

CONSTITUTION AND BY LAWS

FOR

CHATHAM BAPTIST CHURCH

CHATHAM, ILLINOIS

ADOPTED JANUARY 28, 1968

AMENDED OCTOBER 21, 1975

AMENDED AUGUST 16, 1989

AMENDED JANUARY 10, 1996

AMENDED OCTOBER 11, 1997

AMENDED MAY 18, 2003

AMENDED MARCH 14, 2004

CONSTITUTION

PREAMBLE

We declare and establish this constitution for the preservation and security of the principles of our faith, and so that this body maybe governed in an orderly manner. This constitution will preserve the liberties of each individual member of this church and the freedom of action of this body in its relation to other churches of the same faith.

I. NAME

This body shall be known as the Chatham Baptist Church (CBC) of Chatham, Illinois.

II. STATEMENT OF FAITH

The Holy Bible is the inspired Word of God and is the basis for any statement of faith. The church subscribes to the doctrinal statement of the Baptist Faith and Message as adopted by the Southern Baptist Convention in 1963. We band ourselves together as a body of baptized believers in Jesus Christ personally committed to sharing the good news of salvation to lost mankind. The ordinances of the church are baptism and the Lord's Supper.

III. PURPOSE STATEMENT

It is the purpose of Chatham Baptist Church to be a light to the world by

1. **Loving God** (worship) and man (fellowship)
2. **Learning** the teachings of Jesus Christ (discipleship)
3. **Living** by the leadership of the Holy Spirit (evangelism and missions)

IV. 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 of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit, we do now, in the presence of God, and this assembly, most solemnly and joyfully enter into covenant with one another as one body in Christ.

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

We also engage to maintain family and secret devotions; to religiously educate our children; to seek the salvation of our kindred and acquaintances; to walk circumspectly in the world; to be just in our dealings, faithful in our engagements, and exemplary in our deportment; to avoid all tattling, backbiting and excessive anger; to abstain from the sale of, and use of, intoxicating drinks as a beverage; to be zealous in our efforts to advance the Kingdom of our Savior.

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

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

V. CHARACTER

Section 1. Polity

The government of this church is vested in the body of believers who compose it. It is subject to the control of no other ecclesiastical body, but it recognizes and sustains the obligations of mutual counsel and cooperation which are common among Baptist churches. This church will cooperate with and support the Capital City Baptist Association, Illinois Baptist State Association, and the Southern Baptist Convention.

Section 2. Doctrine

This church receives the Scriptures as its authority in matters of faith and practice. Its understanding of Christian truth as contained therein is in essential accord with the belief of other Southern Baptist churches.

This church shall use literature published by LifeWay Christian Resources of the Southern Baptist Convention, and may make limited use of other literature.

BYLAWS

I. 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 a member of this church and the conditions of such membership.

Section 2. Candidacy

Any person may offer himself/herself as a candidate for membership of CBC. A candidate must meet the following criteria to be a member of CBC:

- (1) Must have a personal relationship with Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior.
- (2) Must have been baptized by immersion as a symbol of his/her faith in Christ.
- (3) Must have completed a class for prospective members.
- (4) Must have been approved by church action at a CBC business meeting.

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

three-fourths vote of those members present and voting shall be required to elect such candidates to membership.

Section 3. Termination of Membership

Membership shall be terminated in the following ways: (1) death, (2) dismissing to another Baptist church, (3) exclusion by action of this church*, (4) erasure upon becoming affiliated with a church of another faith or denomination.

*Should a member become an offense to the church and to its good name by reason of immoral or unchristian conduct, or by persistent breach of his/her covenant vows, or nonsupport of the church, the church may terminate his/her membership by a three-fourths vote, but only after due notice and hearing, and after faithful efforts have been made to bring such member to repentance and amendment.

II. CHURCH OFFICERS

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

Section 1. Pastor

The pastor is responsible for leading CBC in functioning as a New Testament church. The pastor will lead the congregation, and CBC staff in performing their tasks.

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

A Pastor Search committee shall consist of the Personnel Committee plus additional members recommended to and approved by CBC. The Personnel Committee in conjunction with the Nominating Committee shall recommend a total of seven (including the Personnel Committee) to serve on the Pastor Search Committee to give balanced representation of ages, gender, and diversity of groups within CBC.

If a member of the Pastor Search Committee resigns for any reason, the Nominating Committee and the Pastor Search Committee will meet and recommend a replacement.

