

**Cedar Heights Baptist Church**  
**By-Laws**  
**Revised by Unanimous Vote – October 26, 2014**

**Article I. Church Membership**

**Section 1. General**

The membership of this church shall consist of persons who have:

1. Made a public profession of their faith in Christ as Savior and Lord;
2. Experienced believers' baptism by immersion, as we are instructed in the New Testament;
3. Agreed with the Church Covenant as expressed in Article IV of the Constitution;

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 has the exclusive right to determine who shall be members of this church and the conditions of such membership.

Watchcare membership shall be granted to those persons upon request and approval of the church body. Such persons shall attest to their public profession of faith and acceptance of Christ Jesus as Savior and Lord. Persons granted Watchcare membership shall be in full fellowship with the church activities, with the exception of having voting privileges in matters of business, and shall not hold elected offices of responsibility within the church organization.

**Section 2. Candidacy for Membership**

Any person may offer himself as a candidate for membership in this church at any regular church service in the following manner:

1. By profession of faith, requesting baptism and church membership.
2. By promise of a letter from another Baptist church of like faith and order;
3. By publicly stating a prior experience of salvation, meeting the requirements of membership detailed in these bylaws.
4. By reinstatement in the event the candidate has been excluded from membership in the church, provided the candidate makes a statement of repentance which is acceptable to the church.

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

**Section 3. Duties of Membership**

Members are expected to be faithful in all duties essential to the Christian life, to attend faithfully the services of the church, to give regularly, systematically, cheerfully, and liberally their tithes and offerings to its support, and to participate in its organized work.

**Section 4. Rights of Membership**

Every active member of the church is entitled to vote at all elections on all questions submitted

to the church in conference, provided the member is present. Every active member of the church is eligible for consideration for elective offices, once they have been members for at least six (6) months. Active members are defined as any member who has attended a regularly scheduled worship service within the prior three (3) months.

### **Section 5. Termination of Membership**

Membership shall be terminated in the following ways:

1. Death;
2. Transfer of letter to another Baptist church;
3. Exclusion by action of this church (see Section 6 below);
4. Erasure upon request of proof of membership in a church of another faith;
5. Erasure upon request by individual.

### **Section 6. Discipline of Membership**

It shall be the basic practice of Cedar Heights Baptist Church to emphasize to its members that every reasonable measure will be taken to assist any troubled member. The pastor, other members of the church staff, and deacons are available for counsel and guidance. The attitude of members toward one another shall be guided by a concern for redemption rather than punishment.

The following procedures shall be followed to resolve differences or administer discipline:

1. Should any unhappy differences arise between any members, the aggrieved member shall follow in a tender spirit the rules given by the Lord in Matthew 18:15-20.
2. Should any case of gross breach of covenant or public scandal occur, the deacons shall endeavor to remove the offense and if such efforts fail, shall report the case to the church.
3. If there is no evidence of repentance, the church will have no option but to place the erring member under discipline, removing him/her from the fellowship of the church. Any subsequent request for the erring member's letter from another church will be accompanied with a notice simply stating that this person is under church discipline. The primary objective will always remain reconciliation.

## **Article II. Church Organizational Structure**

### **Section 1. Church Officers**

The New Testament prescribes two offices within the organizational structure of the church: the pastor and the deacon. These are to be men described as being above reproach, with the character qualities listed in 1 Timothy 3 and Titus 1. Beyond those two offices, the church is free to appoint additional officers as needed. At a minimum, this church must also fill the offices of clerk, treasurer, trustee, and any other office deemed necessary by the congregation for the efficient operation of our organization. All officers elected shall be members of this church in good standing.

