

CHURCH CONSTITUTION

HARMONY BAPTIST CHURCH OF PULASKI COUNTY

Preamble:

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

I. NAME:

This body shall be known as the Harmony Baptist Church of Pulaski County, located at Waynesville, Missouri.

II. OBJECTIVES:

1. To love the Lord our God with all our hearts, souls, and minds, and to love our neighbors as ourselves.
2. To be a dynamic spiritual organism empowered by the Holy Spirit to share Christ with as many people as possible in our Church, community, and throughout the world.
3. To be a worshipping fellowship, recognizing the authority of God, and responding in obedience to His leadership.
4. To experience an increasingly meaningful fellowship with God and fellow believers.
5. To help people experience a growing knowledge of God and mankind.
6. To be a Church that ministers unselfishly to persons in the community and the world in Jesus' name.
7. To be a Church whose purpose is to be Christ-like in our daily living by emphasizing total commitment of life, personality, and possessions to the Lordship of Christ.

III. 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 (dated 2000 and attached as Appendix 1) as adopted by the Southern Baptist Convention. We band ourselves together as a body of Spirit-filled believers in Jesus Christ personally committed to sharing the good news of salvation to the lost. The ordinances of the Church are baptism and the Lord's Supper.

IV. RELATIONSHIPS

The government of this Church is vested in the body of believers who compose it. It is subject to the control of no other ecclesiastical body, but it recognizes and sustains the obligations of mutual counsel and cooperation which are common among Southern Baptist Churches. Insofar as is practical, this Church will cooperate with and support associations and state conventions affiliated with the Southern Baptist Convention.

V. CHURCH COVENANT

Harmony Baptist Church is a covenant membership congregation. This means that everyone considered a member of the church body has reviewed and pledged to follow the guidelines found within the covenant document which can be found attached as Appendix 2 (can also be found at www.harmonybaptistmo.org).

BYLAWS OF HARMONY BAPTIST CHURCH

I. MEMBERSHIP

1. General

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

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

2. Candidacy

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

a. Admission by baptism: Any person who publicly confesses Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior and follows in obedience by immersion baptism and agreeing to follow in like faith of this body may be accepted as a member.

b. Admission by letter: Any person who comes from another Church of like faith and publicly shows a desire for membership may be accepted as a member.

c. Admission by statement: A person who comes forward and proclaims that he or she has accepted Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior and been baptized by immersion may be a member.

3. New Member Orientation

New Church members will be **EXPECTED** to participate in the Church's new member orientation plan, as provided by the church.

4. Voting Rights of Members

Each covenant member of the Church who is at least 18 years old is entitled to vote on all matters submitted to the Church in conference or during a business meeting, provided the member is present.

5. Termination of Membership

Membership shall be terminated in the following ways:

- a. Death of the member
- b. Request by the member or an agent acting on behalf of the member
- c. Exclusion by action of this Church.

6. Discipline

Any member having a severe complaint against another member must seek to reconcile their differences according to Matthew 18: 15-17. If the matter is not resolved it may then be taken to the Church leadership (Pastor(s), Elders, or Deacons) for further action, also according to Matthew 18: 15-17. The church leaders will take such action as seems wise and proper only after all efforts have been exhausted for reconciliation. All discipline will be carried out according to Scripture.

In all cases of such church action the member must be notified in writing of the complaint, the time of the meeting, and possible expulsion. The church must always give the person time to repent and even a time of rebuttal of the allegations against him or her.

Exclusion from a church is a serious soul searching experience. Prior to expulsion, every effort must be taken by the church leaders to counsel, guide, pray, and seek reconciliation of the member's good standing.

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

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

Any person whose membership has been terminated for any condition which has made it necessary for the Church to exclude the member may upon request be restored to membership by a two-thirds vote of the Church upon evidence of repentance and reformation.

II. Church Officers

All church officers shall be covenant members of the Church. The officers shall be active participants in the ministries supported by the Church. The officers of this Church shall be as follows:

1. Pastor/Lead Elder

The pastor shall be chosen and called by the members of the Church. His election shall take place at a meeting called for that purpose after one week's public notice has been given. The pastor is the leader of the pastoral ministries in the church. He is responsible for leading the body to function as a New Testament church, spiritually equipping the congregation, overseeing the operation of the church, and supervising the staff in the performance of their duties.

