

# Bylaws for Lake Shore Baptist Church

*Revised May 1, 2013 and November 30, 2016*

## Article I. Membership

- A. Lake Shore Baptist Church accepts into membership those who affirm that Christ is Lord, desire to identify themselves with this unique congregation of faith, and have presented themselves to the congregation and received its affirmation and support.

Lake Shore Baptist Church is a welcoming and affirming community of Christians attempting to discover, articulate, and embody the meaning of the Gospel in the world today. We affirm each individual as a child of God and as created in God's image. Our welcome holds no bounds; we welcome all persons into membership and full participation in the life and ministry of our congregation.

- B. Lake Shore Baptist Church is committed to the following historic Baptist principles:
1. We affirm the priesthood of all believers, the freedom and accountability of each individual before God. In Christ's name we are to minister to and pray for one another and move out into the world in service and witness;
  2. We affirm the freedom of individuals, led by God's Spirit within the family of faith, to read and interpret the Scriptures;
  3. We affirm the authority of the local church to shape its own life and mission, call its own leadership, and ordain whom it perceives as gifted for ministry;
  4. We affirm communion with the larger body of Jesus Christ, expressed in various Christian traditions, and we affirm cooperation with believers everywhere in giving full expression to the Gospel;
  5. We affirm the servant role of leadership within the church, following the model of our Servant Lord;
  6. We affirm our obligation to proclaim the Good News of Jesus Christ and the calling of God to all peoples to repentance and faith, reconciliation and hope, social and economic justice;
  7. We affirm the separation of church and state, the principle of a free church in a free state and the opposition to any effort either by church or state to use the other for its own purposes.
- C. We recognize that **Baptism** by immersion is a beautiful and meaningful symbol which describes, in a way that no other symbol can, the death and resurrection of Christ. It also symbolizes for the individual who is baptized the death and burial of an old way of life and resurrection to new life. When baptism is administered by our congregation, it shall be done for believers by the mode of immersion. However, we recognize that baptism by

immersion is a symbol representing the real baptism by the Holy Spirit, that Baptism is not essential to salvation, and that other Christian denominations symbolize baptism by the Spirit of God in other ways. We accept into full fellowship those from other denominations whose baptismal experiences were meaningful and who affirm with us the confession of the ancient church: Jesus is Lord!

- D. We believe that the **Lord's Supper** was instituted by Jesus on the night he was betrayed with instructions to "do this in remembrance of me." We further believe that the invitation to partake of the communion comes from Jesus and not from the church or any individual. Therefore, all persons are welcome who wish to partake of communion with us, and who, by their participation, claim Jesus as Lord.
- E. When an individual joins Lake Shore Baptist Church intending to transfer membership from another congregation, Lake Shore will notify that congregation and request from them a letter of membership, if it is that congregation's custom to provide such a letter. Lake Shore will also provide a letter of membership transfer upon request from another congregation.

## **Article II. Officers of the Church**

- A. All church officers must be members of the church. The officers of this church shall be:
  - 1. Moderator: The moderator shall be nominated by the Committee Coordinating Council and approved by the church. The moderator's term of office shall be for one year and shall begin on or about January 1. The moderator shall preside at all business meetings of Lake Shore Baptist Church. In the absence of the moderator, the chair of the deacons or the vice chair of the deacons, in that order, shall preside. In the absence of all three, the clerk shall call the church into session and an acting moderator shall be elected.
  - 2. Clerk: The clerk shall keep the minutes of all business meetings of the church and maintain these records in the church office in good order. In the absence of the clerk, the moderator shall appoint an acting clerk. The clerk shall be nominated by the Committee Coordinating Council and approved by the church. The clerk's term shall be one year and shall begin on or about January 1.
  - 3. Treasurer: The chair of the Finance and Audit Committee shall serve as church treasurer. It shall be the duty of the treasurer to supervise the receipts and disbursements of all money or other negotiable instruments. The treasurer or a member of the Finance and Audit committee shall periodically present a financial report to the church. The treasurer's report shall be audited annually by the Finance and Audit Committee.
  - 4. Legal documents shall be executed by one or more of the chair of the Finance Committee, the Chair of the Deacons, and the Senior Pastor. Such signatures do not imply personal liability.

