the office of deacon. He may continue to serve and support the body of Christ on a voluntary basis “having used the office of deacon well to purchase to themselves a good degree” (I Tim. 3:13).

Section 5: Additional Church Staff

In order to meet the needs of the church, the pastor is at liberty to fill positions, salaried and unsalaried, with personnel who are equipped for a particular task and meet the spiritual qualifications. The pastor shall oversee all staff personnel, determine their responsibilities and maintain the right of dismissal.

- (A) Clerk. The clerk shall keep the minutes of each business meeting. The clerk shall be the custodian of the membership roll and other official and non-official documents of the church. The elders shall appoint the clerk.
- (B) Treasurer. The treasurer shall keep an accurate account of all receipts and disbursements. The elders shall appoint the treasurer. The treasurer, pastor, and any other designee appointed by the pastor shall be authorized to sign church checks.

(C) Financial Records Secretary. The financial records secretary shall keep a record of all monetary gifts and provide a copy to each individual contributor of his own annual contributions. The elders shall appoint a financial records secretary. The records and personal knowledge of the financial records secretary shall be confidential.

Section 6: Calling a Pastor

The pulpit committee shall be composed of the current elders in addition to deacons that have been recommended by the elders and confirmed by a majority vote. The committee shall consist of 5 individuals.

The committee shall first prayerfully consider the Lord's calling upon one of the elders to be the Pastor. If the Lord has not so led then, then the committee may seek for a Pastor outside its existing membership.

After hearing the pastoral candidate preach and allowing sufficient time for proper interviewing, the membership shall vote in his taking the pastorate. He shall be elected by a $\frac{3}{4}$ majority of those members present. He must also sense the Lord's leading as well as the church's approval before assuming the position. Voting shall take place at a regular or special called business meeting. Only when the need occurs and the membership is properly notified shall the pulpit committee act.

Article 5 – Indemnification

Section 1: Mandatory Indemnification

If a legal claim or criminal allegation is made against a person because he or she is or was an officer, employee, or agent of the church, the church shall provide indemnification against liability and costs incurred in defending against the claim if the elders determine that the person acted (a) in good faith, (b) with the care of an ordinarily prudent person in a similar position would exercise under similar circumstances, and (c) in a manner the person reasonably believed to be in the best interest of the church, and (d) the person had no reasonable cause to believe his or her conduct unlawful.

Section 2: Permissive Indemnification

At the discretion of the elders, the church may also indemnify any person who acted in good faith and reasonably believed that his or her conduct was in the church's best interest and not unlawful.

Section 3: Procedure

If the elders are not available for an indemnification determination because of the number of elders seeking indemnification, the requisite determination may be made by the membership or by a special legal counsel appointed by the membership.

Article 7 – Dispute Resolution

Believing that the Bible commands Christians to make every effort to live at peace and to resolve disputes with each other in private or within the Christian Church, the church shall require its members to resolve conflict among themselves according to biblically based principles without reliance on

secular courts. Consistent with its call to peacemaking, the church shall encourage the use of biblically based principles to resolve disputes between itself and those outside the church whether Christian or pagan and whether individuals or corporate entities. However, we do believe, that a Christian may seek compensation for injuries from another Christian's insurance company as long as the claim is pursued without malice or slander (1 Cor. 6:1-8; Eph. 4:31-32; Matt. 18:15-17).

Article 8—Institutions

Gunnery Road Baptist Church shall have authority to operate schools, publish Christian literature, operate and carry on eleemosynary institutions and the like. All such activities shall be recommended by the elders and approved by a majority vote of the membership.

Section 1: Gunnery Road Christian Academy and Preschool

Gunnery Road Christian Academy and Preschool shall be ministries of Gunnery Road Baptist Church.

- (A) These educational institutions shall operate under the Structure and Bylaws of Gunnery Road Baptist Church that are contained in this document.
- (B) The philosophy of education and the day to day operations of these educational intuitions shall be determined by the teachers under the supervision of the school administrator, who shall be under the supervision of the elders and pastor. The Pastor shall oversee all staff personnel, determine their responsibilities and maintain the right of dismissal.

Article 9—Amendment to the Trust

This document may be amended so long as the amendments proposed are consistent with the teaching of the Word of God, do not violate the purpose for which Gunnery Road Baptist Church was established. Amendments must: meet the needs of Gunnery Road Baptist Church and maintain the doctrinal basis on which it was founded and is to be perpetuated.

Article 10—Dissolution Of The Trust

No part of the net earnings, properties, or assets of this trust shall ensure to the benefit of any private person or individual, or any member or leader of this trust, upon the dissolution or otherwise. On liquidation or dissolution, all properties and assets of this trust remaining after payment or provision for all debts and obligations shall be distributed and paid over to another church, its integrated auxiliaries, or conventions or associations of churches as the Church may determine