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# Unity Baptist Church

## Bylaws



# UNITY BAPTIST CHURCH

101 East Bryant Drive  
Sylvester, GA 31791  
(229) 776-4212

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## **Article I Name and Location**

The name of this congregation will be The Unity Baptist Church of Sylvester, Georgia, Inc. located in Sylvester, Georgia.

## **Article II Church Covenant**

Having been led, as we believe, by the Spirit of God, to receive the Lord Jesus Christ as our Savior, and on the profession of our faith, having been baptized in the name of the Father, and the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, we do now, in the presence of God, angels, and this assembly, most solemnly and joyfully enter into a 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, 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 devotion, 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, 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 each other in prayer, to aid each other in sickness and distress, to cultivate Christian sympathy in feeling and courtesy in speech, to be slow to take offense, but always ready for reconciliation, being 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 III Statement of Faith**

### **Section 1 – Polity**

The government of the 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 mutual counsel and cooperation, which are common among Baptist churches. Insofar as it is practical, this church will cooperate with and support the Mallary Baptist Association, The Georgia Baptist Convention, and the Southern Baptist Convention.

## **Section 2 – Doctrine**

This Church receives the scriptures as its authority in matters of faith and practice. The Baptist Faith and Message, as adopted by the Southern Baptist Convention in 2000, is the Statement of Faith of this Church.

## **Article IV Membership**

### **Section 1 – General**

This is a sovereign and democratic Baptist Church under the Lordship of Jesus Christ. The membership retains unto itself the right of exclusive 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/herself as a candidate for membership in this Church. All such candidates shall be presented to the Church at any regular worship service for membership in any of the following ways:

- A. By profession of faith in Jesus Christ and for baptism by immersion according to the beliefs of this Church.
- B. By promise of a letter from another Baptist Church.
- C. Upon a statement of prior conversion experience and baptism by immersion in another church of like faith and order when no letter is obtainable.
- D. Upon a statement of prior conversion experience and for baptism according to the beliefs of this Church.

All candidates for membership shall be received upon a two-thirds majority vote of members present and voting at any worship service of this church.

### **Section 3 – Rights**

- A. Members of this Church who are 18 years of age or older may vote in the transactions of the Church.
- B. When necessary, absentee ballots are permissible when voting on pastoral and deacon candidates. Members must sign voting log, mark ballot and return sealed ballot to church secretary. This voting must be done during church office hours.
- C. All members of this Church shall be entitled to participate in the church services to the full Christian fellowship of the Church, and with other like believers, to participate in the Church ordinances.

### **Section 4 – Duties**

Members are expected, first of all, to be faithful in all the duties essential to the Christian life, to attend habitually the services of this Church, to give regularly to its support and its

causes, and to share in its organized work according to the covenant of this Church as previously set out herein.

### **Section 5 – Termination of Membership**

Membership shall be terminated in the following ways:

- A. By death
- B. By granting of letters by the Church to another church
- C. By request of the member

## **Article V     Officers**

### **Section 1 – Pastor**

- A. The Pastor shall be the Chief Executive Officer of the Church. His duties shall include the following:
  - 1. To preach the gospel at the Church
  - 2. To administer the ordinances of the New Testament
  - 3. Give attention to the spiritual needs of the congregation
  - 4. To act as moderator at all Informational Meetings of the Church (where he is personally involved, he may appoint someone else to moderate)
  - 5. To serve as ex-officio member of all teams of the Church
  - 6. To superintend the operation of the Church
  - 7. To be in charge of the pulpit at all times
  - 8. To visit the lost, un-churched and the families with special needs and offer counseling as allowed
  - 9. To oversee ALL literature purchased for Church programs
  - 10. To lead the Church to be on Missions (Local, National, and International).  
Matthew 28:19-20
- B. Qualifications of Pastor – The Pastor Qualifications are the same as those for Elders. Section 2 A.
- C. Calling a Pastor – Upon the death, resignation or removal of the Pastor, the Church shall call a minister of good report using the following guidelines:
  - 1. Notice of intention to vote on a Pastor shall be given by the Pastor Search Team and Elders from the pulpit at the regular Sunday morning worship service one week preceding the date of the Church's vote to call the new Pastor.
  - 2. The Church's vote to call the Pastor shall be on the recommendation of the Pastor Search Team.
  - 3. The vote to call must be at least a 90% majority vote of members voting by secret ballot.
  - 4. The Church must consider only one candidate at a time. After hearing the candidate in view of a call, all action pertaining to him must be disposed of before hearing another candidate in view of a call.
  - 5. The Pastor in view of a call must preach at one regular Sunday Morning Service (11:00 AM) and one Sunday Evening Service (6:00 PM).

6. The Chairperson of the Pastor Search Team may call the Church into a Informational Meeting for the purpose of calling or rejecting a Pastor recommended by the Pastor Search Team on the following Sunday Morning.
- D. Term of Office – The Pastor shall be elected to an indefinite tenure of office, to be terminated at his pleasure or the pleasure of the Church, with 30 days notice being given by either party before the termination is effective. The 30 days notice may be waived by mutual consent of the Pastor and the Church.
  - E. Compensation – The Pastor’s salary shall be an amount scheduled in the Annual Budget and regularly paid by the Church. Compensation of expenses incurred during his ministerial duties will be developed and recommended by the Elder’s, Finance Team, and Personnel Team.

## Section 2 – Elders & Pastor

- A. Qualifications of Elders and Pastor– Spiritual qualifications as set forth in 1 Timothy 3:1-7 and Titus 1:5-9 as interpreted by the Church.

