



Elm
GROVE
BAPTIST CHURCH

Constitution and Bylaws

ELM GROVE BAPTIST CHURCH OF ELM GROVE, LA CONSTITUTION AND BYLAWS

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 relation to other churches.

ARTICLE I.

NAME

This body shall be known as the Elm Grove Baptist Church of Elm Grove, LA operating at 8180 Barksdale Hwy., Bossier City, Louisiana, located in Bossier Parish.

ARTICLE II.

OBJECTIVES

1. 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.
2. To be a worshiping fellowship, experiencing an awareness of God, recognizing his person, and responding in obedience to his leadership.
3. To experience an increasingly meaningful fellowship with God and fellow believers.
4. To help people experience a growing knowledge of God and man.
5. To be a church that ministers unselfishly to persons in the community and the world in Jesus' name.
6. To be a church whose purpose is to be Christlike in our daily living by emphasizing total commitment of life, personality, and possessions to the lordship of Christ.

ARTICLE III

STATEMENT OF BASIC BELIEFS

We affirm the Holy Bible as the inspired word of God as the basis for our beliefs. This church subscribes to the doctrinal statement of “The Baptist Faith and Message” as newly adopted by the Southern Baptist Convention. We voluntarily band ourselves together as one body of baptized believers in Jesus Christ personally committed to sharing the good news of salvation to lost humanity. The ordinances of the church are Believer’s Baptism and the Lord’s Supper. (See Article VI of the Bylaws).

ARTICLE IV

CHURCH COVENANT

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

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

We also engage to maintain family and private 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 gossiping, backbiting, and excessive anger; to abstain from the sale of and use of intoxicating drinks as a beverage; to use our influence to combat the abuse of drugs and the spread of pornography, gambling, abortion, and sexual immorality 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.

ARTICLE V

POLITY AND RELATIONSHIP

The government of this church is vested in the body of believers who compose it. Persons duly received by the members shall constitute the membership. (See Article I of the Bylaws.)

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.

This church is subject to the control of no other ecclesiastical body, but it recognizes and sustains the obligations of mutual counsel and cooperation that are common among Baptist churches. Insofar as is practical, this church will cooperate with and support the local Baptist association, the Louisiana Baptist Convention, and the Southern Baptist Convention.

BYLAWS

ARTICLE I

CHURCH MEMBERSHIP

SECTION 1. GENERAL

This is a 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 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 scriptural baptism in a Baptist church when no letter is obtainable.

Upon completion of New Member Orientation and Baptism, when required, full rights and privileges (to include voting) are instated.

Should there be any dissent as to any candidate, such dissent shall be referred to the deacons for investigation and the making of a recommendation to the church within thirty (30) days. A two-thirds vote of those church members present and voting shall be required to accept such candidates into membership.

SECTION 3. NEW MEMBER ORIENTATION

Candidates for membership shall participate in the church's new member orientation.

SECTION 4. RIGHTS OF MEMBERS

- (1) Every member of the church at least 17 years of age is entitled to vote at all elections and on all questions submitted to the church in conference, providing the member is present.

(2) Every member of the church at least 17 years of age is eligible for consideration by the membership as a candidate for elective offices in the church.

(3) Every member of the church may participate in the ordinances of the church as administered by the church.

SECTION 5. TERMINATION OF MEMBERSHIP

Membership shall be terminated in the following ways:

- (1) death of the member,
- (2) dismissal to another Baptist Church,
- (3) exclusion by action of this church,
- (4) erasure upon request, or
- (5) proof of membership in a church of another denomination.

SECTION 6. DISCIPLINE

It shall be the practice of this 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 the deacons are available for counsel and guidance. The attitude of members toward one another shall be guided by a concern for redemption rather than punishment.

Should some serious condition exist that would cause a member to become a liability to the general welfare of the church, the pastor and the deacons will take every reasonable measure to resolve the problem in accord with Matthew 18. If it becomes necessary for the church to take action to exclude a member, a two-thirds vote of the members present and voting is required to dismiss a member. A spirit of Christian kindness and forbearance shall pervade all such proceedings.

The church may restore to membership any person previously excluded, upon request of the excluded person, and by two-thirds vote of the church upon evidence of the excluded person's repentance and reformation.

ARTICLE II

CHURCH OFFICERS AND COMMITTEES

All who serve as officers of the church, and those who serve on church committees, shall be members of this church who have attained majority age, unless otherwise noted in these bylaws.

SECTION 1. CHURCH OFFICERS

The officers of this church shall be the pastor, the church ministerial staff, the deacons, a moderator, a clerk, a treasurer, and trustees.

