

**The Constitution**  
**of**  
**Chatham Bible Church**

**Hazelwood, Missouri**

**(Revised May, 2004)**

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# The Constitution of Chatham Bible Church Hazelwood, Missouri

## Preamble

We the members of the Chatham Bible Church, duly incorporated under the laws of Missouri on December 2, 1928, do hereby establish and enact the following articles in order to declare the purpose, beliefs, and operating methods by which this church shall function. Pursuant to a meeting of the church members on May 16, 2004, these articles are adopted:

## Article 1. Our Mission

The Mission of Chatham Bible Church shall be:

To be a family of believers in Jesus Christ who worship and proclaim God and are built up to serve one another and the world.

Our Mission addresses five purposes established by God for the Church. We recognize that these purposes must be undergirded with prayer. They are explained further in the paragraphs below.

### *To Worship God:*

The phrase “believers in Jesus Christ who worship... God” reminds us that man was created to know and love God and to worship Him forever. Our worship includes hearts and lips that praise the Lord. Worship also includes good works done in His name, and giving of our resources and ourselves to Him.

Mark 12:29-30; Romans 12:1; Philippians 4:18; Hebrews 13:15-16

### *To Spread the Gospel:*

The phrase “proclaim God” reminds us of our mission to evangelize the world. His church is called to proclaim Him as He has been revealed in His Son, Jesus Christ, and by His Word, the Bible. We are called to proclaim Him through our lives, deeds, and words.

Matthew 4:19; 5:14-16; 28:19-20; Romans 1:16; Colossians 4:5-6; 1 Peter 3:15

### *To Make Disciples:*

The phrase “built up” reminds us of the on-going process of strengthening in each of us as we grow into Christlikeness. It is the Lord’s desire that all of His children grow and become fully equipped disciples who in turn reproduce themselves into the lives of others.

Matthew 28:19-20; Acts 2:42; Ephesians 4:11-13; Colossians 2:6-7

### *To Be a Family:*

The phrase “to be a family of believers” reminds us of the Biblical priority of fellowship. Fellowship is not something that we are to strive after. Rather, the Bible claims that fellowship is something that we already have received, since we’ve been placed by the Holy Spirit into union with Christ, and fellowship with one another as family members.

Acts 2:42; 1 Corinthians 1:9; Hebrews 10:24-25; 1 John 1:3

### *To Serve Others:*

The phrase “to serve one another and the world” reminds us of our responsibilities as His ministering body here on Earth. The Holy Spirit has gifted every believer for ministry. We are to minister to one another as fellow servants for each other’s benefit, and we are to minister to others in our community and the world.

Mark 12:31; 2 Corinthians 5:18-20; Galatians 6:10; 1 Peter 4:10-11

## Article 2. Our Doctrine

### 2.1 The Essentials

Doctrine is important, in fact, it is vital. The Apostle Paul wrote to Timothy, a pastor in Ephesus, to watch his life and doctrine closely, and to persevere in them, to assure that he was saved, as well as his hearers. He was told to “guard the good deposit” that was entrusted to him. Another pastor, Titus, was told to appoint elders who “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.”

1 Timothy 4:16; 2 Timothy 1:14; Titus 1:9

#### 2.1.1 The Scriptures

We believe that the Bible is the verbally inspired Word of God, inerrant in the original manuscripts, and therefore the infallible and final authority for faith and life.

Psalm 119:89; Matthew 5:18; John 12:47-48; 16:12-13; 17:17; 2 Timothy 3:16-17; Hebrews 1:1-2; 4:12; 1 Peter 1:25; 2 Peter 1:20-21

#### 2.1.2 The Godhead

We believe that the Godhead eternally exists in three persons—the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit—and that these three are one God, having precisely the same nature, attributes, and perfections, and equally worthy of the same worship, confidence, and obedience.

Genesis 1:26; Deuteronomy 6:4; Matthew 28:19; Mark 12:29; John 1:14; 6:27; Acts 5:3-4; 2 Corinthians 13:14; Hebrews 1:8; Revelation 1:4-6

#### 2.1.3 God The Father

We believe that God the Father is co-equal and co-eternal with the Son and the Holy Spirit. He is the Father over all creation, Israel, the Lord Jesus Christ, and all believers in Jesus Christ. He is infinite, eternal, holy, unchanging, everywhere present, all-powerful, all-knowing, just, love, truth, and sovereign.