1. 1 Timothy 3:1-7

“<sup>1</sup>Here is a trustworthy saying: If anyone sets his heart on being an overseer, he desires a noble task. <sup>2</sup>Now the overseer must be above reproach, the husband of but one wife, temperate, self-controlled, respectable, hospitable, able to teach, <sup>3</sup>not given to drunkenness, not violent but gentle, not quarrelsome, not a lover of money. <sup>4</sup>He must manage his own family well and see that his children obey him with proper respect. <sup>5</sup>(If anyone does not know how to manage his own family, how can he take care of God's church?) <sup>6</sup>He must not be a recent convert, or he may become conceited and fall under the same judgment as the devil. <sup>7</sup>He must also have a good reputation with outsiders, so that he will not fall into disgrace and into the devil's trap.”

- Titus 1:5-9

“<sup>5</sup>The reason I left you in Crete was that you might straighten out what was left unfinished and appoint elders in every town, as I directed you. <sup>6</sup>An elder must be blameless, the husband of but one wife, a man whose children believe and are not open to the charge of being wild and disobedient. <sup>7</sup>Since an overseer is entrusted with God's work, he must be blameless--not overbearing, not quick-tempered, not given to drunkenness, not violent, not pursuing dishonest gain. <sup>8</sup>Rather he must be hospitable, one who loves what is good, who is self-controlled, upright, holy and disciplined. <sup>9</sup>He must hold firmly to the trustworthy message as it has been taught, so that he can encourage others by sound doctrine and refute those who oppose it.”

- a. Understanding that God is the equipper. (1 Timothy v1)
- b. Elders are above reproach and blameless. (1 Timothy v2, Titus v6 – Elders have sought forgiveness from God and those they have wronged.)
- c. Elders are a one-woman man. (1 Timothy v2, Titus v6)



- d. Temperate. (1 Timothy v2, Titus v7 – Elders are men who can control their temper and are not starters of fire with their tongue. (James))
- e. Self-controlled, upright. (Timothy v2, Titus v8 – Elders are men who stay poised.)
- f. Respectable. (Timothy v2)
- g. Hospitable. (Timothy v2, Titus v8 – Understanding Christ’s teaching on love thy brother.)
- h. Able to teach, encourage others by sound doctrine. (Timothy v2 – Elders are encouragers of the Word.)
- i. Not given to drunkenness. (Timothy v3, Titus v7)
- j. Gentle. (Timothy v3, Titus v7)
- k. Not quarrelsome, non-argumentative. (Timothy v3)
- l. Not a lover of money or in pursuit of dishonest gain. (Timothy v3, Titus v7 – Elders are men that are not driven by money, the concern of money or the value of money. They realize that God is in control of all things.)
- m. Receives respect from his family. (Timothy v4, Titus v6)
- n. Not a recent convert. (Timothy v6)
- o. Must have a good reputation with those who are not in the Church. (Timothy v7)
- p. Holy in discipline. (Titus v8 - One who is sanctified and set apart through their salvation and is disciplined in their daily walk with Christ.)
- q. Refutes those who oppose sound doctrine. (Titus v9 – The Elder stands up and against anything or anyone that does not agree with the Word of God.

### **Section 3 - Elders**

- A. Nominations for Elders will be received from the Church floor by the 1<sup>st</sup> Sunday Morning Service in July.
- B. The Pastor shall then correspond with those nominated who are at least 40 years of age. Been a Church Member at least one (1) year. Been a Christian at least three (3) years, detailing Elder qualifications and expectations.
- C. The men who, after prayerful consideration, agree to serve if elected will be presented before an appointment team in accordance to Titus 1:5-9 and Acts 14:23, consisting of the Pastor and Deacons. The purpose of this team is not to judge individuals but to seek God in prayer for seven (7) days without discussion of nominees. The team would reconvene to reveal who God has led them to appoint in service of Elders.
- D. There shall be a maximum of three (3) Elders with a rotating system of one (1) member going on and one (1) member coming off each year. Elders may be re-nominated for the appointing process to serve a second term following one (1) year of idle service. The Elder’s term is to run from September 1<sup>st</sup> to August 31<sup>st</sup> annually for three (3) years.
- E. The number shall remain constant unless led by God to increase the number of Elders.
- F. Any vacancy that occurs during the Church year will remain open until the next regular scheduled election. If Church ministry will suffer the Elders can request to fill the vacated position from the present nominated pool of Elder candidates, which will be kept.
- G. The Elders shall constitute the Pastor’s spiritual counsel and under his leadership assist him with the spiritual affairs of the Church. With the Pastor, they shall assist in