## **Article III. Deacons**

- A. Active and Reserve Deacons: This church shall have a Diaconate consisting of deacons elected from the membership of the church and ordained by this church or by another church of like faith and order. The Diaconate shall consist of two (2) groups, as follows:

1. Active Deacons: those filling elected positions on the Diaconate.
  2. Reserve Deacons: those ordained previously who are members of this church but are not presently part of the active Diaconate.
- B. Number of Deacons and Term. There shall be an active Diaconate consisting of a minimum of 21 deacons representing a membership of 500 or less resident members, with 3 additional deacons authorized for each increase of 100 resident members. The membership on the last Sunday of January will be used in determining the number of vacancies to be filled. Deacons shall begin their service in January and serve 3-year terms, one-third rotating off the Diaconate each year. In the event the church membership increases to the point of requiring an increase in the number of deacons, the newly-elected deacons will draw for the one-year term, two-year term, and three-year term. Where possible, those drawing for the shorter term will not include any person elected to the Diaconate for the first time.
- C. Officers of the Diaconate. The Diaconate shall have three officers: Chair, Vice-Chair, and Secretary. The Vice-Chair shall preside at deacon meetings in the absence of the chair. The Secretary shall keep minutes of the Deacons' meetings.
- D. Executive Committee: This committee shall consist of the three officers of the Diaconate plus one at large member of the Diaconate and the chair of the Committee Coordinating Council (if the chair of the Committee Coordinating Council is not a member of the active Diaconate, then that person shall be a non-voting ex-officio member of both the Diaconate and the executive committee of the Diaconate). The executive committee shall serve as a nominating committee for Diaconate officers, and shall serve as an appointments committee deciding which deacons shall assume other deacon responsibilities. This nominating and appointment process should reflect input from the deacons and staff, as well as concern for an even distribution of work load among the deacons. This committee should have completed these appointments by the end of November. Flexibility is important in the appointments for while some deacons may be asked to perform a task for three years, changes may become necessary. See Article V.A.2. for material relevant to the composition of the Diaconate executive committee.
- E. Meeting of the Diaconate. The Diaconate shall ordinarily meet monthly. However, it may not be necessary to have a meeting each month, since the heart of deacon involvement takes place in other activities. The chair shall eliminate unnecessary meetings. Called meetings may take place as needed.
- F. Role and Functions of Deacons:
1. Service. Since the word "deacon" means literally "one who serves," and since the original purpose of the deacons was to minister to needy persons within the Christian community, the role of the deacon should be primarily that of servant to the church fellowship.

- a. The deacons shall accept general responsibility for achieving and maintaining a high spiritual level of commitment and concern in the church.
  - b. The deacons shall minister to the people of the church as spiritual leaders under the guidance of the pastor. Deacons shall be responsible for ministering to families in times of special needs and for working toward bringing them into a more active Christian experience and fellowship within the church.
  - c. The deacons shall assist the pastor in conducting worship and in serving the Lord's Supper to the congregation.
2. Coordination. A primary function of the deacons shall be coordination of the ministries of the church.
- a. Three deacons shall serve on the Committee Coordinating Council.
  - b. Ideally three deacons shall serve on the Children's Program Board.
  - c. Other deacon committees will need to be appointed on an ad hoc basis. These include the committees for hospital visitation and retreats.
3. Administration. The primary role of the Diaconate is servanthood. However, a secondary function of the deacons shall be to serve as administrative advisors, making recommendations to the church concerning the business of the church.
- a. The deacons shall, with the assistance of the church staff, committees, and board, establish and maintain a church policies and procedures manual containing policies and procedures that have been adopted by the church.
  - b. The deacons shall prepare and submit to the congregation new or revised procedures or policies that are deemed advisable to improve the effectiveness of the church organization and operation.
  - c. The deacons shall be notified of any items to be included on the business meeting agenda prior to the business meeting. They shall present information or recommendations to the congregation prior to voting, to assist them in reaching a decision. This does not mean that the Diaconate may exercise any form of veto on matters to appear before the congregation. Their function under this section is advisory, not executive.
  - d. The deacons will make recommendation to the Finance Committee, review each year's proposed budget, determine its compatibility with long-range goals and current programs of the church, and inform the church of the results of their review at the business meeting(s) devoted to discussion of the proposed budget.

#### G. Qualifications for election as a deacon.

1. A member of Lake Shore Baptist Church for a minimum of two years;
2. At least 18 years of age;
3. Involved in ministry;
4. Committed to regular attendance at deacons' meetings and to participating in deacons' retreats;
5. Intentional in his or her quest for a mature faith;
6. Regular in attendance in worship and other church programs;
7. Committed to regular financial stewardship through the church budget;
8. One given to reconciliation and one who reflects the biblical model of servanthood and personal moral integrity.
9. No deacon can serve as an active deacon until the lapse of at least two years since serving as an active deacon.