His duties include leading the Elders, deacons, and church staff members to proclaim the gospel. He will encourage the body in performing ministry, worship, discipleship, and service.

The pastor can be relieved of his position by an affirmative vote of two-thirds of the members present at a business meeting called specifically for the purpose of removing the pastor from his office.

2. Elders

Assist and advise pastor in establishing church programs to educate and disciple. First and foremost the Elders must live their lives to a biblical standard; they must be

leaders by example and in decision making. They must watch out for the spiritual life of the body as individuals and as a corporate entity (1 Peter 5:1-3 and Hebrews 13:17).

The Elders should know the needs of the members and be prayer warriors on their behalf (Acts 6:4), including prayer for the sick (James 5:14). Teach the word (Acts 6:2-4) (2 Tim 2:15). Settle disputes in the church (Acts 15:1-4).

The Elders will meet regularly to attend to spiritual and business matters that affect the church. Elder team meetings are open to all members of the congregation for observation on all non-confidential issues and the presentation of his or her needs; however, observers shall have no voting rights within the Elder's meeting. The Elders will also ensure constitution and bylaws remain current and relevant. They will establish church budget and oversee expenditures as well as salaries/compensation packets and maintain job descriptions for church personnel.

3. Deacons

Deacons are to be servants of the Church (1 Tim 3:8-13). The task of the deacons is to serve with the pastor, Elders, and staff in caring for the pastoral team and the congregation, proclaiming the gospel, and encouraging the body in performing ministry, worship, discipleship, and service. Deacons will administer the Lord's Supper and assist in baptisms.

4. Moderator

The moderator shall be a deacon and shall preside over business meetings of the church.

5. Clerk

The ministry assistant shall serve as the Church clerk. In the absence of a ministry assistant, a member of the congregation shall be appointed by the Elder body. The clerk shall maintain a record of all the actions of the Church, except as otherwise provided. The duties of the clerk are: to keep a register of the names of members with dates of admission, dismissal, or death together with a record of baptisms; issue letters of dismissal voted by the Church; preserve on file all communications and written official reports; and give legal notice of all meetings where such notice is necessary, as indicated in these By-Laws. All church records are church property and should be filed in the church office when an office is maintained.

6. Treasurer

The Elder team shall select a Church treasurer as the need arises. It shall be the duty of the treasurer to provide the Elders an itemized report of the receipts and disbursements for the preceding month. The treasurer is responsible for receiving, preserving, and disbursing, upon receipt of vouchers approved and signed by authorized personnel, any money or things of value paid or given to the Church

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

7. Trustees

Three trustees shall be appointed by the Elder team and will hold in trust the church property. They shall have no power to buy, sell, mortgage, lease, or transfer any property without a specific vote of the Church authorizing each action. It shall be the function of the trustees to affix their signatures to legal documents involving sale, mortgage, purchase, or rental of property or legal documents where the signatures of trustees are required. They shall study the needs of the building and make recommendations of such to the Elders in such areas as maintaining all church property for ready use, policies regarding use of property, and employment of maintenance personnel. In case of emergency, the trustees will have the authority to repair or maintain church equipment and property that would be necessary.

8. Director of Student Ministries

The Director of Student Ministries shall be chosen by the Church members whenever a vacancy occurs. The director is the leader of student ministries within the church. As such, he or she works with the Elders and church staff to ensure the spiritual development and leadership skills of children from nursery through high school within the church and organize, plan, and execute outreach programs to unbelievers. This person may fill the office of youth minister or children's minister. The Director of Student ministries will have administrative privileges over all aspects of the children's ministry (birth through 12th grade), but will only serve as the permanent ministry head over either the youth or the children's ministry.

9. Ministry Assistant

The ministry assistant shall be chosen by the Elders when a vacancy occurs. The assistant is responsible for: (1) preserving documents, legal notices and all financial transactions conducted by the Church; (2) performing the clerical needs of the church staff; (3) maintaining communication between the staff and membership through telephonic, electronic, and written publications or notices; (4) publicizing information to the church body; (5) assisting the church leadership with special projects, historical documents or administrative needs.

10. Associate Pastor of Worship (Worship Leader)

The Associate Pastor of Worship shall be chosen by the Church members whenever a vacancy occurs. The worship leader is responsible for (1) planning diverse weekly and special worship music; (2) directing dramatic productions to enhance the collective worship by the church membership and outreach to unbelievers; and (3) ensuring church members are recruited and trained to assist with worship service needs. The Associate Pastor of Worship will also oversee the multimedia ministry and the children's music ministry.