If a member of the Personnel Committee has served his/her term and rotates off the committee during the pastor search process, the Personnel Committee member will be allowed to continue serving on the Pastor Search Committee until a pastor is called. A new Personnel Committee member will be recommended to CBC by the Nominating Committee, but that person will not serve on the Pastor Search Committee unless the former Personnel Committee member declines to continue serving on the Pastor Search Committee.

The Pastor Search Committee will recommend to CBC how CBC staff is to be involved in the pastor search process. The Pastor Search Committee shall keep CBC staff and CBC informed as to the progress of the pastor search process.

The Pastor Search Committee shall seek out a suitable pastor, and their recommendation will constitute a nomination, though any member has the privilege of making other nominations according to the policy established by CBC. The committee shall bring to the consideration of the CBC only one person at a time. Election shall be by ballot, an affirmative vote of three-fourths of those present being necessary for a choice. The Pastor, thus elected, shall serve until the relationship is terminated by his request or the request of CBC. The Pastor shall give at least two weeks notice at the time of resignation before terminating his responsibilities as pastor.

In the absence of the pastor, the Personnel Committee may recommend to CBC an interim pastor. A recommendation of an interim pastor shall include the interim pastor's responsibilities and compensation. Additional responsibilities may be assigned to current CBC staff members as approved by CBC.

CBC shall approve a mutually agreeable job description with an incoming pastor. This job description is to be reviewed by the pastor and Personnel Committee annually. Needed agreed upon changes are to be recommended to CBC.

Section 2. Church Staff

This church shall call or employ such staff members as the church shall need. A job description shall be written when the need for staff members is determined. Vocational staff members other than the pastor shall be recommended to the church by the Personnel Committee and employed by church action.

The secretaries and custodians shall likewise be recommended to the church by the Personnel Committee and employed by church action.

The pastor shall supervise staff personnel, which includes the Child Development School and Mission Pastor.

The pastor shall conduct an annual review of staff personnel and shall report the results to the Personnel Committee.

Section 3. Deacons

The number of deacons for the CBC shall be determined by the number of Resident Family Units in the church membership. The ratio shall be: one (1) deacon for not less than five (5) Family Units.

In case of death, removal or incapacity to serve, the active deacons shall recommend to the church body, a person or persons meeting the spiritual qualifications of deacons to be elected by the church to fill that unexpired term.

The Deacons of the Chatham Baptist Church shall serve on a rotational basis. Each year the term of office of one-third of the deacons shall expire, and an election shall be held to fill vacancies. Any deacon after serving a designated term of three or less years becomes automatically eligible for re-election. No deacon, however, shall be eligible for election to more than two consecutive terms of service until the lapse of at least one (1) calendar year. A year of service shall be defined as one calendar year.

There is no obligation on the part of the CBC family to constitute as an active deacon, a person who comes to CBC from another church.

Election of Deacons: Deacons for the Chatham Baptist Church shall be elected in the following manner:

(1) A ballot containing the names of all male resident active members, 21 years of age and above and having been members of CBC for one (1) year, shall be mailed to every resident member of the church. Each resident member will be asked to nominate and vote for the specified number of men to be nominated.

(2) After the ballots have been received a deacon screening committee composed of the Pastor, Chairman of Deacons, and three other active Deacons named by them, shall be responsible for the following:

- (a) Count the votes for nomination
- (b) Meet with men receiving the highest number of votes to determine their spiritual qualifications and willingness to serve. (This will be determined according to the "Deacon Covenant.")
- (c) Present to the Church Family the names of the qualified men who were nominated for election by the church by means of secret ballot.
- (d) Arrange for any ordination which may be needed.

Section 4. Moderator

The moderator shall be selected by the Nominating Committee and elected by the church. In the absence of the Moderator, the chairman of Deacons shall preside; or in the absence of both, the clerk shall call the church to order and an acting moderator shall be elected.

Section 5. Clerk

The church-elected clerk of the church shall keep in a suitable book, a record of all the actions of the church, except as otherwise herein provided. He/she is responsible for keeping a register of the names of members, with dates of admission, dismissal, or death, together with a record of baptisms. He/she shall issue letters of dismissal voted by the church, preserve on file all communications and written official reports, and give legal notice of all meeting where such notice is necessary, as indicated in these bylaws. The church may delegate some of the clerical responsibilities to the church secretary. All church records are church property and should be filed in the church office when one is maintained.

Section 6. Treasurer

The church shall elect annually a church treasurer. It shall be the duty of the treasurer to receive, preserve, and pay out, upon receipt of monies, approved and signed by authorized personnel, all money, or things of value paid or given to the church, keeping at all times an itemized account of all receipts and disbursements. It shall be the duty of the treasurer to render to the church at each regular business meeting an itemized report of the receipts and disbursements for the preceding month. The treasurer's report shall be audited annually by an auditing committee or public accountant.