Exodus 4:22; Deuteronomy 14:2; 29:29; 1 Kings 8:27; Psalms 2:7-9; 90:2; 139:7-12; Matthew 3:17; John 3:16; Acts 15:18; 17:28-29; 17:31; Romans 3:4; Galatians 3:26; Ephesians 1:3-6; 4:6; Hebrews 12:9; James 1:17; 1 John 1:5; 4:16; Revelation 19:6

#### 2.1.4 God The Son

We believe that in our Lord Jesus Christ dwells the fullness of the Godhead bodily. He is constantly and simultaneously God with all His divine attributes and man with all his human attributes except sin. His deity and humanity are inseparably united forever. He was eternally pre-existent but voluntarily took upon Himself sinless human flesh and nature, being conceived of the Holy Spirit and born of virgin Mary.

Micah 5:2; Matthew 1:16; Luke 1:26-35; 19:10; John 1:1, 2, 14; 2 Corinthians 5:21; Philippians 2:4-11; Colossians 2:9; Hebrews 1:8; 2:17; 4:15; 1 John 4:2-3

We believe that our Lord Jesus Christ was incarnated to reveal God to man and redeem us from our sin and death. This redemption was accomplished through His death on the cross as our representative and substitute. His literal and physical resurrection out of death secures life everlasting for the redeemed. His resurrection body is a pattern of that body which will ultimately be given to all the redeemed. He is now exalted at the right hand of God, where as our high priest, He intercedes for us as our mediator and advocate.

Luke 19:10; John 1:29; 14:8-11; 20:19-29; Acts 1:9-10; Romans 3:25-26; 8:34; 1 Corinthians 15:20-23; 2 Corinthians 5:14-15; Galatians 3:13; Hebrews 1:13; 7:25; 9:24; 10:5-14; 1 Peter 1:3-4; 3:18; 1 John 2:1-2; Revelation 5:9

### 2.1.5 God The Holy Spirit

We believe that God the Holy Spirit is a real person with all the attributes of personality and deity. His ministry in salvation is first convicting man of sin, righteousness, and judgment, and then regenerating this convinced sinner. He instantaneously indwells the believer, baptizes all believers into the body of Christ, and seals the believer's salvation from the day of conversion until the day of redemption.

John 16:8-11; Acts 5:3-4; Romans 8:9; 1 Corinthians 2:10-11; 6:19; 12:11, 13; Ephesians 1:13-14; 4:30; Titus 3:5

The Spirit's ministry to the Christian includes teaching Biblical truth, guiding us into righteous living according to the will of God, and assuring the Christian of his salvation. Furthermore, He convicts us of sin, restrains us from evil and controls those yielded to Him. He produces spiritual fruit in the life of the believer and gives spiritual gifts, as He chooses, to every believer. These God-given abilities equip us for a ministry of edification to and for the church.

John 16:12-15; Romans 8:14, 16, 26; 1 Corinthians 12:7, 11; 14:21-22; Galatians 5:22-23; Ephesians 5:18; 2 Thessalonians 2:7

### 2.1.6 The Creation, Fall, and Total Depravity of Man

We believe that man was created in the image and likeness of God, but through Adam's willful sin man lost his condition of innocence, lost his spiritual life, and became spiritually dead and alienated from God. This spiritual death has been transmitted to the entire human race, with the only exception being Jesus Christ. Man is totally depraved, utterly unable to remedy his lost condition through his own efforts. While everyone is the recipient of imputed Adamic sin, we are also responsible to God for the committing of personal sins.

Genesis 1:26-27; 3:1-21; Isaiah 64:6; Romans 3:10, 23; 5:12-19; 6:2-6; 2 Corinthians 5:21; Ephesians 2:1-3

### 2.1.7 Salvation

We believe that salvation, the gracious gift of God, is freely offered to all, but must be individually received by personal faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. His shed blood is the only means to satisfy God's just penalty for sin, and through his substitutionary death, salvation is offered to all men. Salvation by grace through faith, of necessity excludes all of man's attempts to earn salvation by meritorious efforts of any kind, including baptism, partaking of the communion meal, good works, or any such thing. All the redeemed, having been born again, are retained in that state by the power of God and therefore are secure in Christ forever, without interruption. The believer's assurance of salvation is based upon the declared Word of God and reassured by the Holy Spirit.

Luke 13:3-5; John 3:16-18; 10:27-30; Acts 16:30-31; Romans 3:24-26; 6:23; 8:1, 16, 38-39; Ephesians 2:8-10; 1 Peter 1:5; 1:18-19; 1 John 5:11-13

### 2.1.8 Sanctification

We believe that every saved person is set apart to God in three ways: first, he is completely sanctified in his positional standing before God, in Christ. Second, although the believer in Jesus Christ is given a new nature, he retains the old sin nature throughout this life. There is, therefore, progressive sanctification wherein the Christian is empowered by the indwelling Holy Spirit to progressively gain victory over the old sin nature. Progressive sanctification is brought about wholly by God's grace as we yield to God's will and conform to his Word. Additional merit or favor with God cannot be earned through works of the law or human effort. Third, the believer will ultimately be fully sanctified when he shall see the Lord and be "like Him."