#### H. Selection and election of deacons:

1. Timing and training: Deacon elections are to be held in October. Between October and January the executive committee of the Diaconate is to provide training for new deacons including the provision of a history of our local church and the past year's minutes of deacon meetings and a discussion of what is expected of deacons.
2. The nominating process: A church committee shall nominate one-third of the Diaconate each year so that the number on the ballot submitted to the church equals the number of deacons to be elected.
  - a. The name of this committee shall be the Nominating Committee for Deacons. The committee shall be nominated by the Committee Coordinating Council and elected by the church.
  - b. This committee shall consist of seven (7) people, as follows:
    1. 3 shall be active deacons;
    2. 4 shall be chosen at-large from the congregation;
    3. The 4 chosen at-large shall be non-deacons if possible.

- c. The Committee Coordinating Council is encouraged to select a diverse and broadly representative group with special attention to the following considerations:
1. The committee should be composed of 4 women and 3 men or 3 women and 4 men,
  2. At least one member should be 60 years of age or older,
  3. At least one member should be 35 years of age or younger,
- d. In order to build continuity, two members of the committee should be asked to serve the following year. The current committee should never have more than two members of the previous year's committee.
- e. Church members are to submit names of proposed deacon nominees to this committee. To encourage maximum participation and reflection, names are to be submitted as part of a worship service, with each member having the opportunity to suggest from one name up to one-third of the deacon body. No list of eligible persons shall be provided. The committee shall simply not consider any ineligible names submitted. The committee shall give notice of this process about three weeks before the deadline, listing the criteria and method of nominating as stated in sections H.2(f) and H.2(g) of the bylaws. Members may submit names to the committee any time during the three-week period.
- f. The committee shall take all the names submitted and begin to rank order the nominees, giving strong consideration to the number of times each individual was suggested by the congregation and to the degree to which individuals meet the following criteria the above listed criteria (see G. above). The committee should restrict its consideration to the list of names submitted by the congregation. If the number of names suggested falls below (50), the committee may introduce additional names.
- g. The committee shall give strong consideration to nominating a slate of deacons that is proportionally representative of the whole congregation. Factors considered should include length of membership in the church, age, gender, ethnicity, and spiritual gifts. An effort should be made to avoid having more than one member of a household on the Diaconate at any one time. Beginning with the top people on their list, representatives of the committee shall, if possible, use a personal visit to ascertain the willingness of each nominee to serve and shall discuss, during the visit, what is expected of deacons. This process shall continue until the list of the required number of nominees is completed.

3. The election of deacons. The committee shall submit their nominees to the church for election by written vote. When presenting their nominees the committee should stress how they arrived at these particular names. The committee shall be required to present their list at least one week before the election, in the bulletin and the newsletter. At the meeting at which the vote will occur, church members may add further nominees to the committee's list as long as such a nominee's willingness to serve as deacon has been ascertained. In this case, the required number of nominees receiving the most votes shall become deacons. That is, if seven deacons are to be elected, and a nomination from the floor produces a slate of eight, the top seven nominees will become deacons.
- I. Ordination and installation. Newly-elected deacons not previously ordained shall be ordained and installed on or about the first Sunday of February at the morning worship service. Newly elected deacons who have been previously ordained shall be installed at the same service.
  - J. Vacancies. If for any reason a vacancy occurs on the active board, the deacons shall recommend to the church a reserve deacon who has not served on the active board for at least two years to fill the remainder of the unexpired term.

#### **Article IV. Meetings of the Church**

- A. Worship services and educational activities shall be conducted on a regular basis and at such times and places as are best suited to meeting the spiritual needs of the congregation. The content of such services shall be determined by the pastoral staff in coordination with the various committees involved.
- B. Social and recreational activities shall be planned by the committees charged with serving the community and fellowship needs of the membership.
- C. Business Meetings
  1. Business meetings shall be held as needed to conduct necessary church business and to provide information to the membership. Called business meetings and other meetings requiring official church action, such as ordination and licensing, shall be held as needed. The agenda for the business meeting shall be set by the moderator and the chair of the deacons in consultation with the pastor(s).
  2. Notification of a regular or called business meeting shall be given in the church newsletter prior to such a meeting or, if necessary, during the Sunday morning worship service prior to such a meeting. This notice shall include a detailed agenda of topics for consideration during the meeting. Only those topics included in the agenda may be considered for voting or other action by the membership at that meeting.
  3. A quorum for any business meeting shall consist of five (5) percent of the resident membership of the church.