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

Section 7. Financial Secretary

The financial secretary shall be elected or employed by the church. He/she shall receive the empty collection envelopes after the money has been removed and counted by the proper persons selected by the church to serve in turn; and from these he/she shall give donors individual credit. He/she shall keep the envelopes for reference for a period of three years. He/she will fill out the sheet for the monthly balance, which will indicate receipts from envelopes, plate or loose, and miscellaneous or special offerings. He/she shall also be responsible for preparing and mailing quarterly or semi-annual records of contributions to all contributing members.

Section 8. Church Ushers

Every regular church usher shall be selected by the nominating committee and elected by the church. The ushers shall be led by a head usher also selected by the nominating committee and elected by the church. The ushers are to greet people as they enter and leave the church, seat people at the proper time, provide bulletins and/or other materials at the time of seating. The ushers will be attentive to the needs of the congregation and the pastor.

Section 9. Church Council

(1) The primary functions of the council shall be to recommend to the congregation suggested objectives and church goals; to review and coordinate program plans recommended by church officers, organizations, and committees; to recommend to the congregation the use of leadership, calendar time, and the resources

according to program priority and to evaluate program achievements in terms of church goals and organization.

(2) The council, unless otherwise determined by vote of the church, shall have as regular members: The pastor, minister of education, minister of music, minister of youth, Sunday School/Bible Study Director, Discipleship Development Director, WMU Director, Brotherhood Director, chairman of deacons, Child Development Center Director, Church Media Center Director, Committee chairpersons and church-elected officers who shall serve as ex-officio members.

(3) All matters agreed upon by the council, calling for action not already provided for, shall be referred to the church for approval or disapproval.

Section 10. Trustees

Three trustees, one-third of whom shall be elected annually to serve for three years, and, until their successors shall be appointed, will hold in trust the property of the church. They shall have no power to sell, mortgage, lease, or transfer any property without a specific vote of the church authorizing each action. It shall be the function of the trustees to affix their signatures to legal documents involving the sale, mortgaging, or purchase or rental of property or other legal documents where the signatures of trustees are required.

Section 11. Church Media Center Director

This person shall be responsible for the proper functioning of the library and media center, which includes audio, video, and selected materials. Workers may be selected as needed.

III. COMMITTEES

All church committee members shall be selected by the nominating committee and elected by the church unless otherwise indicated in the description below. The committee members shall serve on a rotation system. The following committees shall be elected.

Section 1. Ad Hoc Committee

An ad hoc committee or committees may be selected by the church for specific short term projects. Ad hoc members may be selected to assist regular committees on a short term basis.

Section 2. Audio-Visual Committee

This committee is responsible for the acquisition and repair of electronic equipment. This includes microphones, amplifying, wiring and other such needs.

Section 3. Baptism Committee

This committee shall consist of deacons and wives. The baptism committee is elected to assist the pastor in preparing for the ordinance of baptism. The committee is responsible for preparing the candidates and the baptistry for the ordinance. This is a deacon committee.

Section 4. Benevolence

The benevolence committee is to perform acts of benevolence in the name of Christ and His Church to persons in need. These needs may be physical, social or mental. This is a deacon committee.

Section 5. Building Safety and Access Committee

The Building Safety and Access Committee shall be responsible for issuing church keys to those who have a reason to carry a church key. The committee shall also be responsible for reclaiming keys as circumstances require.

The committee shall assist the church by coordinating a group of volunteers who will secure the church building and grounds after regularly scheduled church activities and other church gatherings where their assistance would be helpful.

Section 6. Building Use and Management Committee

The Building Use and Management Committee shall regulate and coordinate the use of the church's facilities with groups and organizations within Chatham Baptist Church and with groups not a part of the church's ministry. The committee shall administer any fees to outside groups according to a fee schedule approved by the church.

Section 7. Child Development Committee

The church child development committee is to study the needs for, and possibilities of, a church child development program, to help in the organization of this program where it is considered wise, and to serve as a liaison between the church and the child development school program.

Section 8. Constitution Committee

The committee is responsible for making recommendations for needed constitutional changes.

Section 9. Counting Committee

This committee shall consist of three persons and is responsible for the counting and deposit of all financial receipts in the bank.

Section 10. Decorating Committee

This committee shall be responsible for color co-ordination and the aesthetics of the church building and related structures both inside and outside. During a building construction or remodeling program, this committee shall be a part of any larger decorating committee which shall be selected for that particular project. Necessary expenditures shall be recommended to the church after consultation with the Stewardship Committee.