John 17:17; Romans 6:13; 12:1-2; 1 Corinthians 8:8; 2 Corinthians 3:18; 5:17; 7:1; Galatians 5:6; Ephesians 4:24; 5:25-27; 1 Thessalonians 5:23; Hebrews 10:10, 14; 12:10; 1 John 3:2-3

### **2.1.9 The Christian's Conduct**

We believe that the Christian is called to conduct himself with holiness according to the standard of God's righteousness by the power of the Holy Spirit. We should not pursue, make provision for, or fulfill the sinful desires of the flesh and its nature. The flesh with its fallen Adamic nature, which in this life is never eradicated, needs to be kept by the spirit constantly in subjection to Christ. When sin occurs, the Christian's fellowship with God is interrupted, but may be restored by simple repentant confession. However, we maintain that our position with God as his child is constant and unbroken.

Romans 8:1-10; 12:1-2; 13:14; Galatians 5:16; 2 Corinthians 6:14-18; 7:1; 1 Peter 1:14-16; 1 John 1:5-10; 2:1-2

### **2.1.10 The Sacraments or Ordinances**

We believe that the believer's baptism and the Lord's supper are the only sacraments or ordinances of the church and that they are a scriptural means of testimony for the church in this age. Water baptism symbolizes the believer's identification with Christ, and the Lord's supper symbolizes the believer's fellowship with Christ, while memorializing his sacrifice for us.

Matthew 28:19; Luke 22:19-20; Acts 10:47-48; 1 Corinthians 11:20-34

### **2.1.11 The Church of Jesus Christ**

We believe that the Church, which is the body and bride of Christ, is a spiritual organism comprised of all born again persons. Furthermore, we believe that the establishment and continuance of organized local churches is clearly taught and defined in the New Testament scriptures. We believe that the one supreme authority for the church is Jesus Christ, and that church leadership, gifts, order, discipline, and worship are all appointed through His sovereignty as found in the Scriptures. The Biblically designated officers serving under Christ as His under-shepherds are elders. These men are to lead by godly example, and the congregation is to submit to their leadership.

Matthew 16:16-18; Acts 2:42-47; 14:23-27; 20:28; Romans 12:5; 16:5; 1 Corinthians 12:12-27; 16:19; 2 Corinthians 11:2; Ephesians 4:3-10; 5:25-27; 1 Timothy 3:1-13; Titus 1:5-11; Hebrews 13:17; 1 Peter 5:1-5

### **2.1.12 The Personality of Satan**

We believe that Satan is a created being. Having willfully rebelled against God, he became the author of sin and the cause of the fall of man. He is the openly declared enemy of God and man. His ultimate defeat is assured, and he shall be eternally punished in the lake of fire with the multitude of his followers.

Job 1:6-7; Isaiah 14:12-17; Matthew 4:2-11; 25:41; Revelation 20:10

### **2.1.13 The Return of Christ**

We believe in the second coming of Jesus Christ, which will be a literal, physical event. He will return in just the same way as His disciples had seen Him depart. He also taught that His return would be a comfort to us because He will be returning to take us back to be with Him into His Father's presence.

John 14:1-3; Acts 1:11

### **2.1.14 The Eternal State**

We believe in the bodily resurrection of all men, the saved to eternal life and the unsaved to judgment and everlasting punishment.

Matthew 25:46; John 5:28-29; 11:25-26; Revelation 20:5-13

We believe that the souls of the redeemed are at death, absent from the body and present with the Lord, where in conscious bliss they await the first resurrection when spirit, soul, and body will be reunited to be glorified forever with the Lord.

Luke 23:43; 2 Corinthians 5:8; Philippians 1:22; 1 Thessalonians 4:16-17; Revelation 20:4-6

We believe that the souls of the unbelievers remain after death in conscious misery until the last resurrection, when with soul and body reunited, they shall appear at the Great White Throne Judgment and suffer everlasting conscious punishment.