- the observance of the Lord's Supper, formulate plans for the ministry of evangelism, the development toward the maturity of Christians, extension, and growth of the Kingdom of God, and fulfill other duties of the office of Elders.
- H. The purpose of Elders is to act as the governing body of Unity Baptist Church so that the primary focus of the congregation can be centered on worship, fellowship, and witness.
  - I. All spiritual and financial needs of the Church will come before the Elders for God's guidance and be administered in accordance to Acts 4:32-37; 11:30; 15; 1 Corinthians 16:1-4; 1 Timothy 5:17; 1 Peter 5:1-3.
  - J. In the event God leads the Elders to show support of the Church through the casting of votes, the Elders would notify the Church one (1) week in advance so that the Church would have seven (7) complete days of prayer before casting a vote.
  - K. Elders shall meet once monthly to seek the face of God in the direction of the Church, to receive financial needs other than budgeted items for approval and to hear concerns that need to be brought forth and addressed.
  - L. The Elders will approve yearly budget after seven (7) days of prayer. The budget will be given to Church Members in the August Information Meeting.
  - M. Elders will approve paid ministerial staff after seven (7) days of prayer before joining any Team in nominating paid positions to the Church for Church vote.
  - N. Elders will oversee the giving of the Church Tithes Offerings to missions and ministry.
  - O. Originate all supplemental appropriations for recommendation to the church as may be needful outside the then effective budget.
  - P. All church members are invited to attend Elder meetings as a non-participating member.
  - Q. A copy of the minutes will be kept in the Church Office.
  - R. The Elders will be charged with all the Church responsibilities in the absence of the Pastor.
  - S. Any Elder, who misses three consecutive meetings without being providentially hindered, will be contacted by the Pastor to determine the cause of absence, to provide encouragement in attendance.
  - T. Rebuking of an Elder will be done in accordance to 1 Timothy 5:19-20. It is stated in God's Word that the Elder who is being rebuked will be done so in the presence of two (2) or three (3) witnesses. If the Elder continues in his disobedience to God, he will be rebuked publicly. In the event he continues he will be asked to step down from his position by the Pastor with the support of the remaining Elders and the Deacon body.

#### **Section 4 – Selection of an Interim Pastor**

- A. The Elders and Pastor Search Team is charged with recommending an Interim Pastor/Preaching Pastor. His tenure will be ninety days. After ninety days, the governing body will evaluate the Interim Pastor, and if his services are satisfactory, the Interim Pastor's tenure may be extended for an additional ninety days.
- B. The vote to call must be at least a two-thirds majority vote of members voting by secret ballot.
- C. Before an Interim Pastor/Preaching Pastor is hired, compensation will be set by the Church in a regular or called Informational Meeting called by the Chairman of the governing body.

- D. During his term as Interim Pastor/Preaching Pastor, he shall be eligible to be considered by the Pastor Search Team to be called as Pastor.
- E. During his tenure, the Interim Pastor/Preaching Pastor will assume the ordinary duties of the Pastor as listed above in Section 1A.

#### **Section 5 – Director of Music**

- A. The Church shall elect the Director of Music after being nominated by the Music Team. He/she shall have general supervision of the music department. He/she shall be responsible for their conduct and direction, consistent with the leadership of the Pastor and Personnel Team. He/she shall be responsible for organizing all choirs and church music.
- B. The Director of Music shall serve as an ex-officio member of the Music Team and shall work with the Music Team in securing the Organist, Pianist and Directors of all music departments.
- C. The vote to call must be at least two-thirds majority vote of members voting by secret ballot for the election of any paid ministerial staff employee. (Pastor, Director of Music, Director of Youth).

#### **Section 6 – Director of Youth**

- A. The Church shall elect the Director of Youth after being nominated by the Personnel Team. He/she shall have general supervision of the Youth Departments. He/she will be responsible for their conduct and direction, consistent with the leadership of the Pastor and Personnel Team.
- B. The Director of Youth shall serve as ex-officio member of the Youth Team.
- C. The vote to call must be at least two-thirds majority vote of members voting by secret ballot for the election of any paid ministerial staff employee. (Pastor, Director of Music, Director of Youth, and Director of Children).

#### **Section 7 – Director of Children**

- A. The Church shall elect the Director of Children after being nominated by the Personnel Team. He/she shall have general supervision of the Children Departments. He/she will be responsible for their conduct and direction, consistent with the leadership of the Pastor and Personnel Team.
- B. The Director of Children shall serve as ex-officio member of the Children Team.
- C. The vote to call must be at least two-thirds majority vote of members voting by secret ballot for the election of any paid ministerial staff employee. (Pastor, Director of Music, Director of Youth, and Director of Children).

#### **Section 8 – Church Clerk**

- A. Duties include:
  - 1. Attend, or be represented at, all Informational Meetings of the Church presenting minutes of previous Informational Meeting if called into by Elders.
  - 2. Keep an accurate record of all Informational Meetings transactions and minutes of all Informational Meetings of the Church, to be stored in the Church office, available for review.

3. Prepare, coordinate and conduct all official correspondence of the Church, including preparation of the Associational Letter.
4. Preserve all valuable records and correspondence of the Church.
5. Request Church permission to grant letters of transfer to members and grant such letters upon permission thereof.
6. Keep an accurate roll of members.
7. Issue letters of dismissal as authorized by the Church.
8. Exclude or erase names of members from the Church roll upon direction from the Church.
9. Perform other such duties as specified in these by-laws.
10. Work with the History Team in keeping records and papers belonging to the Church.

### **Section 9 – Church Treasurer**

- A. The Church shall use the Unified Budget, and the Treasurer shall disburse all funds for local expenses, missions, and benevolence. The Treasurer shall hold all monies belonging to the Church and shall, without special vote or authority, pay out of the Church funds all salaries, fixed charges, interest, utilities, rent, and literature, as well as all other approved expenditures as specified in the Church budget.
- B. He/she shall pay all other bills only after the Elder have approved them. He/she shall keep a record of all receipts and disbursements with proper vouchers.
- C. He/she shall present an updated summary of the financial condition of the Church at each informational Meeting and a complete report at the annual meeting.
- D. The Assistant Treasurer or Chairperson of the governing body of this Church shall have authority to sign checks in the absence of the Church Treasurer.
- E. At the end of each calendar year, the Treasurer and Financial Secretary shall provide Church members and non-members with a record of tithes and offerings to the Church.
- F. All books, records, and accounts kept by the Treasurer shall be the property of the Church. The books and records, excluding contribution records, shall be open for inspection by the Church members at any reasonable time and made available upon request for audit.
- G. The Treasurer shall serve on the Finance Team.
- H. The Treasurer shall give to the Pastor a summary of tithes and offerings, including both designated and undesignated, on a weekly basis.

