

# CONSTITUTION AND BY-LAWS

Talatha Baptist Church  
361 Talatha Church Road  
Aiken, South Carolina 29803

Proposed Revisions 10/25/2017

# CONSTITUTION

## ARTICLE 1: PREAMBLE

We declare and establish this Constitution to preserve 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 relation to other churches.

## ARTICLE 2: NAME

**This body shall be known as "Talatha Baptist Church", located in Aiken County, in the State of South Carolina. It was established as a charitable Christian Institution in 1825 and constituted under the laws of South Carolina.**

## ARTICLE 3: MISSION

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. To be a worshipping fellowship experiencing an awareness of God, recognizing his person, and responding in obedience to his leadership. To experience an increasingly meaningful fellowship. To help people experience a growing knowledge of God and mankind. To be a church that ministers unselfishly to persons in the community and world in Jesus' name. 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 Jesus Christ.

## ARTICLE 4: STATEMENT OF FAITH

**We believe the Holy Bible is the inspired "Word of God" and is the basis of any statement of faith. The church subscribes to the doctrinal statement "The Baptist Faith and Message" as adopted by the SOUTHERN BAPTIST CONVENTION 2000. We band ourselves together as a body of baptized believers in Jesus Christ, personally committed to sharing the good news of salvation to lost mankind. THE BIBLE SPEAKS WITH FINAL AUTHORITY CONCERNING TRUTH, MORALITY, AND THE PROPER CONDUCT OF MANKIND AND IS THE SOLE AND FINAL SOURCE OF ALL THAT WE BELIEVE. The ordinances of the church are "Baptism" and the Lord's Supper (Communion).**

## **ARTICLE 5: STATEMENT ON MARRIAGE, GENDER, AND SEXUALITY**

**We believe that God creates each person as male and female, and that these two distinct complementary genders "together" reflect the image and nature of God. (Gen 1: 26-27)**

**We believe that God created "Marriage" to be the union of one man and one woman only, as stated in Scripture (Gen 2:18-25). We believe God intends sexual intimacy to occur only in the union between a man and a woman who are married to each other. (1 Cor 6:18-20; Heb 13:4) We believe that God has commanded that intimate sexual activity not be engaged in, outside of marriage between a man and a woman.**

**We believe that any form of sexual immorality such as ; adultery, fornication, homosexuality, bisexual conduct, bestiality, incest, pornography, or any attempt to change ones' sex or disagreement with ones' biological sex is sinful and offensive to God (Matt 15:18-20; 1 Cor 6:9-10).**

**We believe that God offers redemption and restoration to all who confess and forsake their sin, seeking God's mercy and forgiveness through Jesus Christ.**

**We believe that every person must be afforded compassion, love, kindness, respect, and dignity (Mark 12:28-31; Luke 6:31). Hateful and harassing behavior or attitudes directed toward any individual are to be repudiated and are not in accord with Scripture nor doctrines of the church.**

**We believe that in order to preserve the function and integrity of the church as a local Body of Christ, and to provide a biblical role model to the church members and to the community, it is imperative that all persons employed by this church in any capacity, or who serve as volunteers abide by and agree to this "Statement on Marriage and Sexual Morality" and conduct themselves accordingly. EMPLOYEES AND VOLUNTEERS ALIKE WILL BE ASKED TO SIGN A COPY OF "STATEMENT ON MARRIAGE AND SEXUAL MORALITY". IT IS IMPORTANT THAT EVERY INDIVIDUAL REQUESTING MEMBERSHIP IN THS ORGANIZATION BE AWARE OF THE BIBLICAL/ RELIGIOUS POSITION WE HOLD ON THESE ISSUES, PRIOR TO ENTERING INTO A FORMAL RELATIONSHIP, OR BECOMING A MEMBER OF THIS CHURCH.**

## **ARTICLE 6: CHURCH RELATIONSHIPS**

**The government of this church is vested in the body of believers who comprise it. It is subject to the control of no other ecclesiastical body, but it recognizes and**

**sustains the obligations of mutual counsel and cooperation which are common among Baptist Churches. In so far as is practical, this church will cooperate with and support the SOUTHERN BAPTIST CONVENTION, THE SOUTH CAROLINA BAPTIST CONVENTION AND THE AIKEN BAPTIST ASSOCIATION.**