Matthew 25:41-46; Mark 9:43-48; Luke 16:19-26; 2 Thessalonians 1:7-9; Jude 6-7; Rev. 20:11-15

## **2.2 Our Distinctives**

Chatham Bible Church, like other Bible churches, has some theological distinctives that are important to us as well. However, we do recognize that these do not fall into the same category of “essential” doctrines. As such, we understand that believers from other theological persuasions have different interpretations than we do. We agree in such matters with one of the great Puritan pastors, Richard Baxter, who wrote, “in essentials - agreement; in non-essentials - toleration; in all things - charity”.

### **2.2.1 Dispensationalism**

A system of theology which recognizes different stewardships of man under God which typically include: Innocence (Genesis 1:28-3:6); Conscience (Genesis 4:1-8:14); Government (Genesis 8:15-11:9); Promise (Genesis 11:10-Exodus 18:27); Law (Exodus 19:1-Acts 1:26); Grace (Acts 2:1-Revelation 19:21); Millennium (Revelation 20:4-6).

We believe in the following premises which are supported by this system: 1) consistent literal interpretation of the Bible, 2) a clear distinction between Israel and the church, and 3) the glory of God as God’s ultimate purpose in the world.

### **2.2.2 Cessation of Certain Gifts**

We believe that the sign gifts (miracles, healing, tongues, interpretation of tongues) were of temporary duration and were not given to the Church beyond the first century. These sign gifts gradually ceased as the New Testament scriptures were completed and their authority became established. The Biblical sign gift of tongues was a known language unknown to the speaker, but never a gift common to all Christians nor a necessary sign of the baptism, nor the filling of the Holy Spirit. Furthermore, the need of the gifts of prophecy and apostleship ceased with the completion of the Scriptures, and so we also believe that such gifts no longer are in use today. To say that such gifts have ceased does not affect our belief that God is still a God who performs miracles, answers the prayers of His people, and heals the sick, as He so desires.

1 Corinthians 14:20-25; 2 Corinthians 12:12; Hebrews 2:1-4

### **2.2.3 End Times**

We believe that according to the Word of God, the next great event of prophecy will be the coming of the Lord in the air to receive the Church to Himself. This blessed hope or Rapture of the Church will be followed by a seven year tribulation period, or Israel’s seventieth week, to bring judgment upon the entire world. During these seven years the Church as the bride of Christ will be in heaven. Subsequent to the tribulation period, Christ will physically return with his saints to establish his millennial kingdom and to reign as King of kings and Lord of lords.

Zechariah 14:4-11; Matthew 24:29-31; John 14:1-3; 1 Corinthians 15: 51-52; 1 Thessalonians 1:10; 4:13-18; 5:9; Titus 2:11-14; Revelation 3:10; 6:1-17; 20:1-6

## **Article 3. Church Government**

### **3.1 The officers of this church shall be the following:**

#### **3.1.1 Elders**

The elders are responsible before God to fulfill four primary functions in His Church: 1) guarding, 2) oversight, 3) being a godly example, and 4) shepherding. The spiritual authority for leadership and shepherding the flock rests in this body of men.

Acts 20:28-31; 1 Timothy 5:17; 1 Peter 5:1-5

#### **3.1.2 Deacons**

In Acts 6:1-6 we find that deacons were established when the need arose within that New Testament congregation. The elders knew they should be devoting themselves to prayer and the ministry of the Word. Deacons were appointed to be responsible for other ministry needs that would be a distraction to the elders. Deacons assist the elders by helping to provide oversight in: Children's Ministries, Discipleship, Outreach, Missions, Mercy, Music, Facilities, Fellowship, Finance, Women's, and Youth Ministries. A pastor or elder may provide direct oversight of any of these ministry areas in lieu of a deacon.

#### **3.1.3 Trustees**

It is necessary in our society and culture to assign to individuals the legal authority to represent our church in the marketplace and legal system of the world. Those to whom we give this authority shall be designated as trustees.

### **3.2 Appointment of Officers**

#### **3.2.1 Elders**

Qualified candidates shall first be nominated by a two-thirds vote of the existing elders. Candidates shall be approved by a two-thirds vote of the church membership at the annual business meeting or a special business meeting. The size of the Elder Board shall be recommended to the congregation by the Elder Board as the elders perceive the needs of the church body. The number of lay Elders shall always be at least one greater than the number of pastoral staff elders. See Article 5 for appointment of pastoral staff.

#### **3.2.2 Deacons**

Qualified candidates shall be appointed by the Elder Board and confirmed by a majority vote of the church membership at a business meeting.

#### **3.2.3 Trustees**

The Deacon of Facilities and one or more of the elders will be designated to represent the church as trustees. Trustees shall be approved by a majority vote of the church membership at a business meeting.