11. Associate Pastor(s)

If led by the spirit of God, the church shall select an associate pastor. He shall be under the leadership of the pastor to (1) lead the church in performing its tasks, (2) lead the church to engage in a fellowship of worship, witness, education, ministry, and application, (3) proclaim the gospel to believers and unbelievers, and (4) care for the Church members and others persons in the community.

III. COMMITTEES.

Committees will be formed and disbanded as needed.

1. Ministry Leader Selection Committee

A ministry leader selection committee shall be elected by the Church body to seek out a suitable ministry leader, and its recommendation will constitute a nomination. Any member has the privilege of making other nominations to the ministry leader selection committee. The committee shall bring to the consideration of the Church only one name at a time. Election shall be made by ballot, an affirmative vote of three-fourths of those present being necessary for a choice. Upon the election of a new ministry leader, the ministry leader selection team will be disbanded, and a newly called ministry leader shall serve until the relationship is terminated by the leader's or the Church's request.

IV. LEADERSHIP TEAMS.

1. Mission Ministry

Primary responsibilities in the spirit of Acts 1:8 are:

- a. Identify mission opportunities
- b. Plan and implement strategies to meet the needs identified by the ministry

2. Children's Ministry

Primary responsibilities are:

- a. Plan and oversee the Children's Ministry from birth through 6th grade.
- b. Ensure volunteers for the nursery are trained and available for regularly scheduled services.
- c. Identify and manage team composition, goals and objectives.
- d. Provide written reports quarterly to the Elders.
- e. Identify ministry team needs and recommended solutions to the Elders.

3. Youth Ministry

Primary responsibilities are:

- a. Plan and oversee the Youth Ministry from 7th grade through completion of high school.
- b. Ensure volunteers are trained and available for special programs and outreach opportunities.
- c. Identify and manage team composition, goals and objectives.
- d. Provide written reports quarterly to the Elders.
- e. Identify ministry team needs and recommended solutions to the Elders.

4. Discipleship Ministry

The discipleship ministry will be divided into small groups and will be conducted under the direction of the Elders for the study of God's word.

Primary responsibilities are:

- a. To teach biblical truths
- b. To make disciples

V. ORDINANCES

1. Baptism

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

- a.** Baptism shall be by immersion in water.
- b.** Baptism shall be administered by the pastor or another party authorized of the Church. The deacons shall assist in the preparation for and observance of baptism.
- c.** A person professing Christ and failing to be baptized after a reasonable length of time shall be counseled by the pastor or an Elder.

2. Lord's Supper

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

- a.** The Lord's Supper shall be observed as led by the Spirit of God.
- b.** The deacons shall be responsible for the physical preparation of the Lord's Supper.

VI. CHURCH MEETINGS

1. Worship Services

The Church shall meet regularly for preaching, instruction, evangelism, and for worship of God. These meetings will be open for all people and shall be conducted under the direction of the pastor.

2. Regular Business Meetings

Regular business meetings will be held biannually in November and May and will serve as the public forum for Elder/congregation communication. The annual budget will be approved by the congregation at the November meeting by a majority vote.

3. Special Business meetings

A specially called business meeting may be held to consider special matters of significant nature. Notice of the subject, date, time, and location must be given for specially called business meetings at least three regularly scheduled church services, unless extreme urgency renders such notice impractical.

4. Quorum

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

5. Parliamentary Rules

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

VII. CHURCH FINANCES

1. Accounting Procedure

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

2. Fiscal Year

The fiscal year of the Church shall run concurrently with the church year which begins the first day of January and ends the last day of December.

3. Church Property

All property or items donated to the Church shall become the property of the Church to be used or disposed of at the church members' discretion.

4. Designated Funds

Any funds in a designated fund which are not disposed of as requested by the donor or donors may be transferred to the general fund or another designated fund by a majority vote of the members present at any business meeting.

VII. AMENDMENTS

Changes in this Constitution and Bylaws may be made at a regular business meeting of the Church, provided each amendment shall have been presented in writing at a previous meeting and copies of the proposed amendment furnished to each member present. Amendments to the Constitution shall be approved by a majority vote of all members of the Church present entitled to vote. Amendments to the By-Laws shall have a concurrence of a majority of the members present and voting. Any amendments to the previous document will be posted publically in the church within 10 days of the vote.