

Constitution

Preamble

This constitution and these by-laws are established to preserve and secure the principles of our faith and to govern the body of believers in an orderly manner. They will also preserve the liberties of each individual church member and the freedom of action of this body in its relation to other church and Southern Baptist organizations.

This constitution and these bylaws are NOT Scripture, however they do represent our best effort to interpret Scripture as to who we are and our basic beliefs as well as how the affairs of the Church should be conducted.

Go ye therefore and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. I have commanded you: and lo, I am with you always even unto the end of the world.

Matthew 28: 18-20

Article I

Name

The name of this body of believers is Rock Springs Baptist Church, Licking MO, according to the name given the Church when founded in 1871. This Church and its property and titles is formed for the purpose of conducting religious services and to carry out the message of the Gospel.

Article II

Objectives and Mission Statement

Section 1. Objectives

- A. To be a dynamic, spiritual Church empowered by the Holy Spirit to share Christ with as many people as possible in our church, community, and throughout the world. (Matthew 28:16-20)
- B. To be a worshipping Church, experiencing the awareness of God, praising Him, and responding in obedience to His Guidance. (1 Chronicles 16:23-31)
- C. To develop an increasing fellowship with God and fellow believers. (Hebrews 10:24-25)
- D. To minister unselfishly to people in the congregation, community, and the world in Jesus' name. (Romans 12:16-18)
- E. To be Christ-like in our daily living. (1 John 2:6)

Section 2. Mission Statement

To change our world by developing Christ followers who love God and love people.

Article III

Statement of Faith and Ordinances

Section 1. Statement of Faith

The Holy Bible is the inspired, infallible Word of God and is the basis for any statement of faith. Rock Springs Baptist Church subscribes to the doctrinal statement of “The Baptist Faith and Message” as adopted by the Southern Baptist Convention in 2000. We assemble ourselves together as a body of baptized believers in Jesus Christ and are personally committed to sharing the Gospel to a lost world.

Article IV

Affiliation and Church Authority

Section 1. Affiliation

Rock Springs Baptist Church, Licking MO is affiliated with the Texas County Baptist Association, the Missouri Baptist Convention, and the Southern Baptist Convention.

Section 2. Church Authority

The government of Rock Springs Baptist Church is vested in the body of believers who are members within the Church. It is subject to the control of no other ecclesiastical body, but Rock Springs Baptist Church does recognize and sustain the obligations of mutual cooperation with fellow Baptist Churches and Licking Ministerial Alliance. Insofar as possible and practical, Rock Springs Baptist Church will support the Missouri Baptist Convention and Southern Baptist Convention.

Rock Springs Baptist Church voting members are the final authority for matters of self-government within the Church. Each voting member will seek and use prayer, Scripture, and reasoned discussion to ensure Providential guidance so that the Church will govern itself according to the Will of God.

Article V

Church Covenant

Having been led, as we believe, by the Holy Spirit, to receive the Lord Jesus Christ as our Savior and Lord, and on the profession of our faith having been baptized in the name of the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Spirit, we do now in the presence of God and this assembly, most solemnly and joyfully enter into covenant with another as one body in Christ.

We will work and pray for the unity of spirit in the bond of peace. (1 Corinthians 1:10)

We will walk together in brotherly love, as becomes the members of a Christian Church; exercise an affectionate care and watchfulness over each other and faithfully admonish and entreat one another as occasion may require. (Hebrews 3:13)

We will not forsake the assembling of ourselves together, nor neglect to pray for ourselves and others. (Hebrews 10:25)

We will rejoice at each other's happiness and endeavor with tenderness and sympathy to bear each other's burdens and sorrows. (Galatians 6:10)

We will seek, by Divine aid, to live carefully in the world, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, and remembering that, as we have been voluntarily buried by baptism and raised again from the symbolic grave, so there is on us a special obligation now to lead a new and holy life. (Colossians 3:5-6)

We will work together for the continuance of a faithful evangelical ministry in this church, as we sustain its worship, ordinances, discipline, and doctrines. (Isaiah 6:8)

We will contribute cheerfully and regularly to the support of the ministry, the expenses of the church, and the spread of the Gospel through all nations. (Matthew 10:8)

We will, when we move from this place, 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. (Hebrews 10:25)

May the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with us all. Amen.