### **3.3 Term of Office for Church Officers**

The term of office for any church officer shall not exceed three years except for the Pastor and Associate Pastors. When a term of office expires the officer may serve successive terms.

### **3.4 Qualifications of Church Officers**

#### **3.4.1 Pastor**

The Pastor should be a graduate of a Bible college or seminary, and preferably ordained. He shall agree with the church's doctrinal statement, as outlined in Article 2 of this constitution, and in the opinion of the Elder Board, meet the Biblical qualifications for an Elder as stated in 1 Timothy 3:1-7, Titus 1:5-9, and 1 Peter 5 :1-3.

#### **3.4.2 Associate Pastors**

Associate pastors shall agree with the church's doctrinal statement as outlined in Article 2 of this constitution, and in the opinion of the Elder Board, meet the Biblical qualifications for an Elder as stated in 1 Timothy 3:1-7, Titus 1:5-9, and 1 Peter 5:1-3. These qualifications shall be verified and confirmed after six months tenure.

#### **3.4.3 Elders**

Elders shall have been members for at least one year and shall, in the opinion of the Elder Board, meet the Biblical qualifications of an elder as stated in 1 Timothy 3:1-7, Titus 1:5-9, and 1 Peter 5:1-3.

#### **3.4.4 Deacons**

Deacons shall have been members for at least one year, and shall, in the opinion of the Elder Board, meet the Biblical qualifications for a Deacon as stated in Acts 6:3 and 1 Timothy 3:8-13. Because the deacon's function is one of service and not spiritual authority, either men or women can be appointed.

### **3.5 Duties of Church Officers**

#### **3.5.1 Pastor**

The Pastor's primary responsibility shall be to provide spiritual shepherding, oversee the dispensing of the ordinances, be a member of the Elder Board, and prepare and deliver spiritual food which will produce growth and maturity in believers. The Pastor shall be a voting member of the Elder Board from the point of his installation. The Pastor shall, when necessary or expedient, act as the Elder Board's representative to coordinate the ministries of the church. He has direct responsibility for worship, shepherding by the elders, preaching, adult education, counseling, and supervision of church office and staff.

#### **3.5.2 Associate Pastors**

Associate Pastors shall be responsible for directing and coordinating their respective programs within the church. They shall preside over their program committee meetings, and secure and supervise personnel necessary to carry out needed functions. The elders may appoint an associate pastor to serve as either an elder or a deacon. If appointed as an elder, an associate pastor shall immediately become a member of the Elder Board, serving in a non-voting capacity for six months. Voting rights as an Elder shall then be granted by a two-thirds vote of other elders upon verification of Elder qualifications. An associate pastor whose primary responsibility is youth ministry shall be referred to as Youth Pastor.

#### **3.5.3 Elders**

The elders shall be accountable for the oversight of all ministries and matters of the church body, whether spiritual, practical, financial, or governmental. Their duties shall include the design and execution of the church program, approval of funds appropriations, supervision of all sub-

organizations, examination of candidates for membership, assisting in the dispensing of the ordinances, and other functions appropriate to their Biblical role as overseers and spiritual shepherds of the church body.

### **3.5.4 Deacons**

#### **3.5.4.1 Deacon of Children's Ministries**

The Deacon of Children's Ministries shall serve as the administrator of the educational programs of the church from 2's & 3's through 6<sup>th</sup> grade, including ministries outside the church facility. He may appoint a Sunday School Superintendent (coordinator), and other coordinators as required. He shall oversee any committees, and equip and train teachers for Children's Ministries programs. He shall seek to provide continuity among the Children's and Youth Ministries by facilitating communication between the various coordinators and the Deacon of Youth Ministries. He shall also seek to encourage the coordinators whom he supervises and to assist them in fulfilling their responsibilities.

#### **3.5.4.2 Deacon of Discipleship**

The Deacon of Discipleship shall serve as the administrator of the formal discipleship programs of the church. He shall oversee a discipleship committee, and coordinate strategies to encourage all at Chatham to grow as fruit-bearing disciples and to be equipped for discipling others.

#### **3.5.4.3 Deacon of Outreach**

The Deacon of Outreach shall serve as the administrator of all formal outreach programs of the church. He shall oversee an outreach committee. This committee shall coordinate strategies to encourage all at Chatham to be equipped in sharing their faith and to reach our local community and personal friends for Christ.

#### **3.5.4.4 Deacon of Missions**

The Deacon of Missions shall serve as the administrator of the missionary program of the church. He may appoint a missions treasurer (coordinator), or any other coordinators. He shall oversee the Missionary Committee, coordinate the budget and disbursement of missions funds, supervise the liaison and regular correspondence with missionaries, and research the effectiveness of current and prospective missionaries. He shall supervise the missions conference and obtain and supervise personnel necessary to achieve objectives.

