

CONSTITUTION

PREAMBLE

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

1. NAME

This body shall be known as the Springhill Baptist Church of Western District Baptist Association located at 1301 Spring Hill Road, Paris, TN 38242.

2. OBJECTIVES

To be a dynamic spiritual organism empowered by the Holy Spirit to share Christ with as many people as possible in our church, community, and throughout the world.

To be a worshiping fellowship, experiencing and awareness of God, recognizing His person, and responding in obedience to His leadership.

To experience an increasingly meaningful fellowship with God and fellow believers.

To help people experience a growing knowledge of God and man.

To be a church that ministers unselfishly to persons in the community and world in Jesus' name.

To be a church whose purpose is to be Christ-like in our daily living by emphasizing total commitment of life, person-ability, and possessions to the lordship of Christ.

3. STATEMENT OF FAITH

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

4. RELATIONSHIPS

The government of this church is vested in the body of believers who compose it. It is subject to the control of no other ecclesiastical body, but it recognizes and sustains the obligations of mutual counsel and cooperation which are common among Baptist churches. In so far as is practical, this church will cooperate with and support the association and state convention affiliated with the Southern Baptist Convention.

5. CHURCH COVENANT

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

We engage, therefore, by the aid of the Holy Spirit to walk together in Christian love; to strive for the advancement of this church, in knowledge, holiness, and comfort; to promote it's prosperity and spirituality; to sustain it's worship ordinances, discipline, and doctrines; to 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 also engage to maintain family and secret devotions; to religiously educate our children; to seek the salvation of our kindred and acquaintances; to walk circumspectly in the world; to be just in our dealings, faithful in our engagements, and exemplary in our deportment; to avoid all tattling, backbiting, and excessive anger; to abstain from the sale and use of intoxicating drinks as a beverage; to use our influence to combat the abuse of drugs and the spread of pornography; and to be zealous in our efforts to advance the kingdom of our Savior.

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

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

BYLAWS

1. MEMBERSHIP

SECTION 1. GENERAL

This is the sovereign and democratic Baptist church under the Lordship of Jesus Christ. The membership retains unto itself the exclusive right of self-government in all phases of the spiritual and temporal life of this church

The membership reserves the exclusive right to determine who shall be members of this church and the conditions of such membership.

SECTION 2. CANDIDACY

Any person may offer himself as a candidate for membership in this church. All such candidates shall be presented to the church at any regular church service for membership in any of the following ways.

1. By profession of faith and for baptism according to the policies of this church.
2. By promise of a letter of recommendation from another Baptist church.
3. By restoration upon a statement of prior conversion experience and baptism in a Baptist church when no letter is obtainable.

Should there be any dissent as to any candidate, such dissent shall be referred to the pastor and the deacons for investigation and the making of a recommendation to the church within thirty (30) days. Members shall be approved by the consent of the church.

SECTION 3. NEW MEMBER ORIENTATION

New church members will be expected to participate in the church's new member orientation plan.

SECTION 4. VOTING RIGHTS OF MEMBERS

Every member of the church is entitled to vote at all elections and on all questions submitted to the church in conference, provided the member is present or provision has been made for absentee balloting.

SECTION 5. TERMINATION OF MEMBERSHIP

Membership shall be terminated in the following ways:

1. Death
2. Dismission to another Baptist church
3. Exclusion by action of this church

SECTION 6. DISCIPLINE

1. It shall be the basic purpose of Springhill Baptist Church to emphasize to its members that every reasonable measure will be taken to assist any troubled member. The pastor, other members of the church staff, and deacons are available for counsel and guidance. Redemption rather than punishment should be the guideline which governs the attitude of one member toward another.

2. Should some serious condition exist which would cause a member to become a liability to the general welfare of the church, every reasonable measure will be taken by the pastor and by the deacons to resolve the problem. All such proceedings shall be pervaded by a spirit of Christian kindness and forbearance. But, finding that the welfare of the church will be best served by the exclusion of the member, the church may take this action by a two-thirds vote of the members present at a meeting called for this purpose; and the church may proceed to declare the offender to be no longer in the membership of the church.