### **Section 10 – Deacons**

- A. Qualifications of Deacons – Spiritual qualifications as set forth in I Timothy 3:8-13 and Acts 6:3-8 as interpreted by the Church.
  1. I Timothy 3:8-13 says, <sup>8</sup>Likewise deacons must be reverent, not double-tongued, not given to much wine, not greedy for money, <sup>9</sup>holding the mystery of the faith with a pure conscience. <sup>10</sup>But let these also first be tested; then let them serve as deacons, being found blameless. <sup>11</sup>Likewise, their wives must be reverent, not slanderers, temperate, faithful in all things. <sup>12</sup>Let deacons be the husbands of one wife, ruling their children and their own houses well. <sup>13</sup>For those who have served well as deacons obtain for themselves a good standing and great boldness in the faith, which is in Christ Jesus.

- a. Christian commitment and dedication (v. 8) – A Deacon’s lifestyle and actions will reflect his love and respect for Jesus Christ.
  - b. Truthfulness in speech, not double-tongued (v.8) – He does not insinuate, fabricate, manipulate or exaggerate when using his speech. Speaks the same truth to everyone. Keeps his word.
  - c. Disciplined Christian life (v. 8) – He should be a good steward of God’s blessings and “walk the talk” by being a Christian example to those within and without the Church. Not given to much wine, full of dignity and not addicted to sordid gain (not greedy). He should be selfless and not seek personal glory (1 Corinthians 10:31). He should not become a stumbling block to others (1 Corinthians 8:13).
  - d. Integrity in Christian conduct, holding the mystery of the faith (v. 9) – His lifestyle will show a sincere effort to reflect the teachings of Jesus Christ. His actions, speech and attitudes will reflect Christ.
  - e. His spiritual maturity should be proved (v. 10) – He should not be a new Christian. We should choose deacons whose lives already exhibit the qualities desired in good deacons. He should maintain a Christian family life. Be the husband of one wife (Greek – one woman man). Consider the practices of those days when men had multiple wives. Does Paul here refer to the Christian relationship between deacons and their spouses? This is an issue for the LOCAL church to determine. One thing is clear; Paul speaks against polygamy and promiscuity. This decision is best made without considering individuals or personalities. Deacons are to rule their children well. He should be the spiritual leader of the home (not a tyrant). He is to be a Christian parent, teaching and training his children in the ways of God.
2. Acts 6:3-8 says, <sup>3</sup>Therefore, brethren, seek out from among you seven men of good reputation, full of the Holy Spirit and wisdom, whom we may appoint over this business; <sup>4</sup>but we will give ourselves continually to prayer and to the ministry of the word. <sup>5</sup>And the saying pleased the whole multitude. And they chose Stephen, a man full of faith and the Holy Spirit, and Philip, Prochorus, Nicanor, Timon, Parmenas, and Nicolas, a proselyte from Antioch, <sup>6</sup>whom they set before the apostles; and when they had prayed, they laid hands on them. <sup>7</sup>Then the word of God spread, and the number of the disciples multiplied greatly in Jerusalem, and a great many of the priests were obedient to the faith. <sup>8</sup>And Stephen, full of faith and power, did great wonders and signs among the people.
- a. Deacons are to be males, believers, of good reputation, have wisdom of God, be filled with and guided by the Holy Spirit, and full of faith in God. They are to be chosen from the congregation, by the congregation of the local church (v. 3, 5).
  - b. A church has the right to expect that its deacons work well with people, show potential for developing an effective ministry and be willing to serve Jesus Christ and the local congregation.
  - c. Deacons are to promote church harmony and see to the welfare and needs of the congregation. The Apostles were to dedicate their time and effort to the studying of the Scriptures and prayer so they might teach and lead the church in the ways of Jesus. The deacons were to handle the other temporal and spiritual needs of the congregation. They can only effectively do this if they are faithful in their attendance of services and events of the Church.