Further details of the church's missions program are contained in the Statement of Missions Policy of Chatham Bible Church. The Deacon of Missions shall work within the guidelines of this document. The Deacon of Missions, in coordination with the Missions Committee, may propose changes to this document. A majority vote of the Elder Board is required to approve such changes.

#### **3.5.4.5 Deacon of Mercy Ministries**

The Deacon of Mercy Ministries shall design strategies so that the sick, the widowed, the orphaned, and the needy will be ministered to. He shall appoint a committee to assist in meeting these needs and to act as a liaison between Chatham and other ministries of mercy in our community.

The Deacon of Mercy Ministries will establish a benevolence committee comprised of himself and two other officers. This committee will administer the benevolence fund.

**3.5.4.6 Deacon of Music**

The Deacon of Music shall serve as the administrator of the music program for the church. He may appoint coordinators to fill positions such as choir director, special music coordinator, orchestra coordinator, song leader, etc. A worship committee may be formed, and the candidates shall be recruited along with the Pastor's coordination. This committee will assist the pastor in the planning and implementation of the music to be utilized in the worship services.

The Deacon of Music shall supervise the orchestration, choirs, and the obtaining of any special music for the church. He is also responsible for any special concerts that may be planned as a part of Chatham's outreach or fellowship ministries.

**3.5.4.7 Deacon of Facilities**

The Deacon of Facilities shall obtain and supervise a facilities committee which shall serve in the management and maintenance of property, facilities, and equipment of the church, except the technology equipment managed by the Deacon of Sound, Video, and Information Technology. The Deacon of Facilities will also be designated as a trustee (see section 3.2.3).

**3.5.4.8 Deacon of Fellowship**

The Deacon of Fellowship shall be responsible for recruiting and training all greeters and ushers. He shall appoint a committee to organize social functions that edify the church body, and oversee the athletics programs, the kitchen, church potlucks, and the fellowship coffee time.

**3.5.4.9 Deacon of Finance**

The Deacon of Finance shall direct the planning, controlling, and reporting of church finances, along with supervising the receiving, counting, depositing, recording, and investing of funds. Coordinators may be appointed as required. He shall obtain any information necessary from other deacons to develop fiscal-year church budgets. He shall develop controls to insure adherence to budgets and seek to streamline all financial systems while maintaining sound accounting practices. A minimum of two people shall be present during the counting of money received in offerings.

The Deacon of Finance shall submit the proposed fiscal-year church budget to the Elder Board at least six weeks prior to the annual business meeting. All matters of financial disbursements not covered in the approved church budget must be submitted to the Deacon of Finance. He will examine the financial feasibility of such requests and, with input from the deacons or other committees concerning the practical feasibility, shall present his findings to the Elder Board. A majority vote of the Elder Board shall be final in every case.

**3.5.4.10 Deacon of Women's Ministries**

The Deacon of Women's Ministries shall oversee functions which seek to minister to the needs unique to women in the church. These functions include ladies' Bible studies, baby and bridal showers, women's retreat, nursery, baby-sitting and child care services, and special activities. Coordinators may be appointed as required. She shall obtain and supervise personnel necessary to achieve objectives.

**3.5.4.11 Deacon of Youth Ministries**

The Deacon of Youth Ministries shall serve as the administrator of the educational programs of the church from 7<sup>th</sup> grade through senior high, including ministries outside the church facility. He may appoint coordinators as required. He shall oversee any committees,

and equip and train teachers for Youth Ministries programs. He shall seek to provide continuity among the Youth and Children's Ministries by facilitating communication between the various coordinators and the Deacon of Children's Ministries. He shall also seek to encourage the coordinators whom he supervises and to assist them in fulfilling their responsibilities.

#### **3.5.4.12 Deacon of Sound, Video, and Information Technology**

The Deacon of Sound, Video, and Information Technology shall serve as the administrator of the technology resources of the church, including computers, computer networks, internet service, church website, video projection, stage lighting, telephone system, sound systems, televisions, video players/recorders, and equipment for reproduction of sermon recordings. He is responsible for the worship center sound and video projection ministries, the sermon recording ministry, and other ministries directly related to the resources listed above, and may appoint others to oversee these ministries. He shall coordinate with the Deacon of Music and other ministry leaders to provide for sound, video projection, and stage lighting for worship services and other church events.