#### **1. Pastor**

The pastor is responsible for leading the congregation, the organizations, and the church staff to function as a New Testament church. His primary responsibility is prayer (1 Timothy 2:1), reading Scripture, exhortation, and teaching (1 Timothy 4:13) in order to properly "shepherd the flock of God"

entrusted to him (1 Peter 5:1), “accurately handling the word of truth” (2 Timothy 2:15), being “ready in season and out of season” to preach the word (2 Timothy 4:2). He is to do the work of an evangelist (2 Timothy 4:5), leading the members of the church to fulfill the Great Commission (Matthew 28:18-20). His love for the church should be evident as he ministers to the congregation. He is to be an ex-officio member of all committees, serving alongside the members in the daily functioning of church business. He is to preside at meetings of the church, and serve as moderator in all business meetings in keeping with the rules of order authorized in these bylaws. In his leadership, he must always remember that we are congregational in our governance. A pastor is never to be dictatorial, but instead be an example to the church (1 Peter 5:3).

In the event that the Lord calls the pastor to leave the church, he must give the church at least a two-week notice at the time of resignation. At the time of his departure, the duly-elected chairman of the deacons will preside over all church meetings as moderator. In the absence of the chairman of the deacons, the clerk shall call the church to order and preside for the election of an acting moderator.

In cases of gross negligence, moral failure, or clear departure from the expressed doctrinal statement of Cedar Heights Baptist Church, it may become necessary for the office of pastor to be declared vacant by an action of the congregation. This action must be accompanied by much prayer and fasting, seeking clear guidance from the Holy Spirit. It is imperative that accusations against the pastor must be received only “on the basis of two or three witnesses” (1 Timothy 5:19). If the accusations are confirmed, the deacons will call for a meeting with the pastor to discuss the accusations, seeking understanding, and if necessary, repentance. If the offense is of the nature that disqualifies the pastor from serving in the capacity of an elder, according to 1 Timothy 3:1-7, the deacons will request his resignation. Every effort will be made to preserve the unity of the church in an attitude of prayer throughout this painful process. If a resolution is not reached, the deacons will bring the matter before the church council. If the church council, along with the deacons, agree by a two-thirds majority that further action is required, a meeting will be called of the entire congregation, giving at least a one week notice. The moderator for this meeting shall be someone other than the pastor designated by the members present by majority vote; the clerk shall call the church to order and preside for the election of an acting moderator. The vote to declare the office vacant shall be by secret ballot; an affirmative vote of two-thirds of the members present being necessary to declare the office vacant. Except in instances of gross misconduct by the pastor, the church will compensate the pastor with not less than one-twelfth of his total annual compensation. The termination shall be immediate and compensation shall be rendered in not more than thirty days (30 days).

In the case when the office of the pastor is vacant, a pastor selection committee shall be elected by the church to seek out a suitable pastor. The committee shall be comprised of 5 or 7 members in good standing. The committee shall bring to the consideration of the church only one name at a time, and its recommendation will constitute a nomination. In the event that a sitting interim pastor desires to be considered as a candidate for the position of pastor, he shall resign from his position as interim, and be subject to the same scrutiny and validation as any and all other candidates for position of pastor. Every candidate must be given equal scrutiny, and an interim pastor would have an unfair advantage. Election shall be by secret ballot, affirmative votes of eighty-five percent (85%) or more of the active members present being necessary for a choice (see Article I Section 4 – Rights of Membership).

## 2. Ministerial Staff

Church staff members shall be called and employed as the church determines the need for such offices. A job description for the required office shall be written by the personnel committee, in consultation with the pastor, and presented to the church council for approval. It shall be published in

the church policy and procedures manual, and made available to the members. Like the character qualifications of the pastor and the deacons, the ministerial staff member must be above reproach, and enhance the integrity of the church. The staff member will be responsible directly to the pastor and the personnel committee, and by extension, to the congregation. In the event that the Lord calls the staff member to leave the church, he must give the church at least a two-week notice at the time of resignation.