(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 the senior supervisor for all paid church staff.

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

- (a) lead the church in the accomplishment of its mission
- (b) proclaim the gospel to believers and unbelievers, and
- (c) 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. The election shall take place at a special called meeting called for that purpose, of which at least one week's public notice has been given.

A pastor selection committee shall be elected by the church to seek out a suitable pastor, and its recommendations will constitute a nomination. 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 eighty percent (80%) of those present and voting being necessary to issue a call. Upon acceptance of the call, the pastor shall serve until his or the church's request terminates the relationship. He shall preside at the worship services of this church, and if so designated may serve as moderator at all business meetings in keeping with the rules of order authorized in these bylaws.

If the newly called pastor is not already ordained to the Gospel ministry, the church shall call for his ordination by his home church.

The pastor may relinquish the office as pastor by giving at least two weeks' notice to the church at the time of resignation.

The church may declare the office of pastor vacant. Such action shall take place at a special meeting called for that purpose, of which at least one week's public notice has been given. The meeting may be called upon recommendation of a majority of the personnel committee and the deacons or by written petition signed by not less than one fourth of the resident church members. The members present shall designate the moderator other than the pastor for this meeting. The vote to declare the office vacant shall be by secret ballot; an affirmative vote of two-thirds of the members present and voting being necessary to declare the office vacant. Except in instances of gross misconduct by the pastor so excluded from office, the church will compensate the pastor with not less than one twelfth of his total annual compensation. The termination is immediate and compensation shall be rendered in not more than thirty days.

(2) MINISTERIAL STAFF

The ministerial staff shall be called and employed as the church determines the need for such offices. A job description shall be written when the need for a staff member is determined. This description is to be reviewed and revised annually as needed. Those staff members of whom the church requires evidence of a personal call from God to minister shall be recommended to the church by the personnel committee and called by church action. At the time of resignation, at least two weeks' notice shall be given to the church. The church may vote to vacate such positions upon recommendation of the personnel committee, such termination being immediate and the compensation conditions being the same as for the pastor, except that the amount shall relate to the individual's compensation.

Nonministerial staff members shall be employed as the church determines the need for their services. The church personnel committee shall have the authority to employ, evaluate, and to terminate services of nonministerial staff members. Such employment and termination of services shall be with the recommendation of the supervising staff member and, as appropriate with the consultation of related committees of the church.

(3) DEACONS

a) Numbers

The church shall elect at a regular business meeting a number of deacons necessary to serve the needs of the church as recommended by the pastor and deacon ministry fellowship.

b) Term of Service

Deacons shall serve on active status for a period of three years and at least one year reserve status. After a one year reserve status, the deacon may be considered for election to active status. In the event no men are qualified or willing to serve when a deacon's term of service expires, those deacons rotating off shall continue to serve until such time as replacements are found.

c) Qualifications

All deacons shall be men who are members of the church in good standing and meet the scriptural qualifications of a deacon in 1 Timothy 3:8-13. They shall have been a Christian for at least three years and a member of the Church for at least one year to be eligible for nomination and election. They shall attend regularly the services of the church. They shall be a tither and have a heart for evangelism and missions. New church members who were previously ordained as deacons by another church will remain on reserve status for one year. After this, the church may consider them for active deacon service.

d) Election

When vacancies exist to the active deacon ministry, the chairman of the deacons will announce the vacancies and request nominations from the church during the morning worship service(s).

Church members will be informed of the nomination date and the qualifications required of a deacon. On the nomination date, and by written ballot, church members will submit names equal to the number of vacancies.

The church shall empower the pastor and active deacons to prayerfully, and with much confidentiality, review the submitted names to determine if they meet the scriptural qualifications. Nominees receiving the highest number of recommending votes from the church will be considered first in the qualification process. When this is accomplished, the pastor and deacons will contact the eligible nominees to see if they are willing to serve.

After the nominees have qualified and been contacted, the chairman of the deacons shall present the nominees to the church for election at a regular business meeting. The election date shall be announced at least one week in advance. Only the number of names matching the vacancies will be submitted to the church. The church then will either affirm or reject a nominee by indicating “yes” or “no” by his name. A simple majority is necessary to elect a deacon candidate.

e) Ordination

An ordination council and date will be established for any deacon-elect who has not been previously ordained and an appropriate service placed on the church calendar.

f) Removal

A deacon may be placed on inactive status in the following ways

1. Upon request
2. Unexcused absence from church services for six consecutive months
3. Unexcused absence from 3 or more consecutive deacons meetings
4. Failure to continue to meet scriptural qualifications
5. Conduct unbecoming the office of deacon or detrimental to the peace and welfare of the church