- d. Deacons' wives should not slander (gossip or practice idle talk), they should be grave (Christian character), sober (live a well-balanced life on a solid biblical foundation). These requirements when followed will naturally lead to helping others. Deacons and their wives are to complement each other not compete against each other.
- B. Nominations for deacons shall be received from the church floor by secret ballot by the 2<sup>nd</sup> Sunday Morning Service in July.
- C. The Pastor shall then correspond with those nominated, who are at least 25 years of age, been a church member at least one year and been a Christian at least three years, detailing deacon qualifications and expectations.
- D. The men who, after prayerful consideration, agree to serve if elected will be presented before an appointing team (in accordance to Acts 6) consisting of the Pastor and Elders. The purpose of this team is not to judge individuals but to seek God in prayer for seven (7) days without discussion of nominees. The team would reconvene to reveal whom God has led them to appoint in the service of Deacon.
- E. There will be a time of installation consisting of a council of ordained men, followed by an ordination service in the church.
- F. There shall be a maximum of 6 Deacons with a rotating system of 2 members going on, 2 members coming off each year. Each new election or re-election will fulfill a term of three (3) years. A Deacon can be elected for a second term following one year of non-active status. The Deacon's term is to run from September 1 to August 31 annually for a three (3) year term.
- G. The number shall remain constant as long as the resident membership remains at 170 or less. As the Church grows, an additional member of the Deacons shall be elected for each increase of fifty members or ten families in the membership of the Church.
- H. Any vacancies that occur during the church year will remain open until the next regularly scheduled election. If church ministry will suffer, the governing body can request the church to hold a special election to fill the vacancy.
- I. The Deacons shall constitute the Pastor's ministry assistant and under his leadership shall have general oversight of the ministry and temporal affairs of the Church. With the Pastor, they shall assist in the observance of the Lord's Supper, formulate plans for the ministry of evangelism, the development toward maturity as Christians, the extension and growth of the Kingdom of God, and fulfill all other duties of the office of a Deacon.
- J. Deacons shall work actively in the fields of visitation, soul winning, hospital calls, and the spiritual ministry of the Church.
- K. The Deacons along with the Elders shall meet every Sunday for a time of prayer and report on ministry.
- L. All church members are invited to attend Deacon meetings as a non-participating member.
- M. The priority service of the Deacon will be to minister to the assigned families given him. Deacons will be encouraged to meet every Sunday morning from 9:00 – 9:45 a.m. The purpose of the meeting is to discuss any needs within his family ministry, to pray for the families of Unity Baptist Church, to pray over the Sunday School Class, to pray over the Worship Service, to pray over the Youth Director, to pray over the Music Director, to pray over the Pastor, to pray over the Church as a building, to pray over the Sanctuary as a place to worship and to pray God's anointing on the pulpit.
- N. Rebuking of a Deacon will be done in accordance to 1 Timothy 5:19-20. It is stated in God's Word that the Elder who is being rebuked will be done so in the presence of two (2) or three (3) witnesses. The Deacons of Unity Baptist Church shall follow the same rebuking process of Elders. If the Deacon continues in his disobedience to God he will

be rebuked publicly. In the event he continues he will be asked to step down from his position by the Pastor with the support of the remaining Elders and the Deacon body.

#### **Section 11 – Trustees**

- A. There shall be four Trustees nominated by the active governing body and elected annually.
- B. The Trustees shall be the officers of this corporation and shall select a President, a Vice-President, and a Secretary at the first meeting in September.
- C. The Trustees will be empowered to execute deeds of trust, mortgages, liens, promissory notes, or other pecuniary obligations, and to transfer, assign, and convey all Church property or any part thereof upon officially recorded instructions of the Elders in an Informational Meeting.
- D. The Trustees shall ensure that adequate insurance is carried on the Church property at all times.
- E. All powers and duties of the Trustees shall conform to the laws of the State of Georgia.
- F. A Trustee must be mature, been a member of this Church for five (5) years, be active in all Church functions such as Sunday School, Family Life Ministries, etc., and maintain a good reputation in all financial responsibilities.
- G. The Trustees shall be responsible for the oversight of all properties of the Church. They shall perform other duties as prescribed by the President of the Board of Trustees and/or as required by the Church.

#### **Section 12 – Director of Sunday School**

- A. The Church shall elect the Director of Sunday School in July of each year, after being nominated by the Church Nominating Team.
- B. The Director of Sunday School shall have general supervision of the Sunday School and its conduct and direction, consistent with leadership of the Pastor and the Church Program.
- C. In consultation with the Pastor and the governing body, he/she will ensure that sufficient teachers are provided, adequate space and equipment are available, and that records are properly kept. He/she shall recommend plans and programs for the best interest of the Church.
- D. Official service shall begin on September 1 and terminate on August 31 annually.
- E. The Director of Sunday School must be at least 21 years of age.

#### **Section 13 – Director of Family Life Ministries**

The Director of Family Life Ministries shall follow the same guidelines as determined for the Director of Sunday School. He/she shall have general supervision of promoting and coordinating family activities, including seasonal and special events, for all church members. He/she shall also assist the Pastor in coordinating Home Groups.

#### **Section 14 – Director of Men’s Ministries**

The Director of Brotherhood shall follow the same guidelines as the Director of Sunday School with the exception that he shall have general supervision over the Men’s Ministry. His duties shall include planning monthly/quarterly activities for men and scheduling speakers for Men’s Ministry’s needs. Oversees Royal Ambassadors (RA’s).

#### **Section 15 – Director of Women’s Ministries**

The Director of Women’s Ministries shall follow the same guidelines as the Director of Sunday School with the exception that she shall have general supervision over the ministry activities of the women.

#### **Section 16 – Director of Women’s Missionary Union (WMU)**

The Director of Women’s Ministries shall follow the same guidelines as the Director of Sunday School with the exception that she shall have general supervision over the mission activities of the women. Oversees Girls in Action (GA’s) and Mission Friends.

#### **Section 17 – Director of Golden Celebrities**

The Director of Golden Celebrities shall follow the same guidelines as the Director of Sunday School with the exception that he/she shall plan, coordinate, schedule and implement activities for senior citizens in the best interest of the Church for this ministry.

#### **Section 18 – Director of Evangelism**

The Director of Evangelism shall follow the same guidelines as the Director of Sunday School with the exception that he/she shall have general supervision over the Evangelism Program of the Church. He/She shall actively work in the spiritual ministry of the Church through visitation, correspondence (birthday card ministry), publications (monthly newsletter), revival preparation, media, prayer coordination, sign ministry, and scheduling special speakers and learning seminars with outreach emphasis.