In the case in which the pastor and the personnel committee are in agreement that the church staff position must be vacated, they are to hold a meeting with the staff member to seek a peaceful resolution. If a resolution is not reached, a meeting will be called of the entire congregation, giving at least a one week notice. Every effort will be made to preserve the unity of the church in an attitude of prayer. The vote to declare the position vacant shall be by secret ballot; an affirmative vote of two-thirds of the members present being necessary to declare the position vacant. Except in instances of gross misconduct, the church will compensate the staff member with not less than one-twelfth of his total annual compensation. The termination shall be immediate and compensation shall be rendered in not more than thirty days (30 days).

### 3. Non-Ministerial Staff

Non-ministerial staff members shall be employed as the church determines the need for their services. The church personnel committee shall have the authority to employ and to terminate services of non-ministerial staff members. Such employment and termination of service shall be in consultation with the pastor and, as appropriate, related committees of the church.

### 4. Deacons

The deacons shall be elected by the church, the number of which will be determined by the specific needs within the ministries of the church. The term of the deacons will be determined by the church to best serve the church body. When it is determined that the ministries of the church require the services of more deacons, the church will review together the qualifications of the deacon, as detailed in 1 Timothy 3:8-13. The congregation will then prayerfully come together using Acts 6:3-5 as a model, and each member will submit the names of men whom they believe fit the qualifications on the Deacon Nomination Ballot provided. These nominations shall be reviewed by the deacons.

The candidates receiving a majority vote shall be declared nominees. Information received by the Deacons will be kept in strictest confidence. Each nominee will then be interviewed by the deacons, or a designated committee within the deacon body, to verify their qualification and willingness to serve. After the interview process, the deacons will select out of the nominees the pre-designated number of men to bring before the congregation. The men will be elected at a called church conference to serve as deacons by a two-thirds majority of the members present. Upon their election as deacons, an ordination service will be planned for the church to ordain them into the service of the church.

Heresy and immorality are Biblical grounds for the church to ask for and expect the ordained officer to give up the office. There may arise, on rare occasion, cases of stubborn and rebellious attitudes which would call for correction or removal from office. The church body is the decisive and governing authority in such matters (Matt. 18:15-20).

### 5. Trustees

The church shall elect three or more Trustees to serve as legal officers for the church. They shall hold in trust the church property. Upon specific vote of the church authorizing each action, they

shall have the power to buy, sell, mortgage, purchase or rent property, or execute other legal documents related to church-approved matters. Trustees shall serve as determined by the church.

6. Clerk

The church shall elect a church clerk who will be responsible for recording and maintaining the minutes of all church conferences and church council meetings. In addition, the clerk will be responsible for maintaining the membership rolls of the church, including sending and receiving letters of membership, as well as the preparation of the Annual Church Profile submitted to our affiliated association and convention.

7. Treasurer

The church shall elect a treasurer who will be responsible for maintaining the financial records of the church. The Treasurer will submit a financial report to the Church Council at their monthly meetings, as well as to all those attending the quarterly church conference.

8. Organizational Leaders

All organizations of the church shall be under the authority of the church with all leadership elected by the church. Examples of organizations within the church might be:

The Sunday School  
Discipleship Training  
Women's Ministries  
Men's Ministries  
The Library  
Student Ministries  
And such other as the church may deem wise to sponsor.

No individual or group of individuals under the protection of the church shall institute or form any organization upon any plan or ideal except under the express authority of this church.

## **Section 2. Church Committees**

The church shall create regular and special committees as needed to conduct the activities of the church. In the fourth quarter of each year the church shall elect a Nominating Committee of five to serve for one year.

This committee shall recommend all general church officers, including organizational heads, trustees and regular church committees. After election, organizational heads shall become part of the Nominating Committee and shall be responsible for enlisting workers for their organizations. All prospective workers shall be first cleared with the Nominating Committee before being contacted for any job.

After the contacting of prospective workers by organization heads the Nominating Committee shall be notified of the willingness to accept responsibility. The Nominating Committee will make all final recommendations for election to the church.