A consideration to remove a deacon may be called by a majority of deacons or by written petition signed by not less than one-fourth of the resident church members. The moderator for this meeting shall be as provided in these By-laws except that the deacon under consideration for removal shall not serve as moderator. A simple majority of members present and voting is required to remove an active deacon.

g) Meetings

The active deacon fellowship shall meet at least once each month. The deacons shall elect their own chairman, vice-chairman and recording secretary. The chairman of the deacons shall represent the deacon fellowship on the church council.

h) Responsibilities

In accordance with the work and practice of the New Testament, the deacon ministry is tasked with assisting the pastor in meeting the practical needs of church members. Such duties include (but are not limited to) hospital visitation, shut-in/homebound ministry, evangelism, prospect visitation, benevolence, bereavement ministry and other practical ministry needs. When possible, each church family will be assigned a specific deacon responsible for individual family ministry and spiritual welfare.

The deacons shall assist the pastor in the observance of the Lord's Supper and Baptism.

Deacons shall be models of spiritual maturity, moral purity, personal integrity, doctrinal accuracy and servant leadership.

i) Reserve Deacons

The active deacon ministry shall maintain a list of all ordained deacons who are members of the church. Reserve deacons should continue to live by the same biblical qualification and level of service as active deacons. Reserve deacons may be called upon to assist the active deacon ministry when their wisdom and help are needed.

j) Deacon Emeritus

Deacon Emeritus is an honorary designation for any deacon reaching age 70 or older that has served the church with honor and distinction and has indicated a desire to retire from the active deacon ministry. Additionally, any deacon who becomes incapable of active service due to incapacitation may also be nominated regardless of age. A deacon emeritus shall have the privilege of attending any deacon meeting and fully participate in all deliberations except for voting. The deacons shall present any nominee for emeritus status to the church at any business meeting.

(4) MODERATOR

The church shall elect annually a moderator as its presiding officer. In the absence of the moderator, the chairman of deacons shall preside; or in the absence of both, the clerk shall call the church to order and preside for the election of an acting moderator. If desired, the pastor may serve as moderator.

(5) CLERK

The church shall elect annually a clerk as its clerical officer. The clerk shall be responsible for keeping a suitable record of all official actions of the church, except as otherwise herein provided. The clerk shall be responsible for keeping a register of names of members, with dates of admission, dismissal, death, or erasure, together with a record of baptisms. The clerk shall issue letters of dismissal voted by the church, preserve on file all communications and written official reports, and give required notice of all meetings where notice is necessary, as indicated in these bylaws. The clerk shall be responsible for preparing the annual church profile for submission to

the association or Louisiana Baptist Convention. The church may delegate some of the clerical responsibilities to a church secretary who will assist the elected clerk. All church records are church property and shall be kept in the church office when an office is maintained.

(6) TREASURER

The church shall elect annually a church treasurer as its chief financial officer. 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 of 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 a part of the permanent records of the church.

The treasurer shall ensure the church's financial affairs comply with Internal Revenue Service guidelines and other federal or state non-profit organization laws.

A church financial secretary or bookkeeper may be used as necessary to assist the treasurer in fulfilling the above responsibilities.

(7) TRUSTEES

The church shall elect three or more trustees to serve as legal officers for the church. They shall hold in trust the church property according to state non-profit corporation law. Upon a specific vote of the church authorizing each action, they shall have the power to buy, sell, mortgage, lease, or transfer any church property. When the signatures of trustees are required, they shall sign legal documents involving the sale, mortgage, purchase, or rental of property, or other legal documents related to church-approved matters.

SECTION 2. CHURCH COMMITTEES

The committees of this church shall be appointed as deemed necessary by the church. They may include regular standing committees such as (but not limited to) a nominating committee, a personnel committee, a church property and space committee, a finance committee, an evangelism committee, and such other regular and special committees as the church shall authorize. Additional regular committees may be added by the amendment procedure prescribed within these bylaws. All church committee members shall be recommended by the church nominating committee and elected by the church unless otherwise specified within these bylaws. All committee members shall be elected annually. The pastor shall serve as an ex-officio voting member of all standing and regular committees.