### **Article VI Meetings**

#### **Section 1 – Informational Meeting**

- A. The primary purpose of the Informational Meeting is to inform the congregation in the direction God is leading the Church once received through prayer. The purpose of this is so that the Church and Elders as a whole will be praying for God’s guidance and provision as Unity Baptist Church seeks to be a New Testament Church, led by the Spirit of God, filled with the Spirit of God and winning the lost for the glory of God.
- B. The regular Informational Meeting will be held on a Wednesday night.
- C. The Pastor may call additional Informational Meetings as needed.
- D. In the absence of the Pastor, the Elders of the governing body shall act as moderator, or in his/her absence.



- E. If the matter to be considered at a called meeting is other than routine day-to-day Church business, notice shall be given publicly through the Church bulletin or from the pulpit one week preceding the called Informational Meeting.
- F. All meetings where Church information is transacted must be held on Church property; otherwise, the meeting will not be considered binding on Church members.
- G. All members whose names are on the Church active roll and who are at least 18 years of age or older shall be entitled to vote in the Church Informational Meetings where the Elders have sensed God's leading for the Church to show support through the casting of votes.
- H. Every Informational Meeting shall be opened and closed in prayer.
- I. Except as otherwise provided herein, the Information Meeting of the Church shall be conducted according to Robert's Rules of Order.

### **Section 2 – Lord's Supper**

- A. The Church shall observe the Lord's Supper.
- B. The Lord's Supper shall be observed as often as the Pastor senses a need within the fellowship to commemorate the Lord's death, burial, and resurrection. One week's notice shall be given to the Ordinance Team prior to ordinance being held.

### **Section 3 – Representation in Association and Convention**

Once each year, messengers shall be appointed by the Church to represent the Church in meetings of the Mallary Baptist Association, the Georgia Baptist Convention, and the Southern Baptist Convention. The duty of the messengers shall be to furnish the associations and conventions a statement of the conditions of the Church, including its changes. Further, they shall represent the desires of the Church in any actions taken at these meetings that would lead to a cooperative effort with other churches in advancing the Kingdom of God.

## **Article VII Teams**

### **Section 1 – Policy**

- A. All team leaders shall be members of this Church. Any team member must be a Church Member for a period of one year before he/she can serve as Chairperson and/or as a Governing Body Member. Unless otherwise stated in this document, all team members shall be selected by the Nominating Team and elected by the Church.
- B. The Pastor shall be ex-officio member of all teams.
- C. All teams shall serve from September 1 until August 31 of the following year.
- D. All teams shall bring to the Church reports or recommendations when necessary.
- E. All team leaders must be at least 21 years of age and volunteers can include youth.
- F. Each team shall elect a Chairperson from the team members unless otherwise provided herein.
- G. A majority of the members of any team must be present at a meeting before business can be transacted.

- H. It is recommended that all teams meet at least once monthly to discuss any issues pertaining to that team or its work.

## **Section 2 – Nominating Team**

- A. This team, composed of three members, shall be elected by the Church in the August Informational Meeting to serve the following church year. Its responsibilities shall be to bring before the Church, on or before the July Informational Meeting, nominations for:
1. Director of Sunday School
  2. Director of Family Life Ministries
  3. Director of Men’s Ministries
  4. Director of Women’s Ministries
  5. Director of Golden Celebrities
  6. Director of Evangelism
  7. Church Treasurer
  8. Church Clerk
  9. Women’s Missionary Union (WMU)
- B. This team shall then work with these officers and bring before the Church, on or before the August Informational Meeting, nominations for Sunday School teachers and Officers.
- C. This team shall also be responsible for nominating the following team members, each team having a minimum of three members with others being added as needed:
1. Benevolence Team
  2. Children’s Team
  3. Decorating/Flowers Team
  4. Finance Team
  5. General Repairs and Maintenance Team
  6. History Team
  7. Host and Hostess Team
  8. Long Range Planning Team
  9. Media Team
  10. Music Team
  11. Nursery Team
  12. Ordinance Team
  13. Personnel Team
  14. Publications Team
  15. Ushers Team
  16. Youth Team

## **Section 3 – Benevolence Team**

This team leadership comprised of Staff and Elders shall investigate needs of which it is made aware to determine if those needs warrant assistance from the Church. This team shall be responsible for any disaster relief efforts and for securing food for a church family upon the death of a member or the member’s parent, spouse, or child.

#### **Section 4 – Children’s Team**

This team shall be responsible for planning, evaluating, scheduling, coordinating and implementing children’s ministry and activities for Preschool through Grade 6.

#### **Section 5 – Decorating/Flowers Team**

This team shall obtain flowers for the regular church services and for special occasions as well as decorating the church for seasonal celebrations. The church office shall also order flowers upon the death of a member or the member's parent, spouse, or child.

#### **Section 6 – Finance Team**

This team shall consist of six (6) members serving three-year terms with two members being elected annually. This team shall generally oversee the financial matters of the church. Their duties include:

- A. Prepare and recommend to the Elders at their regular business meeting in July the annual budget based upon expected request from various departments.
- B. Revise the budget according to recommendations of the Elders.
- C. Make recommendations to the Elders concerning the financial ministries within the Church.
- D. Count and record all collections of the Church on a weekly basis.