4. Business meetings shall be conducted by the moderator as defined in Article II, Section A.

## **Article V. Committees**

### A. Committee Coordinating Council:

1. **Composition.** The Committee Coordinating Council shall be comprised of 3 deacons and 6 church members at large. The deacons shall be appointed to the council by the deacon's appointment committee. The members-at-large shall be nominated by the deacon's appointment committee and approved by the church. The pastor or pastor's representative shall serve as ex-officio member. The three-year term of office shall begin in January with staggered terms assigned. Persons shall rotate off the council for two years before reappointment.
2. **Chair and Vice-Chair of the Committee Coordinating Council.** These positions shall be nominated by the Committee Coordinating Council and elected by the church. For the purposes of coordination, it is preferable that the chair of the council be an active deacon. If the chair is not an active deacon, the chair shall be a non-voting ex-officio member of the executive committee of the Diaconate. The vice-chair of the Committee Coordinating Council, preferably an active deacon, shall be the chair elect.
3. **Duties:**
  - a) To serve as the committee on committees, recommending to the church, in consultation with church staff, persons to fill all positions of the standing committees of the church. Committee recommendations shall be for three-year staggered terms, though the Committee Coordinating Council shall be flexible in the recommendations process, particularly with regard to the size of committees and reappointments to committees. These recommendations shall be made by December first and the committee year shall begin in January.
  - b) To supervise, facilitate, and coordinate the work of church committees.
  - c) To divide church committees into four divisions: community relations, education, ministries, and operations.
  - d) To assign liaisons to each committee from the Committee Coordinating Council to facilitate the functioning of the church committees.
  - e) To fill any vacancy which arises on a committee if this seems appropriate for the church calendar year.
  - f) To hold an annual committee chair orientation meeting in which the job descriptions of the committees are distributed, liaisons from the Committee



Coordinating Council shall be noted, and church staff assignments to the committees are announced.

- g) To evaluate and update committee job descriptions as needed.
  - h) To maintain a Manual with information on all the committees such as job descriptions.
  - i) To abolish committees when no longer needed.
  - j) To establish new standing committees and task groups as needed.
- B. Committees are authorized to spend money which has been budgeted for their work, but they shall contact the office manager to verify the availability of funds for expenditures over \$500.
- C. A member of the church staff shall be assigned to each committee as a resource person for that committee but will not necessarily attend committee meetings.
- D. Chairs of committees shall have the responsibility of being present for church-wide budget discussions to provide information.

## **Article VI. The Children's Center**

### A. Children's Program Board.

1. **Membership.** The Children's Program Board shall be comprised of church members and constituted as follows. The appointments committee of the Board of Deacons shall ideally appoint three active deacons to serve three-year staggered terms. The Committee Coordinating Council shall appoint a minimum of six additional members to serve three-year staggered terms. The chair shall be appointed by the Committee Coordinating Council.

In selecting members for this Board, the deacons and the Committee Coordinating Council shall consult with each other and shall consider the importance of having a board member who is a parent of a child participating in the Children's Center Program, a board member who is a volunteer worker in the preschool/children's religious education program, a board member who has a professional interest in education and/or in child care, a board member who is an attorney, a board member who is a nurse or physician, and a board member with experience in business. If educational, legal, medical, or business experience is not represented on the Board, then the Board shall invite consultants to serve as advisors to the Board.

The member of the pastoral staff who serves as the liaison to the Children's Center Board shall serve as an ex-officio member of the Children's Program Board. The faculty of the Children's Center shall elect a representative who shall serve as liaison from the faculty to the Board. Though not a member of the Board, the director of the Children's Center

shall ordinarily meet with, and provide a monthly report to, the Children's Program Board.

2. Function:

- a) The Children's Program Board shall serve as a school board for the Children's Center and shall oversee the Children's Center Program. The Board shall meet monthly.
- b) The Board shall be the policy-making body for the Children's Center Program, and the policies that the Board establishes shall be stated in a policy manual.
- c) It shall be the responsibility of the designated member of the pastoral staff serving as ex officio member to the Program Board to evaluate the effectiveness of the director's work and to ensure that annual evaluation procedures for faculty and staff are established, implemented and reported to the Children's Center Program Board.
- d) The Board, in conjunction with the director of the Children's Center shall annually survey the parents of children in the Children's Center Program to determine the degree of satisfaction with the services being delivered.
- e) The Board shall work closely with the Finance Committee in developing a budget for the Children's Center Program and shall have the responsibility for recommending the budget of the Children's Center Program to the church for final approval.
- f) The Children's Program Board shall also assist in coordinating the activities of the Children's Center and the church's preschool/children's religious education program. This involves coordinating space usage and, where possible, the purchase of material. In all of its activities and policy decisions, the Children's Program Board shall take into account the interests of both the Children's Center and the church's preschool/children's religious education program.