3. Any person whose membership has been terminated for the condition which has made it necessary for

the church to exclude him, may, upon his request, be restored to membership by a vote of the church upon evidence of his repentance and reformation.

2. CHURCH OFFICERS

All church officers must be members of the church. The officers of this church shall be as follows:

SECTION 1. PASTOR

The pastor is responsible for leading the church to function as a New Testament church. The pastor will lead the congregation, the organizations, and the church staff to perform their tasks.

The pastor is leader of pastoral ministries in a church. As such he works with the deacons and church staff to:

1. Lead the church in the achievement of it's mission
2. Proclaim the gospel to believers and unbelievers, and
3. Care for the church' members and other persons in the community.

A pastor shall be chosen and called by the church whenever a vacancy occurs. His election shall take place at a meeting called for that purpose, of which at least a one week public notice has been given.

A pastor selection committee shall be appointed by the church to seek out a pastor, and its recommendations will constitute a nomination. Any member has the privilege of making other nominations according to the policy established by the church. The committee shall bring to the consideration of the church only one name at a time. Election shall be by ballot, an affirmative vote of three fourths of those present being necessary for a choice. The pastor, thus elected, shall serve until the relationship is terminated by his request or the church's request. He shall preside at meetings of the church. The pastor shall give at least two weeks notice at the time of resignation before terminating his responsibilities as pastor.

SECTION 2. CHURCH STAFF

This church shall call or employ such staff members as the church shall need. A job description shall be written when the need for staff members is determined. Vocational staff members other than the pastor shall be recommended to the church by the personnel committee and employed by church action. At least two weeks notice at this time of resignation should be given.

The secretaries and custodians shall likewise be recommended to the church by the personnel committee and employed by church action.

SECTION 3. DEACONS

1. Deacons shall be nominated by the church by secret ballot. The existing deacon body will investigate the qualifications of the nominees and bring the names of the approved nominees before the church for a final vote of approval. A two-thirds vote of approval will be required for the election of new deacons. There is no obligation to constitute as an active deacon a person who comes to the church from another church where he has served as deacon.

2. In accordance with the meaning of the work and the practice of the New Testament, deacons are to be servants of the church. The task of the deacon is to serve with the pastor and staff in performing pastoral ministries tasks: proclaim the gospel to believers and unbelievers; care for the church members and other persons in the community; lead the church to achieve its mission.

SECTION 4. MODERATOR

The moderator shall be the pastor. In the absence of the pastor, the chairman of the deacons shall preside, or in the absence of both, the clerk shall call the church to order and an acting moderator shall be elected.

SECTION 5. CLERK

The church elected clerk of the church shall keep in a suitable record of all the actions of the church, except as otherwise herein provided. He or she is responsible for keeping a register of the names of members, with dates of admission, dismissal, or death, together with a record of baptisms. He or she shall issue letters of dismissal voted by the church, preserve on file all communications and written official reports, and give legal notice of all meetings where such notice is necessary, as indicated in these bylaws.

The church may delegate some of the clerical responsibilities to a church secretary. All church records

are church property and should be filed in the church office when an office is maintained.

SECTION 6. TREASURER

The church shall elect annually a church treasurer. It shall be the duty of the treasurer to receive, preserve, 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, keeping at all times an itemized account of all receipts and disbursements. It shall be the duty of the treasurer to render to the church at each regular business meeting an itemized report of the receipts and disbursements for the preceding month.

Upon rendering the annual account at the end of each fiscal year, and its acceptance and approval by the church, the records shall be delivered by the treasurer to the church clerk, who shall keep and preserve the account as part of the permanent records of the church.

SECTION 7. TRUSTEES

Three trustees elected by the church will hold in trust the church property. They shall have no power to buy, sell, mortgage, lease, or transfer any property without a specific vote of the church authorizing each action. It shall be the function of the trustees to affix their signatures to legal documents involving the sale, mortgage, purchase, or rental of property or other legal documents where the signatures of trustees are required. Trustees shall serve on a rotating basis with one new trustee being elected every three years.