Article VI

Tax Status

This corporation is organized pursuant to the General Non-Profit Corporation Law of the State of Missouri; the property of this corporation is irrevocably dedicated to religious and charitable purposes, and upon liquidation, dissolution, or abandonment, shall not inure to the benefit of any private person except a fund, foundation, or corporation organized and operated for religious or charitable purposes.

Article VII

Statement on Marriage

Our statement of faith, the Baptist Faith and Message 2000, expresses our fundamental biblical conviction that Christian marriage is, by definition, the spiritual and physical uniting of one man and one woman in an exclusive covenant commitment for their joint lifetime. Christian marriage is God's unique gift to reveal the union between Christ and His Church. As such, this local church believes that wedding ceremonies on church property are spiritual observances of worship of God who created this divine institution. As worship services, weddings on church property shall be officiated by one or more ordained ministers of the gospel. The church may decline to make its facilities or ministers available for any wedding if it is determined that one or both of the parties are not biblically and/or legally qualified to marry. Such determinations may be made by the [pastor, church council, or wedding committee, etc.], subject to the direction of the church.

No minister[or employee] of the Church shall officiate at any marriage ceremony unless such marriage is consistent with this policy.

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Bylaws

Article I.

Church Membership

Section 1. General

Rock Springs Baptist Church is a sovereign Southern Baptist Church under the leadership of our Lord Jesus Christ. The membership retains the exclusive right of self-government in all phases of the temporal life of the Church. The membership reserves the right to determine who shall become a member of Rock Springs Baptist Church as well as the conditions of such membership.

The membership of this Church will be composed of individuals who are believers in the Lord Jesus Christ, affirm the tenets of the Church Covenant and who offer evidence by their confession that they are actively pursuing and continuing in fellowship with the Lord Jesus Christ. A member is also one who attends regularly, serves at, and contributes to Rock Springs Baptist Church. Anyone not attending, serving and/or contributing may be deemed an inactive member.

All action regarding membership will be by a vote of the Church.

Section II. Candidacy

1. Any person may offer one's self as a candidate for membership in Rock Springs Baptist Church. All such candidates will be presented to the Church at any regular service for membership in any of the following ways:
 - a. Profession of faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, accepting the promises and commands of Holy Scripture, and being baptized by immersion in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit and accepting the principles of faith and practices of this Church.
 - b. Promise of a letter of recommendation from another Southern Baptist Church and accepting the principles of faith and practices of this Church.
 - c. A statement of prior conversion and scriptural baptism by immersion and accepting the principles of faith and practice of this Church.
 - d. Reinstatement as provided for in Section VI of these bylaws.

Section III. Rights as Members

1. Every member of the Church is entitled to vote in all elections and on all questions submitted to the Church in conference. Proxy votes are not permitted.
2. Every member of the Church may participate in the ordinances of the Church as administered by the Church.

Section IV. Duties of Members

1. New members are expected to participate in the Church's new member orientation.
2. All members of Rock Springs Baptist Church are expected to worship, attend Church services, pray, praise God, and give of one's assets through offerings to the Church.
3. All members are expected to use their spiritual gifts by serving in the Church's ministries. Members are also expected to study the Word of God, witness, and encourage family and friends to come to Church.

Section V. Termination of Members

1. Membership in Rock Springs Baptist Church may be terminated in the following ways:
 - a. Death of the member.
 - b. Transfer to another Church
 - c. An individual's request to be removed from the membership role.
 - d. Action of Rock Springs Baptist Church as described in Section VI.

Section VI. Discipline and Restoration

1. It will be one of Rock Spring Baptist Church's basic purposes to emphasize to its members that every reasonable measure will be taken to facilitate, assist, counsel, and pray for any troubled member. The Senior Pastor, Associate Pastor, Ministry Staff, Worship Leader and Deacons will be available for guidance. Redemption, rather than punishment will be the guideline followed by these Church leaders.
2. If some serious condition should arise which would cause a member to become a candidate for Church discipline, every reasonable measure will be taken by the Senior Pastor, his staff, and the Deacons to resolve the problem and restore the individual. All of these proceedings will occur with the utmost kindness and forbearance. If the issue cannot be resolved and the general welfare of the Church is threatened, the Church may opt to remove the member with a vote of 75% of its members present in a specially called meeting.
3. Any person whose membership has been terminated may be reinstated with evidence of his or repentance and reformation and membership vote held by the congregation.