## **Section 3. Church Council**

The Church Council shall serve the church by leading in planning, coordinating, conducting,

and evaluating the ministries and programs of the church and its organizations.

Regular members of the Church Council shall be the pastor, other church ministerial staff members, Chairman of Deacons, and all organizational leaders and committee chairs. Other members can be added to the Church Council as necessary to meet the needs of the church.

The Church Council shall meet on the second Sunday of every month, except months containing a Quarterly Church Conference (see Article II.4.3). This is a general guideline, and may be adjusted in the event of a conflict. The pastor, or his designee, will serve as chairman of Church Council.

All matters agreed upon by the council will be recorded in the minutes, and will be made available to the congregation. The congregation reserves the right to revisit a Church Council decision at the called Quarterly Church Conference, and bring the matter to a church-wide vote.

## **Section 4. Church Meetings**

### **1. Worship Services**

The church shall meet regularly each Sunday morning and Wednesday evening for preaching, instruction, evangelism, and for worship of Almighty God. These meetings shall be open to the entire church membership and to any who will come. The worship services shall be conducted under the direction of the pastor or whomever he designates.

### **2. Special Services**

Revival services and any other church wide meeting essential to the promotion of the objectives of the church, such as a study course or conference, shall have no other church program or activity scheduled to conflict with them.

The pastor will be responsible for making arrangements and/or giving directions to the planning for guest speakers and musicians. This will include making reservations for lodging, meals, and securing and distributing honorariums. These honorariums may be budgeted or love offering given at the time of ministry. Due to the variance of each meeting, the breakdown of the honorarium will be at the discretion of the pastor.

### **3. Regular Business Meeting (Quarterly Conference)**

Regular business meeting shall be held quarterly, on the second Sunday of the first month of the quarter. First month of the quarter is defined as January, April, July, and October. The Financial Statement will be prepared on a monthly basis, and copies will be available in the church office after the second Wednesday of each month. The Financial Statement presented at the quarterly meeting will be presented in a quarterly format.

Requests for letters will be granted when received unless there is some questionable aspect involved. In that case, the request would be held and brought before the church to be discussed and voted on at the next business meeting.

#### 4. Special Business Meetings

A called business meeting may be held to consider matters of a significant nature and must be announced two worship services prior to the meeting.

#### 5. Business During Regular Worship Services

At any of the regular meetings of worship, the church, without special notice, may act upon the reception of members and upon the appointment of messengers to annual associational meetings or conventions.

In an emergency situation, those members of Cedar Heights Baptist Church present at any regular scheduled meeting, i.e., Sunday morning worship or Wednesday evening prayer service, may take such action as they deem necessary to protect the interests of Cedar Heights Baptist Church until such time as a regular business meeting can be called to deal with the need.

#### 6. A Quorum

A quorum shall consist of thirty (30) active church members who attend any properly called business meeting (See Article I Section 4 for the definition of “active member”).

#### 7. Parliamentary Rules

Robert’s Rules of Order, Revised, shall be the authority for parliamentary procedure for all business meetings of the church.

### **Article III. Ordinances**

The ordinances of the church, as set forth in the Holy Scriptures, are Baptism and the Lord’s Supper.

1. Baptism. A person who receives Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord 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.
  - a. Baptism shall be by immersion in water.
  - b. The pastor, or any ordained person the church shall authorize, shall administer baptism. A deacon and his wife shall be selected to assist in the preparation for baptism.
  - c. Baptism shall be administered as an act of worship during any worship service of the church.
  - d. A person professing Christ who fails to be baptized after a reasonable length of time shall be counseled by the pastor and/or staff or deacons.
  
2. The Lord’s Supper is a symbolic act of obedience whereby believers, through partaking of the bread and fruit of the vine, commemorate the death of Jesus Christ and anticipate His Second Coming. These are established procedures for the Lord’s Supper:
  - a. This ordinance shall be open to all baptized believers of like faith and order.
  - b. This ordinance shall be observed in any worship service and with such frequency as the

pastor and/or staff or deacons may determine.