#### **Section 7 – General Repairs and Maintenance Team**

This team shall be responsible for the general upkeep of all Church properties (land, buildings, parsonage, church vehicles, playground), furniture, fixtures, and maintenance equipment to determine necessary repair and improvements, and to authorize replacement or repair up to the limit of the budget. Should the budget be inadequate for such repairs or improvements, this team will request the Elders to provide special appropriations for this purpose (excluding new construction). New construction must be voted on and approved by the Church by a two-thirds affirmative vote of members in a regularly called Church Informational Meeting. This team shall also be responsible for obtaining and presenting contractual services for grounds and building upkeep to the Personnel Team for disposition.

#### **Section 8 – History Team**

This team shall be responsible for gathering and preserving all Church records of the past, to assist with the recording of present day activities, and to use the records to help the Church members measure up to their opportunities in accomplishing their God-given mission. The Church Clerk shall serve as ex-officio member of this team.

#### **Section 9 – Host and Hostess Team**

This team shall help coordinate the social activities of the various departments of the Church as needed and shall help in making arrangements for Church-wide socials. It shall ensure that the user cleans the appliances, dishes, and other items in the kitchen. This team shall be responsible for keeping the kitchen stocked with necessary supplies.

## **Section 10 – Kitchen Team**

### Responsibilities

- A. Training or supervising anyone who wants to use the appliances in the kitchen.
- B. Seeing that the kitchen is cleaned after use. Advise those using or have used what needs to be completed. Whoever uses the kitchen is responsible for cleaning up afterwards.
- C. Inspecting all appliances to be sure they are in working order and inform the office of any concerns.
- D. Cleaning of the fryers.

## **Section 11 – Long Range Planning Team**

This team shall be responsible for making long range plans for Church growth by establishing and recommending a three-year and five-year plan.

## **Section 12 – Media Team**

This team shall be responsible for sorting and cataloging books and caring for and maintaining media room. This team shall also encourage church members to read and will keep them informed of new books that become available. This team is also responsible for the video system operations for worship services and making tapes available in the media room.

## **Section 13 – Music Team**

This team, along with the Pastor, shall have supervision of the music of the Church. It shall make any recommendations necessary for the improvement of the music of the Church. It shall arrange for sufficient songbooks for worship services, choirs and other equipment as needed within the limits of the budget. The Director of Music, pianist and organist shall serve as ex-officio members of this team.

## **Section 14 – Nursery Team**

This team shall be responsible for scheduling nursery workers for each Sunday morning and for special events. They shall also make sure there are enough workers for each service including Sunday nights and Wednesday nights. They are responsible for washing sheets and blankets used in the nursery and taking out garbage after each service and ensuring that the rooms are left neat and clean. They must also make sure there are juice and snacks available in both nursery rooms.

## **Section 15 – Ordinance Team**

This team shall be responsible for the ordinances of baptism and the Lord's Supper. They shall make arrangements for these ordinances, prepare for and assist the Pastor during baptismal services and presentation of the Lord's Supper. They shall also be responsible for cleaning up after these services.

## **Section 16 – Outside Greeters**

### Responsibilities

- A. Being present at all regularly scheduled church services and events.

- B. Assisting attenders find their desired location.
- C. Locking and unlocking the appropriate doors during the services and events.
- D. Monitoring the outside facility during services to see if any assistance is needed.

### **Section 17 ~ Personnel Team**

The Personnel Team shall serve for two years with one member rotating off each year. They shall assist the church in matters of personnel administration in such areas, as staff needs, employment, salaries, benefits and personnel services of paid employees. Their duties shall include:

- A. Survey the needs of employees, create new positions, and abolish old ones.
- B. Prepare job descriptions for church employees.
- C. Assist in recruiting and interviewing of prospective employees and recommend the employment of church employees unless otherwise provided herein.
- D. Develop and recommend salaries and benefits for church employees.
- E. Develop and recommend personnel policies and procedures.
- F. Meet with staff members semi-annually for discussion of staff members work.
- G. Seek to improve communication between professional staff and the church through “staff appreciation” events.
- H. Recommend to the Elders the termination of a staff member whenever it is deemed by this team that unresolved detrimental conflict continues unabated between staff members and/or staff member and the Church. The Church shall be notified of the conflict charges by due notice.
- I. The vote of termination shall be by secret ballot by the Church after due notice.
- J. Close family members of church staff should not be asked to serve on this team.

### **Pastor Search Team**

When it becomes necessary to call a Pastor or Interim Pastor, the Church Elders, under the direction of their Chairperson, shall nominate five (5) members to serve as a Pastor Search Team. The team’s duties shall be to investigate possible candidates and make recommendations to the Church concerning the calling of a Pastor or Interim Pastor, making known to the candidates the expectation of the Church and candidate found in Article V, Sections 1 and 2. This team shall report to the Church and present no more than one candidate at a time.

### **Sections 19 – Publications Team**

This team shall be responsible for publishing a monthly Church newsletter as an extension of evangelism. It will also prepare other computer prepared miscellaneous circulars, pamphlets, etc. as required. The Director of Evangelism shall be an ex-officio member of this team.

### **Section 20 – Ushers Team**

The ushers shall greet those who come to the services, seat them, look after their comfort, distribute the bulletins and visitors’ cards, collect the tithes and offerings, investigate promptly, and if necessary, handle any disturbances inside or outside the building during services, and in any other way possible, help the congregation in its worship. They shall also be responsible for securing all church buildings after each service.

## **Section 21 – Youth Team**

This team shall plan and coordinate ministries and activities to promote spiritual growth for youth. The Director of Youth shall be an ex-officio member of this team.