Article II

Church Officers, Staff, and Support Personnel

General: All who serve as officers of the Church will be members of Rock Springs Baptist Church. Officers in the Church will include Senior Pastor, Associate Pastor, Worship Leader, Deacons, Clerk, Treasurer, Sunday School Director, and Trustees.

Further, the Church will elect or appoint teachers and committee members as necessary to carry out the work of the church. Term of office will be from the First Day of October through the last

day of September the following year. These too, shall be members of Rock Springs Baptist Church.

Section 1. Senior Pastor

1. The Church affirms that Jesus Christ is the head of the Church. With the guidance of the Holy Spirit, the Church will call a gifted man to serve as Senior Pastor.
2. He shall be a duly ordained Southern Baptist minister, or qualified to be so. He is responsible for leading the Church to function as a New Testament Church. He will lead the congregation, the organization, and the Staff.
3. He will be the overseer and leader of the ministry of the Church.
4. He will conduct worship services.
5. The Senior Pastor will be the overseer and leader of the ministries and programs of the Church and will supervise directly or by delegation all Staff and Support Personnel.
6. He will work with Ministry Staff and Deacons to:
 - a. Achieve the Church mission, vision and objectives
 - b. Proclaim the Gospel to the World
 - c. Caring for the Church's members and other people in the community
7. The Senior Pastor will hold the his office for an indefinite period of time with the understanding that he may offer his resignation at any meeting or service if he feels led by the Holy Spirit to do so. If he resigns he should give at least two weeks' notice.
8. In calling a Pastor it will require 75% of voting members present.
9. His service may be terminated by 75% of voting members present.
10. Before holding a meeting to hire or terminate a Pastor, two regular Sunday Morning meetings must pass. The purpose of the meeting must be provided in writing to the members of the Church as well as the Pastor.
11. A meeting to terminate may be called by the majority of the Deacon body.

Section 1A. Senior Pastor Search Committee

1. When needed, a special or a business meeting will be called for the purpose of selecting a Search Committee. The members will nominate and vote for 5 people they desire to have on the committee. Those individuals receiving the most votes will form the committee.
2. The Search Committee will prayerfully and with the guidance of the Holy Spirit seek out a Senior Pastor. The Search Committee's recommendation will then serve as a nomination. The Committee will bring to the consideration of the Church only one name at a time.
3. The nomination of the prospective Senior Pastor will be at a Special Meeting called for that purpose. Notice of when the vote is scheduled will be given at the time of the nomination. The vote will be by church members using written ballots.
4. Prior to the vote the prospective Senior Pastor will be asked to come and meet with the Deacon Body and preach to the congregation during a Sunday Morning Service.

5. After the call is extended and accepted, the Search Committee will assist the new Senior Pastor in making the transition to the Church. After that time, the Search Committee duties and function will cease.

Section 2. Ministry Staff

General: The ministry staff positions will consist of 1) Ordained Staff and 2) Other Staff Positions not requiring ordination.

Section 2A. Ordained Ministerial Staff Positions

1. Associate Pastors will be called as needed. The Senior Pastor as well as the Deacons may act as the search team for recruiting and making recommendations for the Associate Pastor position. The Senior Pastor and Deacons may choose to appoint additional members of the congregation to facilitate the search.
2. After prayerful consideration and guidance by the Holy Spirit, the team may nominate the candidate of their choice to the position at a special meeting called for that purpose. At least 75% of those members present must vote to affirm the call.
3. The Associate Pastor thus called will serve until the relationship is terminated by the individual's request or the Senior Pastor's and the majority of Deacon's request. If by the individual's request, two weeks' notice will be given before terminating.
4. A detailed job description will be provided to the candidates upon call.

Section 2B. Ministerial Staff Positions not requiring ordination.