Section 11. Evangelism Committee

This committee shall consist of three persons. In consultation with the pastor they shall recommend to the church body persons for evangelistic meetings and other evangelistic emphasis.

Section 12. Fellowship Committee

This committee shall consist of three persons. It shall monitor the congregation's need for food and refreshments. The committee shall facilitate coordination of meeting the need of the congregation for

fellowship through arranging meals and table preparation. They may call upon the congregation for assistance.

Section 13. Flower Committee

The flower committee is responsible for securing, arranging, and disposing of floral arrangement for church services, and the providing of flowers for sick and bereaved members.

Section 14. History Committee

The history committee is to preserve and use the historical records of the church. The committee is especially concerned with gathering and preserving available church records, recording full and accurate records, and using the records to help members understand and appreciate their heritage and mission.

Section 15. Hospitality Committee

The hospitality committee is responsible for formulating policies of the kitchen and for communicating these policies to church members. This committee is to arrange meals for ill and grieving church families. They may call upon the congregation for assistance.

Section 16. Kitchen Committee

The Kitchen Committee shall oversee the use of church kitchens. The committee shall assume the responsibility for general kitchen management, including organization of utensils, cleaning of appliances and cabinets, monitoring of kitchen supplies, and stocking of dish cloths and other cleaning items. For all-church activities, the committee shall supervise general cleanup.

The committee shall consist of three persons plus the chairpersons of the Hospitality Committee and the Fellowship Committee.

Section 17. Long Range Planning Committee

This committee shall review present and future anticipated needs for growth and expansion of programs and facilities. It shall consult with the church officers and pastor and shall report to the church.

Section 18. Lord's Supper Committee

The Lord's Supper committee prepares the elements and equipment for the observance of the Lord's Supper. The committee does the preparatory and maintenance work needed to observe the memorial service. The committee will prepare the elements on a schedule approved by the church. This is a deacon committee.

Section 19. Missions Committee

The missions committee seeks to discover possibilities for local mission's projects, shares findings with church program organizations, and serves the church in establishing and conducting such mission's projects as may be assigned.

Section 20. Nominating Committee

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

Section 21. Office Equipment Committee

The office equipment committee shall be responsible for monitoring the church's need for office equipment. The committee shall make recommendations to the congregation concerning budget needs, purchase or lease of equipment, repairs to existing equipment and other related tasks that involve church office equipment.

Section 22. Personnel Committee

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

Section 23. Preschool Committee

The preschool committee is to coordinate the church's preschool activities and to help nursery parents and teachers work together. The committee will see that adequate provisions are made for preschool children each time they are at church.

Section 24. Properties Committee

The properties committee assists the church in matters related to properties administration. Its work includes such areas as maintaining all church properties for ready use, recommending policies regarding use of properties, recommending employment of outside maintenance and contractual personnel and it is responsible for the completion of such tasks.

Section 25. Public Relations Committee

The church public relations committee is to know and discover the public relations needs and choose the means of communication to those inside and outside the church. The committee is responsible for discovering what needs to be communicated and to communicate to the proper audience.

Section 26. Recreation Committee

This committee seeks to serve the entire church in seeing that all recreation activities sponsored by the church or any organizational unit are properly planned and that they contribute to the ultimate objectives of the church. The committee will plan all church recreational activities and serve as a resource to others who plan such activities.

Section 27. Stewardship Committee

The stewardship committee develops and recommends an over all stewardship information plan as authorized by the church. A suggested budget based on projected needs shall be prepared in consultation with the church council and submitted to the church for review and/or approval.

IV. EDUCATIONAL MINISTRIES

Section 1. General

All organizations of the church shall be under church control, with all officers elected by the church and reporting regularly to the church. It is understood that the pastor is an ex-officio officer of all the organizations named, and his leadership is to be recognized in them.

Section 2. Sunday School/Bible Study

There shall be a Bible Study Program, divided into departments and classes for all ages and conducted under the supervision of a general director, for the study of God's Word. This Bible Study is to be conducted each Sunday morning unless otherwise directed.

The tasks of the Sunday School/Bible Study shall be to teach the biblical revelation; lead in reaching all prospects for the church; lead all church members to worship, witness, learn, and minister daily; provide and interpret information regarding the work of the church and denomination.

Section 3. Discipleship Training

There shall be Discipleship Training, divided into departments for all ages and conducted under the direction of a general director; Discipleship Training is to be conducted each Sunday evening, or according to a schedule approved by the church. The Discipleship Training Department shall serve as the training organization of the church.