### **3.5.5 Trustees**

Trustees are individuals given the legal authority to represent Chatham Bible Church in the marketplace and legal system of the world. They must carry all documents in the corporate name rather than in their own names. They shall be delegated the authority to carry out all business affairs of the church not specifically assigned to another officer.

## **3.6 Dismissal of Church Officers**

### **3.6.1 Pastor**

The Pastor may be dismissed from office by a two-thirds vote of the Elder Board and a two-thirds vote of the church membership at a business meeting. Grounds for dismissal may include improper conduct, differing doctrinally from Article 2, slothfulness, evidence that the Lord is no longer blessing his ministry, or failure to maintain any of the Biblical qualifications of an Elder as stated in 1 Timothy 3:1-7, Titus 1:5-9, and 1 Peter 5:1-3.

### **3.6.2 Associate Pastors and Elders**

These officers may be dismissed from office by a two-thirds vote of the Elder Board or by a two-thirds vote of the church membership at a business meeting. Grounds for dismissal may include any of those listed in section 3.6.1.

### **3.6.3 Deacons**

These officers may be dismissed from office by a majority vote of the Elder Board. Grounds for dismissal may include failure to maintain any of the Biblical qualifications of a Deacon as stated in Acts 6:3 and 1 Timothy 3:8-13, or improper conduct.

## **3.7 Appointment, Qualifications, Term, Duties, and Dismissal of Coordinators**

### **3.7.1 Appointment**

Coordinators may be appointed to assist a Deacon and may be assigned specific duties normally reserved for that Deacon. Coordinators shall be appointed by a Deacon and then confirmed by a majority vote of the Elder Board.

**3.7.2 Qualifications**

All coordinators shall be members of good reputation.

**3.7.3 Term of Service**

The term of service for a coordinator shall be one year, after which he may be reconfirmed.

**3.7.4 Duties**

Coordinators are responsible for all duties outlined in this constitution and in their job descriptions given by the deacon in their area of ministry.

**3.7.5 Dismissal**

A coordinator may be dismissed at the discretion of his deacon, after which the dismissal must be reported to the Elder Board.

**3.8 Eligibility and Appointment of Teachers**

**3.8.1 Eligibility**

Teachers are subject to the same eligibility requirements as members; see paragraph 6.1.

**3.8.2 Appointment**

Teachers shall be appointed by the Pastor, Associate Pastors, elders, deacons, or their coordinators. Teachers who are not members shall be confirmed by a majority vote of the Elder Board.

**Article 4. Meetings**

**4.1 Prayer at Meetings**

All meetings, regardless of their nature, shall be opened and closed with prayer to seek the wisdom and guidance of the Holy Spirit in discerning the will of God.

**4.2 Church Business Meetings**

Notification of all church business meetings shall be given at least two weeks prior to the meeting. Twenty-five percent of the church membership shall constitute a quorum. Only members eighteen years of age and older shall be eligible to vote on any appointments or referendums at a business meeting. A simple majority of eligible voters present shall be required to decide any issue, unless otherwise specified in this constitution. All votes on appointments or referendums shall be cast by secret ballot.

**4.2.1 Annual Business Meeting**

The annual business meeting should be held during the month of May. All business proposals must be presented through the Elder Board and placed on the agenda two weeks prior to the annual meeting. This meeting shall include: a review and acceptance of the minutes of the previous annual meeting, a review of the new annual report and other necessary business, approval of elders and/or deacons, and confirmation of the fiscal-year church budget. Changes to the budget during the year shall be proposed in accordance with paragraph 3.5.4.9 and confirmed by the congregation at a Special Business Meeting.

#### **4.2.2 Special Business Meetings**

Special church business meetings may be called by a majority vote of the Elder Board, or if petitioned in writing by over 50% of the church members eighteen years of age and older.

#### **4.3 Elder Board Meeting**

The Elder Board shall meet on an appointed day each month. A Head Elder (chairman) and an alternate (vice chairman) shall be appointed each year. The Head Elder presides at meetings of the Elder Board and is responsible for coordinating constitutional revisions, nominations, annual meetings, and leadership conferences. The alternate (vice chairman) assists the Head Elder with these duties. Two thirds of the elders must be present to constitute a quorum. Additional meetings may be called, as required, by the Head Elder or his alternate. All decisions shall be by majority vote unless otherwise specified in this constitution.

The Elder Board shall appoint one Elder to be Church Clerk. He shall keep a proper record of all congregational business meetings and Elder Board meetings. He is responsible for conducting necessary correspondence, and maintaining custody of all vital papers and documents of the church. His appointment shall be for one year.