STANDING COMMITTEES

- (1) The Nominating Committee coordinates the staffing of all church leadership positions filled by volunteer workers, unless otherwise specified herein. The Nominating Committee shall first approve persons considered for any such positions before they are approached for recruitment. The Nominating Committee shall present to the church for election all who accept the invitation to serve. The Church Council shall recommend to the church those to serve on the Nominating Committee.
- (2) The Personnel Committee assists the church in matters related to 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. The Personnel Committee shall recommend necessary employment policies and guidelines to supplement these bylaws.
- (3) The Church Property and Space Committee assists the church in matters related to property administration. Its work includes such areas as maintaining all church properties for ready use, recommending policies regarding use of properties, consulting with the Personnel Committee and the church staff regarding the needs for, and the employment of, maintenance personnel and regarding the assignment of supervisory responsibility to appropriate personnel.
- (4) The Finance Committee develops and recommends an overall stewardship development plan, a unified church budget, and budget information plans. It advises and recommends in the administration of the gifts of church members and others, using sound principles of financial management. It works with the treasurer in the preparation and presentation to the church of required reports regarding the financial affairs of the church. The Finance Committee shall recommend to the church necessary financial policies to supplement these bylaws. The treasurer serves as an ex-officio member of the Finance Committee. The deacons may appoint one of its members to serve as an ex-officio member of the finance committee.
- (5) The Evangelism Committee will guide the church in programs of outreach, evangelism, and missions.

SERVICE COMMITTEES

The church shall elect service committees, teams, and working groups as needed. Service committees include, but are not limited to:

- (1) Hostess Committee
- (2) Flowers and Decorum Committee
- (3) Transportation Committee
- (4) Nursery Committee

ARTICLE III

CHURCH PROGRAM ORGANIZATIONS

The church shall maintain programs of Bible teaching; church member training, church leader training, new member training, church leader training, new member orientation; mission education, action, and support; and music education, training, and performance. 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 program activities subject to church coordination and approval. The church shall provide the human resources, the physical resources, and the financial resources for the appropriate advancement of these programs.

- (1) The Sunday School shall be the basic organization for the Bible teaching program. Its tasks shall be to teach the biblical revelation, reach persons for Christ and church membership, perform the functions of the church within its constituency, provide and interpret information regarding the work of the church and denomination.

The Sunday School shall be organized by departments and/or classes, as appropriate for all ages, and shall be conducted under the direction of the Sunday School director elected by the church or the Minister of Education.

- (2) Women's Ministry shall be the mission education, mission action, and mission support organization of the church for women, young women, girls, and preschool children. Its tasks shall be to teach missions; engage in mission action; support world missions through praying and giving; and provide and interpret information regarding the work of the church and denomination.

Women's Ministry shall have such officers and organizations, as the program requires.

- (3) The Men's Ministry shall be the church's organization for mission education, mission action, and mission support for men, young men, and boys. Its tasks shall be to teach missions, engage in mission action, support world missions through praying and giving, and provide and interpret information regarding the work of the church and denomination

The Men's Ministry shall have such officers and organization, as the program requires.

- (4) The Church Music organization, under the direction of the church-elected music director, shall be the music education, training, and performance organization of the church. Its tasks shall be to teach music; train persons to lead, sing, and play music; provide music in the church and community; and provide and interpret information regarding the work of the church and denomination.

The Church Music program shall have such officers and organization, as the program requires.

ARTICLE IV

CHURCH PROGRAM SERVICES

The church shall maintain, as needed, media center services and recreation services for the purpose of enriching and extending the ministries and programs of the church.

- (1) The media center service will be the resource center for the church. Its personnel will seek to provide and promote the use of printed and audiovisual resources. They also will provide consultation to church leaders and members in the use of printed and audiovisual resources.
- (2) The church recreation service will seek to meet the needs of members and groups. Its personnel will provide recreation activities, consultation, leadership assistance, and resources.

ARTICLE V.

CHURCH COUNCIL

The Church Council shall serve the church by leading in planning, coordinating, conducting, and evaluating the ministries and programs of the church and its organizations.

The primary functions 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 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.

Regular members of the Church Council shall be the pastor, other ministerial staff members, directors of church program organizations, chairman of deacons, church officers, chairmen of regular standing church committees, and at large members as determined annually by the church. The council shall elect its own chairman and vice-chairman.

All matters agreed upon by the council that call for actions not already approved shall be referred to the church for approval or disapproval.

ARTICLE VI.

CHURCH ORDINANCES

SECTION 1. BAPTISM

This church shall receive for baptism any person who has received 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.

- (1) Baptism shall be by immersion in water.
- (2) The pastor, or whomever the church shall authorize, shall administer baptism. The deacons shall assist in the preparation for, and the observance of, baptism.
- (3) Baptism shall be administered as an act of worship during any worship service of the church.
- (4) The pastor and/or staff or deacons shall counsel a person who professes Christ and is not baptized after a reasonable length of time. If negative interest is ascertained on the part of the candidate, he shall be deleted from the list of those awaiting baptism. Membership shall be denied to anyone who refuses scriptural baptism.