1. Worship Leader
 - a. The Worship Leader shall be appointed by the Senior Pastor and will lead the church in the Music of Praise and Worship.
2. Church Clerk:
 - a. The Clerk will be elected annually. The clerk will keep an accurate record of all business of the church, which will be approved at the regular business meeting. He or she will keep a record of all Baptisms and new memberships. The clerk will keep all church documents and records in a safe place. The clerk will prepare the annual letter to the Texas County Baptist Association. The clerk will grant letters of dismissal and receive letters of admission.
3. Treasurer
 - a. The Treasurer will be elected annually. The Treasurer will hold all monies belonging to the Church and will, without special vote, pay out of funds available for the purpose, all salaries, fixed charges, interest and utilities. All other bills will be paid only after approval by the church. The Treasurer will keep an accurate record of all income and expenses.
 - b. The Treasurer will present a financial summary at each business meeting and shall submit an annual financial report at the August business meeting for the year. The Treasurer will also provide information for the Association Annual Profile.

- c. The Treasurer, with the help of the finance committee will prepare and submit to the Church an inclusive budget, indicating by item the monies needed for expenses, expansion, etc.

Section 3. Deacons

General

1. Deacons must be men of Godly character and integrity, worthy of respect and ordained by the church.

2. Deacons shall be selected on the basis of the biblical qualifications for Deacons set forth in 1 Timothy 3:8-13.

⁸ In the same way, deacons are to be worthy of respect, sincere, not indulging in much wine, and not pursuing dishonest gain. ⁹ They must keep hold of the deep truths of the faith with a clear conscience. ¹⁰ They must first be tested, and then if there is nothing against them, let them serve as deacons.

¹¹ In the same way, the women are to be worthy of respect, not malicious talkers but temperate and trustworthy in everything.

¹² A deacon must be faithful to his wife and must manage his children and his household well. ¹³ Those who have served well gain an excellent standing and great assurance in their faith in Christ Jesus.

3. Only those who have been members of this church for at least one year shall be eligible to be elected as Deacons.

Election and Tenure of Deacons

1. Those who are elected and ordained as Deacons in this church are considered Deacons as long as they remain members unless they resign from the Deacon ministry or are removed by the disciplinary action of the church. A Deacon may, if necessary, request a leave of absence from Deacon service.

2. As many men as are Biblically qualified to serve, are willing to serve in this responsible position, and are elected by the church shall serve as Deacons.

3. If a man is elected as a Deacon who has not yet been ordained, he shall be ordained as a Deacon by the church as soon as possible within his first year of service.

4. The Deacons may decide to remove a Deacon from service if they find that he is no longer qualified to be a Deacon according to the principles of 1 Timothy 3, or if they find that he is not adequately fulfilling his role as a Deacon as defined in the bylaws.

5. If a Deacon is found to be failing in his duties as a Deacon, reasonable efforts should be made to help the Deacon and find a solution to whatever problems may exist before he is removed. The Pastor(s) should be consulted in this process.

Ministry of Deacons

1. Deacons are servants. The Greek word, diakonos, from which the word “Deacon” derives, meant one who works for the success and benefit of others. Deacons work to benefit the church and to help its ministries be effective.
2. The Deacons will facilitate the proper functioning of the church’s ministries. They shall be active and involved in the various ministries and shall serve as they can to help the ministries function effectively.
3. The Deacons are charged by the church with the following responsibilities.
 - a. They shall oversee the administration of the church’s two ordinances: baptism and the Lord’s Supper.
 - b. They shall seek to minister to those in need and work with the Pastor(s) to oversee the church’s benevolence and other ministries.
 - c. In coordination and cooperation with the Pastor(s), they shall mediate when conflict arises between members or when there is dissatisfaction with the church and its leadership.
 - d. They shall minister to members who have become inactive, seeking to contact them, discern what problems might exist in the members’ lives or their fellowship with the church, restore them to fellowship with the church or make appropriate recommendations to the church to terminate their membership.