### **Article 5. Church Employees**

#### **5.1 Selection Process**

##### **5.1.1 Pastor**

Prospective pastoral candidates shall be selected by the Elder Board. Having examined his qualifications, experience, and references, the Elder Board must agree unanimously to present a candidate to the church membership where an 80% affirmative vote at a business meeting will suffice to issue a call to that candidate. Only one candidate may be presented at a time.

##### **5.1.2 Associate Pastors**

Associate Pastors shall be appointed by the Elder Board and confirmed by a two-thirds vote of the congregation at a business meeting. After serving six months, his qualifications shall be verified and confirmed by a two-thirds vote of the Elder Board.

##### **5.1.3 Other Positions**

Other positions may be established by the Elder Board and confirmed by a majority vote of the congregation at a business meeting.

#### **5.2 Resignations and Dismissals**

All resignations must be submitted in writing to the Elder Board for their consideration.

##### **5.2.1 Pastor**

If the Pastor voluntarily resigns, it is requested that at least 60 days notice be given. In the case of dismissal see paragraph 3.6.1.

##### **5.2.2 Associate Pastors**

If an associate pastor voluntarily resigns, it is requested that at least 30 days notice be given. In the case of dismissal see paragraph 3.6.2.

### **5.2.3 Other Employees**

All other employees who resign are requested to give at least two weeks notice. Dismissal of these employees shall be by action of the Elder Board.

## **Article 6. Membership**

### **6.1 Eligibility**

To be eligible for membership a person must be able to give assurance of having received Jesus Christ as his personal savior, be willing to abide by the constitution of this church, and be in agreement with our essential doctrines in section 2.1 and not teach contrary to any of our doctrines as outlined in Article 2.

### **6.2 Approval**

A person must be approved for membership by the Elder Board, and be accepted by the congregation at one of its public meetings upon recommendation of the Elder Board. The congregation shall be notified two weeks prior to the candidate's acceptance. Any questions from the congregation concerning the eligibility of candidates for membership should be made known to the Elder Board during this two-week interim.

### **6.3 Responsibility of the Believer**

Members should recognize that believers in Jesus Christ are responsible to God for worshipping and fellowshiping regularly with the local church body, as well as other Biblical responsibilities such as regular prayer, Bible study, witnessing, giving, exercising spiritual gifts, etc., for the edification of the body of Christ.

### **6.4 Discipline**

The authority for all church discipline shall be vested in the Elder Board.

### **6.5 Dismissal**

A person may be dismissed from membership as disciplinary action for improper conduct. Dismissals of this type require a majority vote of the church membership at a business meeting.

### **6.6 Removal from Membership Roll**

Members' names may be removed from the roll after a one-year absence if they have not notified the church of their desire to continue membership.

## **Article 7. Ceremonies**

### **7.1 Ceremonies and Activities**

Chatham Bible Church reserves the right to oversee the performance of all ceremonies and activities involving members and non-members, as well as the use of church facilities for these events. These events, such as marriages, ordinations, dedications, funerals, installations, memorials, membership acceptances, etc., and all informal activities shall not be in violation of Biblical imperatives. The church property and premises shall also be used in a manner consistent with scriptural guidelines.

#### **7.1.1 Marriage**

The premises of this church shall not be used to unite in marriage believers with unbelievers (2 Corinthians 6:14). Persons who have been divorced shall not be married on the church premises

unless they have been the innocent party to desertion or adultery (Matthew 19:9; 1 Corinthians 7:12-15). Such innocence shall be determined by the Pastor and concurred by the Elder Board prior to the performance of the ceremony.

### **7.1.2 Ordination**

This church may give its endorsement, through ordination, to men called by God into the ministry.

## **Article 8. Amendments To The Constitution**

### **8.1 Method of Amendment**

Proposals to amend this constitution may be initiated by the submission of a rough draft of the proposed amendment by any member to the Elder Board. A three-fourths affirmative vote of the elders is required to present the proposal for congregational approval.

### **8.2 Approval of Amendment**

The proposed amendment, in final draft wording, must be made available to the congregation by the Elder Board two weeks prior to the date of the business meeting along with an explanation of the need for the change. A two-third affirmative vote of the members present at the business meeting is then required for approval.

## **Article 9. Dissolution**

No part of the net earnings of the corporation shall ever inure to the benefit of any donor, member, director, or officer of the corporation or any private individual. And no donor, member, director, officer of the corporation, or any private individual shall be entitled to share in the distribution of any of the corporate assets. Upon dissolution, any assets of the corporation must be distributed to one or more organizations recognized by the internal revenue service as one organized exclusively for religious, charitable, scientific, literary, or educational purposes.