B. Director of the Children's Center.

1. Director of the Children's Center. The authority of the director shall derive from the Board. The Board shall be responsible for developing a clear and detailed job description for the director of the Children's Center. When the position of Director of children's Center is vacant, the Board shall serve as the search committee which shall recommend a replacement to the church.
2. The Director shall recruit, select, supervise, and terminate, as necessary, teachers and staff employed at the Children's Center.

**Article VII. Pastoral Staff**

- A. Responsibilities of the Pastors. The senior pastor shall be the principal administrator of the church and shall in general supervise the affairs of the church. Other members of the pastoral staff shall assist the senior pastor in the performance of duties as required by church policy and job descriptions. The continual updating of titles and job descriptions shall be the

responsibility of the Personnel Committee, which shall also have the responsibility of preparing and continually updating a personnel policies handbook. Each member of the pastoral staff will be assigned as contact person for several committees. The committees assigned to each minister should be listed in his/her job description.

## B. Calling and Dismissing the Pastors

1. When calling a pastor becomes necessary, a Search Committee shall be formed for the purpose of recommending a candidate to the church. An Interim/Supply Committee shall also be formed to take responsibility for supply preaching and/or to recommend an interim pastor to the church.
2. The Search Committee, of not fewer than seven (7) nor more than thirteen (13), shall be nominated by the Committee Coordinating Council and presented to the church for election. The Search Committee shall be representative of the whole congregation with respect to age, gender, length of membership in the church, and gifts. The Search Committee shall meet in open forum with the church and solicit written suggestions from the church members concerning the direction in which the church should move and the characteristics desired in a new pastor. The Search Committee shall provide on-going lines of communication with the congregation as a means of keeping the church informed of its activities and as a means of securing the counsel of church members.
3. The Interim/supply Committee shall consist of 3-5 members nominated by the Committee Coordinating Council and presented to the church for election.
4. The vote to name a pastor shall come before the church at a special business meeting after at least two (2) weeks' written notice and proper announcement from the pulpit on two (2) consecutive Sundays.
5. An affirmative vote of 75 percent of the members present and voting is required to extend a call. The vote shall be by secret ballot. Any member whose ballot indicates abstention shall be deemed not to have voted.
6. The pastors shall be called for an indefinite period of time. Salary, allowance, and other benefits shall be fixed by vote of the church, upon recommendation of the Search Committee, Deacons, Finance Committee, and the Personnel Committee.
7. The term of office of the pastors may be ended upon 30 days written notice of resignation by the pastor or immediately in the event of termination by the church. Church members desiring the termination of employment of a member of the pastoral staff and wishing to initiate such an action shall present their grievances to the Personnel Committee. Following accepted standards of due process, the Personnel Committee in consultation with the deacons should consider the issue and attempt to resolve the matter equitably. Termination may be voted at any business meeting provided two (2) consecutive weeks' written notice of time and purpose has been given to the members.
8. An affirmative vote of a majority of the members present and voting shall be required to authorize and direct the Chair of the Deacons, or in his/her absence, the Vice Chair of the

Deacons, to give the pastor notice of the termination of his/her pastorate. The vote shall be by secret ballot. Any member whose ballot indicates abstention shall be deemed not to have voted. In the event of a pastor's dismissal, the church shall pay the pastor at least one (1) month's salary and benefits as termination benefits.

### **Article VIII. Church Staff**

- A. The church staff shall consist of all paid employees of the church other than the pastors. The staff members, with the exceptions of those positions listed below, shall be employed by regular church action in a business meeting. Replacement or additional staff members shall be recommended to the church by the Personnel Committee after consultation with the committee(s) directly involved with the position concerned.
- B. Exceptions to the above are:
  - 1. Childcare workers, who shall be employed by the appropriate staff person in consultation with the Children's Education Committee.
  - 2. Temporary positions, which shall be filled by the Personnel Committee on the recommendation of those persons or committees directly involved with the needed temporary position.
- C. The Personnel Committee shall prepare, revise, and distribute a job description for each position under its responsibility after consultation with the committee directly involved with the position concerned. They shall consult with the Finance Committee to determine salary levels and availability of funds for new employees.

### **Article IX. Procedures and Amendments**

- A. The church may from time to time, in business session, adopt, revise, or delete such policies and procedures as are necessary to the organization and operation of the church.
- B. All questions of procedure not provided for in these bylaws shall be governed by *Robert's Rules of Order Revised*.
- C. These bylaws may be amended at any regular or called business meeting of the church by a two-thirds vote of those qualified, present, and voting, provided at least 10% of the resident membership is present, and that notice of such amendment shall have been given from the pulpit on two successive Sundays in advance of said meeting, and that a copy of the proposed amendment shall have been posted in a conspicuous place in the church.