Section 4. Other Church Positions

1. Sunday School Director
 - a. The Sunday School Director will be a Church Member elected annually and will be the executive officer of Sunday School. He or she will exercise a general supervision over all departments and direct the activities of the Sunday School, as recommended by the Southern Baptist Convention whenever possible.
2. Sunday School Teachers
 - a. The teachers will be elected annually and will conduct themselves according to the existing standards as set forth by the Church. Guidelines for a Sunday School Teacher include:
 - i. Be a devoted Christian
 - ii. Be a member of the Church
 - iii. Be loyal to the Church

- iv. Teach according to the Faith and Message
 - v. Use the Bible as the final authority in teaching
 - vi. Support the financial program of the church through tithes and offerings
 - vii. Cooperate with the Sunday School Director and other leaders in the church
 - viii. When absent contact assistant or Director in advance
 - ix. Be mindful of opportunities to witness to the lost
3. Trustees
- a. The church will elect a new trustee each year, while the one with the most seniority will step down. All actions by the trustees will be subject to church approval. The priority of the trustees will see to the repair and general upkeep of the Church and all property of the Church. Trustees will be allowed, in an emergency to spend up to \$300.00 without prior Church approval.
4. Committees:
- a. The Church will elect or appoint committees as are necessary for the active duties of the Church.
 - i. Finance Committee – Composed of Pastor, Chairman of Deacons, Treasurer and two other members chosen by the Church.
 - ii. Function Committee – Composed of four people and plan the events of the Church. This will be a rotating committee.
 - iii. Nominating – Selected by the Pastor and Deacons and then presented to Church.
 - iv. Ad hoc committees as needed.

Article 3

Ordinances

Section 1. Baptism

A person who receives Jesus Christ as Savior by personal faith, who professes Him publically at any worship service, and who indicates a commitment to following Christ as Lord, shall be received for baptism:

- 1. Baptism shall be by immersion in water.
- 2. Baptism shall be administered by the Senior Pastor or whoever he shall authorize.
- 3. Baptism shall be administered as an act of worship during any service.

Section 2. The 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 the Second Coming.

1. The Lord's Supper will be observed at the discretion of the Pastor.
2. The Pastor and the Deacons will be responsible for the administration of the Lord's Supper.

Article 4

Church Meetings

Section 1. Worship Services

The Church will meet regularly each Sunday Morning for Praise, Worship, Prayer, Instruction, and Evangelism. Sunday Evening Discipleship Training services will be held as determined by Pastor and Deacons. Wednesday Night services are dedicated to Bible Study and Student Ministry. Cancellation of services due to special events or circumstances (weather) will occur when agreed upon by the Senior Pastor and Deacon Body Chair.

Section 2. Special Services

Revival services and other Church meetings essential to the promotion and objectives of the Church will be placed on the Church calendar by the Pastor and/or Deacons.

Section 3. Regular Business Meetings

Regular business meetings will be held monthly or as determined by the Church. Financial summaries, attendance, and other reports concerning the general welfare of the Church will be presented at these meetings.

Section 4. Special Business Meetings

A special business meeting may be held one week after public notification at a worship service. The notice shall also be published in the Church Bulletin, giving the subject, date, time, and place of the meeting. The Senior Pastor, his designate, or the Chairman of the Deacons may issue a call for a special business meeting.

Section 5. Quorum

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

Section 6. Parliamentary Rules

Robert's Rules of Order, as amended, is the authority for parliamentary rules of procedures for all business meetings of the Church.

Article 5

Church Programs

Section 1. General

All organizations of the Church will be responsible to the Church

Section 2. Sunday School

There will be a Sunday School, divided into departments and classes for all ages and conducted under the direction of the Sunday School Director, with supervision from the Senior Pastor, for the study of God's Word.

Section 3. Student Ministry

Being specifically guided by the Holy Spirit, the Church will develop and continue to support a Youth and Children's ministry that facilitates and upholds students' spiritual, mental and physical needs.

Section 4. Discipleship

Church Discipleship program will be developed and continued. Included in this program will be the New Members Orientation.

Section 5. Church Worship/Music Program

As praise and worship are central to the Christian life, there will be a Church music and worship program under the direction of the Worship Leader and the supervision of the Senior Pastor.

Section 7 Senior Ministry

A ministry dedicated to the seniors in our church and community will be developed and implemented with the direction of the Associate Pastor under the supervision of the Senior Pastor.

Section 8 Women’s Ministry.

The women's ministry exists to help women grow in their walk with the Lord and in fellowship with each other. Scripture says it is much better to walk through this world with the help of those who love and care for you. The women's ministry seeks to create an atmosphere where this fellowship and learning exists.

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