3. COMMITTEES AND COORDINATING GROUPS

SECTION 1. GENERAL

All church committee members shall be recommended by the nominating committee and elected by the church unless otherwise indicated in the description below. The committee members shall serve on a three year rotation system with one third to be elected each year.

SECTION 2. NOMINATING COMMITTEE

The nominating committee coordinates the staffing of all church leadership positions that are filled by volunteers. The nominating committee recommends persons for all volunteer positions to be elected by the church.

SECTION 3. PERSONNEL COMMITTEE

The personnel committee assists the church in matters related to employed personnel administration. Its work includes such areas as determining staff needs, employment, salaries, benefits, and personnel service.

SECTION 4. FINANCE COMMITTEE

The finance committee develops and recommends an overall stewardship information plan and administers the gifts of church members, using sound principles of financial management.

SECTION 5. OTHER COMMITTEES

Other committees shall be established as needed by a majority vote of the church.

4. ORDINANCES

SECTION 1. BAPTISM

A person who receives Jesus Christ as Savior by personal faith; who professes Him publicly at any worship service; and who indicates a commitment to follow Christ as Lord, shall be received for baptism.

1. Baptism shall be administered by the pastor or whomever the church shall authorize. The deacons or whomever they designate shall assist in the preparation for, and observance of, baptism.
2. Baptism shall be by immersion in water.
3. Baptism shall be administered as an act of worship during any worship service.
4. A person professing Christ and failing to be baptized after a reasonable length of time shall be counseled by the pastor and/or staff and deacons. If negative interest is ascertained, he shall be deleted from those awaiting baptism.

SECTION 2. THE LORD'S SUPPER

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

1. The Lord's Supper shall be observed as directed from the church.
2. The pastor and deacons shall be responsible for the administration of the Lord's Supper.
3. The deacons shall be responsible for the physical preparation of the Lord's Supper.

5. CHURCH MEETINGS

SECTION 1. WORSHIP

The church shall meet regularly on Sunday mornings, Sunday evenings, and Wednesday evenings for preaching, instruction, evangelism, and for the worship of Almighty God. These meetings will be open for the entire membership of the church and for all people and shall be conducted under the direction of the pastor.

SECTION 2. SPECIAL SERVICES

Revival services and any other church meetings which will be essential in the promotion of the objectives of the church shall be placed on the church calendar.

SECTION 3. REGULAR BUSINESS MEETINGS

Regular business meetings shall be held monthly on a designated Wednesday night.

SECTION 4. SPECIAL BUSINESS MEETINGS

A specially called business meeting may be held to consider special matters of significant nature. A one week notice of the subject, date, time, and location must be given for the specially called business meeting unless extreme urgency renders such notice impracticable.

SECTION 5. QUORUM

The quorum consists of those who attend the business meeting, provided it is a stated meeting or one that has been properly called. Minimum attendance for required quorum is 20 approved members of the church.

SECTION 6. PARLIMENTARY RULES

Robert's Rules of Order, Revised, is the authority for parliamentary rules of procedure for all business meetings of the church.

6. CHURCH FINANCES

SECTION 1. BUDGET

The finance committee shall prepare and submit to the church for approval an inclusive budget, indicating by items the amount needed and sought for all local and worldwide expenses.

It is understood that membership in this church involves financial obligation to support the church and its causes with regular, proportionate gifts.

SECTION 2. ACCOUNTING PROCEDURES

All funds for any and all purposes shall pass through the hands of the church treasurer, or financial secretary, and be properly recorded on the books of the church.

A system of accounting that will adequately provide for the handling of all funds shall be the responsibility of the stewardship committee.

SECTION 3. FISCAL YEAR

The fiscal year of the church shall run concurrently with the church year which begins on January 1st and ends on December 31st.

7. AMENDMENTS

Changes in this constitution and bylaws may be made at any regular business meeting of the church provided each amendment shall have been presented in writing at a previous meeting, and copies of the proposed amendment be furnished to each member present. Amendments to the constitution and bylaws shall be by two thirds vote of all members of the church present entitled to vote.