## **Article VIII Financial Policies**

### **Section 1 – Plan and Method of Finance**

Tithes and offerings shall be recognized as the Church's plan of finance. All members shall be encouraged to give at least a tenth of their income to the Church. The Unified Budget System shall be the Church's method of finance, and there shall be one treasury in the Church.

### **Section 2 – Promotion of the Financial Program**

Promotion of the Financial Program will come through Sunday School and in service worship services with opportunities to give online or in service.

### **Section 3 – Business Policy**

In the interest of sound business policy, the following shall be observed:

- A. The Church year will begin on September 1 and end on August 31. The Fiscal year shall be the Church calendar year.
- B. All bills and obligations of the Church and its organizations shall be paid as directed by the Treasurer.
- C. A detailed and comprehensive written report of all receipts, disbursements, balances, etc., shall be given to the Church at each regular Informational Meeting by the Treasurer.

## **Article IX Amendments**

This constitution and by-laws may be altered, amended or rescinded by the members of the Church at any regular Informational Meeting called for that purpose, provided that proper notice has been given at a previous regular Informational Meeting 30 days in advance and provided also that such proposed changes have been submitted to the governing body for their consideration prior to bringing it to the Church for action. The governing body may express approval or disapproval, but final action is subject to the vote of the Church. All such proposed alterations as amendments of the by-laws must receive a two-thirds affirmative vote of the members present and voting at such meeting.

## **Article X    Miscellaneous**

### **Section 1 – Complaints**

- A. If any of the congregation has a complaint or a criticism about the work of any of the staff of any Church program, it shall be brought to the Pastor and Elders at their regular meeting each month; a time shall be set aside for them to listen to complaints, criticisms, or suggestions. The complaints, criticisms or suggestions may be presented in written form if the person bringing it cannot attend the meeting.
- B. The Pastor and Personnel Team will handle personnel problems. Problems serious enough to merit the attention of the congregation will be reported to the congregation; if the congregation receives no report, it can assume the problem merits no public statement. If the Personnel Team cannot resolve a complaint, then it can be taken to the Elders.

### **Section 2 – Ministerial Licensing and Ordination**

- A. Any member, who in the judgment of the Church, gives evidence by his piety, zeal and aptness to teach that he/she is called of God to the work of the ministry may be licensed to preach the gospel of Jesus Christ after having preached in the hearing of the Church and provided that two-thirds of the members of the Church present at any regular meeting agree thereto.
- B. If the Church, by a two-thirds affirmative vote, decides that one of its licensed preachers possesses the scriptural qualifications for full ordination, it shall call a council of ministers and brethren from sister Churches to examine the qualifications of the candidate, to which council of the propriety of ordaining shall be referred.

### **Section 3 – Precedence**

This Constitution and By-Laws, when adopted by the Church, shall take the place of all other rules and regulations heretofore in effect.

**Church voted 08/12/15**

August 2021 – Revisions

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## **ADDENDUM #1**

### **Statement on Marriage and Sexuality**

We believe that the term “marriage” has only one meaning and that is marriage sanctioned by God which joins one man and one woman in a single, exclusive union, as delineated in Scripture. Gender is delineated at birth.

We believe that God intends sexual intimacy to only occur between a man and a woman who are married to each other. We believe that God has commanded that no intimate sexual activity be engaged in outside of a marriage between a man and a woman.

We believe that any form of sexual immorality, such as adultery, fornication, homosexuality, bisexual conduct, bestiality, incest, pornography or any attempt to change one’s sex, or disagreement with one’s biological sex, is sinful and offensive to God.

We believe that in order to preserve the function and integrity of the church as the local Body of Christ, and to provide a biblical role model to the church members and the community, it is imperative that all persons employed by the church in any capacity, or who serve as volunteers, should abide by and agree to this Statement on Marriage and Sexuality and conduct themselves accordingly.

We believe that God offers redemption and restoration to all who confess and forsake their sin, seeking His mercy and forgiveness through Jesus Christ.

We believe that every person must be afforded compassion, love, kindness, respect, and dignity. Hateful and harassing behavior or attitudes directed toward any individual are to be repudiated and are not in accord with scripture nor the doctrines of the church.

## **ADDENDUM #2**

### **Wedding Request:**

#### **Requirements for wedding request:**

1. Individuals desiring to be married by the Pastor of this church and at this church location must complete premarital counseling by an approved counselor. (Counselor will be approved by pastor)



2. Individuals desiring to be married must be active church participants and both must profess to know Christ as their Savior.
3. If individuals are living together, then one must move from the current residence unless other arrangements are agreed upon.
4. All qualifications of the Pastor must be met including qualifications pertaining to pre-marital sex before the Pastor will marry couples.
5. Unity Baptist Church will only support the marriage union of a man and woman. Gender is delineated at birth.
6. All visiting Pastors (licensed/ordained clergy) asked to perform such ceremony will complete a questionnaire before being given the opportunity to perform such ceremony and will be of the male gender only.
7. All wedding ceremonies will agree with the Southern Baptist Faith, Southern Baptist Doctrine, and the Statement of Marriage and Sexuality.

### ADDDENDUM #3

#### Page 4 Section 2 – Candidacy for Membership

Any person(s) agreeing to adopt the Church Covenant, Statement of Faith, Statement on Marriage and Sexuality and Membership qualifications for membership in this Church.

August 18, 2021 – Church voted on By-Law changes.

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