The pastor and deacons shall be responsible for administration of the Lord's Supper, with the deacons being responsible for necessary physical preparations for the ordinance. In the pastor's absence, or at his request, or when the church shall be without a pastor, the church shall elect someone to preside.

#### **Article IV. Licensing and Ordaining**

Any member of the church who, by his piety, zeal, and aptness to teach gives evidence that he is called of God to the work of the Ministry, may, by a vote of a majority of the members present at any regular conference, be licensed by the church to the Christian Ministry.

When a church of like faith and order calls as its pastor a member of this church who possesses Scriptural qualifications for ordination to the work of the Gospel Ministry, and shall request in writing that he be ordained, this church shall consider such request.

The church may, by a vote of a majority of the members present, direct the pastor to assemble an Ordaining Council. The Ordaining Council shall consist of ordained Ministers of the Gospel and Deacons of like Faith and Order, who shall perform the ceremony of ordaining him to the Gospel Ministry in the name of and in the presence of the church.

The church may, at a regular conference, elect a member or members to the office of deacon, and shall authorize and direct the pastor to assemble an Ordaining Council. The Ordaining Council shall be composed of ordained ministers and deacons of this church and of churches of like faith and order, who shall perform the ceremony of ordaining him or them to the office of deacon, in the name of and in the presence of the church.

#### **Article V. Fiscal Policy**

We believe the Scriptural mode of church finance to be no less than the tithe. Therefore, the financial needs of the church, its organizations, and causes fostered by it, shall be supported by voluntary, free gifts of money which shall be deposited and disbursed from the church treasury through a banking organization approved by the church.

All disbursements from the treasury shall be made only on authority of the church and on the signatures of any two of three elected co-signers. One of the elected co-signers shall be the Church Treasurer.

All property, all moneys, all equities, and the like, shall be held and controlled by the church.

No debt, commitment, or other obligation shall be created except by specific authority of the church.

For the sake of efficiency, the church shall operate on the Annual Budget prepared by the Budget Committee, reviewed by the church council, and adopted by the church prior to the beginning of the Fiscal Year. The Fiscal Year shall be January 1 thru December 31. Extraordinary disbursements and proposals for raising special funds to meet such disbursements must be authorized by the church. Special Mission offerings, including International Missions, North American Missions, State Missions,



and Associational Missions shall be taken annually as designated by the church.

The salaries of all compensated officers and employees of the church shall be set by the church after recommendation by the Personnel Committee to the Budget Committee. The church may amend, waive, or set aside such recommendations.

The Church Treasurer shall be the custodian of all church funds and shall oversee the church financial secretary in keeping books of account of all funds received into and disbursed from the Treasury. The church-elected Money Counting Committee shall deposit funds as soon as possible after receipt in the name of the church in a bank subject to State or National supervision and approved by the church. The Treasurer shall submit all books, records, and supporting documents for an audit at the end of each fiscal year and at such time as the church shall direct.

### **Article VI. Church Operations Manual**

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

Additions, revisions, or deletions of church policies require: (1) the recommendation of the church officer or organization to whose areas of assignment relate to the policy; (2) discussion by the church council, (3) approval by the church.

Procedures may be added, revised, or deleted by: (1) recommendation of the church officer or organization to whose areas of assignment the procedures relate, (2) approval by the church council, (3) approval of the church, if the church council deems it necessary.

### **Article VII. Amendments**

Changes in the Constitution and By-Laws may be made at any regular business meeting (not a called conference) of the church, provided each amendment has been presented in writing at a previous business meeting and copies of the proposed amendment shall have been furnished to each member present at the earlier meeting. Amendments to the Constitution shall be by a two-thirds vote of the active church members present and voting. Amendments to the By-Laws shall have a concurrence of a majority of the active members present and voting (See Article I Section 4 for the definition of "active member").