SECTION 2. THE LORD'S SUPPER

The church shall observe the Lord's Supper quarterly, usually the first Sunday of the quarter, unless otherwise scheduled by the church. The pastor and deacons shall administer the Lord's Supper, the deacons being responsible for the physical preparations. Any baptized believer present shall be served, regardless of church affiliation.

ARTICLE VII.

CHURCH MEETINGS

SECTION 1. WORSHIP SERVICES

The Church shall meet every Sunday morning for the worship of Almighty God. Prayer, praise, preaching, instruction, and evangelism shall be among the ingredients of these services. The Church may schedule other weekly worship services and prayer meetings as may be approved by the Church upon the recommendation of the Church Council. The pastor shall lead the worship services of the church or delegate such leadership in his absence.¹

SECTION 2. SPECIAL SERVICES

Revival services and any other church meetings essential to the advancement of the church's objectives shall be placed on the church calendar.

SECTION 3. REGULAR BUSINESS MEETING

The church shall hold regular business meetings at least quarterly on the day and time recommended by the Church Council and with at least two weeks' notice to the church. The meeting day may be rescheduled or even cancelled with the agreement of the pastor, moderator and deacon chairman with notice to the church. Agenda items must be submitted to the pastor, moderator or church clerk at least one week before the meeting and included on the printed

¹ Amended October 21, 2012.

agenda. The moderator may declare out of order any motion or recommendation not published the printed agenda.²

SECTION 4. SPECIAL BUSINESS MEETINGS

The church may conduct special called business meetings to consider matters of a special nature and significance. A one-week notice must be given for the special called business meeting unless extreme urgency renders such notice impractical. The notice shall include the subject, the date, and time and place; and it must be given in such a manner that all resident members have opportunity to know of the meeting. The special call meeting may only consider those matters for which it was called.

SECTION 5. QUORUM

The quorum consists of those members of majority age who attend the business meeting, provided it is a stated meeting or one that has been properly called.

SECTION 6. PARLIAMENTARY RULES

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

ARTICLE VIII.

CHURCH FINANCES

SECTION 1. BUDGET

The finance committee, in consultation with the church staff, committee chairs, and program leaders, shall prepare and submit to the church for approval an inclusive unified budget, indicating by items the amount needed and sought for all local and other expenses. The approved budget represent spending authority for church offices and programs. Offering envelopes will be provided for members' use.

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 received 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. (See Article II, Section 1, (6), regarding the church treasurer.) A system of accounting that will adequately provide for the handling of all funds shall be the responsibility of the finance committee.

² Amended October 21, 2012

SECTION 3. FISCAL YEAR

The church fiscal year shall run from January 1 through December 31.

ARTICLE IX.

CHURCH OPERATIONS MANUAL

The Church Council (or a special committee of the church) shall develop a church operations manual to include church policies and procedures and organization charts depicting lines of responsibility in the administration of the church. The manual shall be kept in the church office and made available for use there by any member of the church. The Church Council or a special committee shall review the manual at least annually, with authority to recommend changes for the church to consider. Any church member or church organization may initiate suggested changes in the manual.

Addition, revision, or deletion of church policies requires; (1) the recommendation of the church officer or organization to whose areas of assignment the policy relates, (2) discussion by the Church Council, and (3) approval by the church.

ARTICLE X.

RELIGIOUS EXEMPTION

The church reserves the right to exercise its religious and spiritual beliefs in all aspects of its operations and ministries as permitted by law. The church may dismiss from employment or volunteer service, or refuse to accept as a candidate for employment or volunteer services, any person whose lifestyle or doctrinal positions violates the church's interpretation of Scripture. The church reserves the right to deny the use of its facility, property and space to any person, group or organization whose views, policies or mission conflict with the church's interpretation of Scripture.

ARTICLE XI.

AMENDMENTS

Any recommended changes in the constitution and bylaws shall be referred to the Church Council for consideration and then shall be presented to the church at a regular business meeting of the church. Recommended changes in amendments shall be presented in writing at a previous business meeting and copies of the proposed amendment shall be furnished to each member present at the earlier meeting. Amendments to the constitution & bylaws shall be by two-thirds vote of church members present.

THIS CONSTITUTION AND BYLAWS WERE PRESENTED AND APPROVED BY THE MEMBERSHIP OF ELM GROVE BAPTIST CHURCH ON FEBRUARY 14, 2010.