The task of the Discipleship Training Department shall be to teach systematic theology, Christian history, Christian ethics, and church polity and organization; give orientation to new church members; train all church members to worship, witness, learn, and minister daily; train leaders for the church and the denomination; discover, recruit and train potential leaders; provide for specialized training; provide organization and leadership for special projects of the church and denomination.

Section 4. Woman's Missionary Union

There shall be a Woman's Missionary Union with such officers and forms of organization as needed. The tasks of the Woman's Missionary Union shall be missions; lead persons to participate in missions; provide organization and leadership for special mission projects of the church; provide and interpret information regarding the work of the church and the denomination.

Section 5. Brotherhood

There shall be a Brotherhood, made up of such standard Southern Baptist organizations, as needed. This program shall be directed by a director who shall be elected by the church. The tasks are to teach missions; lead all men, young men, and boys to participate in mission activities; provide organization and leadership for special projects of the church; provide and interpret information regarding the work of the church and the denomination.

Section 6. Music Ministry

There shall be a Music Ministry under the direction of the staff minister of music. Such officers and organizations shall be included as needed. The music tasks shall be to teach music and hymnology; provide music and musicians for the congregational services and the organizations of the church; lead persons to participate in hymn singing; train persons to lead, sing, and play music; provide organization and leadership for special projects of the church; provide and interpret information regarding the work of the church and denomination.

Section 7. Youth Ministry

This ministry shall be performed by a staff person who is a youth minister. He/she shall encourage the youth to participate in church and convention activities. He/she shall coordinate these activities with the church and convention calendar. The youth shall be encouraged and trained to become mature Christians.

V. CHURCH MEETINGS

Section 1. Worship Services

The church shall meet regularly each Sunday morning and evening for preaching, instruction, evangelism, and for the worship of Almighty God and on Wednesday evening for prayer. These meetings shall be open for the entire membership of the church and for all people and shall be conducted under the direction of the pastor. Adjustments may be made when necessary.

Section 2. Regular Business Meeting

Regular business meetings shall be held bimonthly, in each odd-numbered month. The church body shall determine a day and a time at which regular business meetings shall be held. Should there be any unusual business or matter of unusual interest to be brought before such regular business meeting, notice shall be given the membership one week prior to the meeting.

Section 3. Special Business Meeting

A specially called business meeting may be held to consider special matters of significant nature. A one-week notice must be given for the specially called business meetings. The pastor may call such a meeting when necessary. When the church is without a pastor present on the field, a meeting may be called by the moderator, clerk, or at the request of five deacons.

Section 4. Notice of Called Meetings

Notice of all specially called business meetings of the church shall be given by announcement one week prior to the meeting, unless extreme urgency renders such notice impracticable.

Section 5. Quorum

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

Section 6. Three-fourths Majority Required; Parliamentary Rules

(A) The church may not take an action at a business meeting unless the action is approved by at least three-fourths of the church members present and voting at the business meeting.

(B) Robert's Rules of Order Revised is adopted as the authority for parliamentary rules of procedure for all business meetings of the church, the deacons, and the committees, except as otherwise provided in these bylaws.

Section 7. Fiscal Year

The fiscal year of the church shall run concurrently with the calendar year.

VI. CHURCH FINANCES

Section 1. Budget

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

Section 2. Funds

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

Section 3. Support of Church

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

VII. DISCIPLINE

Section 1. Differences Among Members

Should any unhappy differences arise among members; the aggrieved member shall follow, in a tender spirit, the rules given by our Lord in the eighteenth chapter of Matthew.

Section 2. Action by Deacons

Should any case of gross breach of covenant, or of public scandal occur, the deacons shall endeavor to remove the offense; and if this effort fails, shall report the case to the church.

Section 3. Proceedings

All such proceeding shall be pervaded by a spirit of Christian kindness and forbearance, but should an adverse decision be reached, the church may proceed to admonish or declare the offender to be no longer in the membership of the church.

Section 4. Restoration

Any person whose membership has been terminated for any offense may be restored by vote of the church, upon evidence of his/her repentance and reformation; or, if on account of continued absence, upon satisfactory explanation.

VIII. AMENDMENTS

Changes in the constitution and bylaws may be made at any regular business meeting of the church, provided such amendments shall have been presented in writing at a previous meeting, and copies of the proposed amendment be furnished to each family which has at least one church member. Amendments to the constitution and bylaws shall be approved by a three-fourths majority vote of all members of the church present and voting.