**ARTICLE 7: CHURCH COVENANT**

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

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

**We also engage to maintain family and private devotions, to religiously educate our children, to seek the salvation of our kindred and acquaintances, to walk carefully in the world, to be just in our dealings, faithful in our engagements and exemplary in our conduct, to avoid all gossiping, backbiting, and excessive anger; to abstain from the sale and use of intoxicating drinks as a beverage, to use our influence to combat drug abuse and the spread of pornography, to maintain family values by abstaining from adulterous living, and to be zealous in our efforts to advance the kingdom of our Savior.**

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

**We moreover engage that when we as individuals relocate, we will unite as soon as possible with some other Church where we can carry out the spirit of the covenant and the principles of God's Word.**

# BY-LAWS

## ARTICLE 1

## MEMBERSHIP

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

### A: Candidacy For Membership:

Any person may offer themselves as a candidate for membership in this Church.

**Discrimination based on color of skin country of origin, or ethnic identification is prohibited.** All candidates shall be presented for membership at any regular church service in the following ways:

- (1) By profession of faith and for baptism according to the policies of the church.
- (2) By promise of letter of recommendation from another Baptist Church, to be under the watch-care of this church until such letter is received.
- (3) By statement of prior conversion experience and scriptural baptism when letter is unobtainable.

Should there be any dissent as to any candidate, a membership committee shall be formed to investigate and make recommendation to the church within thirty (30) days. A three-fourths vote of those members present and voting shall be required to elect such candidate(s) to membership.

### B. New Member Orientation:

New church members will be expected to participate in the church new member orientation plan. This is a pastoral function.

### C. Voting Rights of Members:

Every member of the church is entitled to vote at all elections and on all items submitted to the church in **regular business meetings and special conference, provided the member is present. No absentee ballots will be allowed.**

### D. Termination of Membership:

Membership may be terminated in any of the following ways.

1. Death
2. Transfer of letter to another Baptist Church
3. Exclusion by action of this church
4. Erasure upon written request or proof of membership in a church of another denomination.

E. Discipline:

It shall be the basic purpose of Talatha Baptist Church to emphasize to its' members that every reasonable measure will be taken to assist a troubled member. The Pastor, Deacons, or other members of the church staff, are available for counsel and guidance. Redemption rather than punishment shall be the guideline which governs the attitude of one member toward another.

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

The church may restore to membership any person previously excluded upon request of the excluded person, and by vote of the church upon evidence of the person's repentance and reformation.

ARTICLE: 2                    CHURCH OFFICERS AND STAFF

A: CHURCH OFFICERS

1. Pastor:

The position of Pastor encompasses many roles, including that of Senior Pastor, preacher, teacher, evangelist, as well as shepherd of the flock. As Senior Pastor, he should guide the Church in the formation of committees and give instruction as to their function and purpose. As preacher, he should be the deliverer of the Gospel Message, with the Bible as the primary source of text. As teacher, his purpose should be to guide the saved towards Christian maturity. As evangelist, his purpose should be to reach beyond the walls of the sanctuary to bring the unsaved to Christ. As shepherd, he should be responsive to those

that are suffering physically and/or spiritually, offering prayer and counsel to those that desire it. **The Pastor will administer the new member orientation program. He may enlist the help of any staff member in doing so.** The church is a cooperating member of the Aiken Baptist Association and as such, the Pastor will act as the head representative to this association.

Two revivals outside the church per calendar year shall be allowed the the Pastor. **If the Pastor elects to be in more than two as allowed, he should seek church approval first and secure and pay a supply pastor himself.**

Pastor Vacation: The Pastor will be given two weeks' vacation per year for the first five years of service, which is to be taken during the calendar year. He may take both weeks at one time or split them. After completion of the fifth year as Pastor, he will be receive an additional week of vacation. If more than normal paid vacation is needed, it shall first be approved by the church before being taken. In case of an emergency such as (sickness, death, etc.), and the Pastor has used all of his allotted vacation, the Deacons shall have the power to immediately approve it without church approval. If the Pastor wishes to take unpaid time off, it also must be approved by the Deacons and subsequently approved by the church. Under those circumstances the pastor shall be responsible for securing a suitable replacement to fill the pulpit and shall be responsible for paying the replacement himself.

When the Pastor becomes eligible for the third week, he will be allowed to bank one (1) week each year thereafter not to exceed a total of three bank weeks at any one time. He will be paid for the bank week/weeks as they are taken. In order to keep accurate records, the pastor should notify the Church Treasurer in writing anytime vacation is taken or when vacation is to be banked. This is necessary so that the Treasurer can correctly pay the Pastor and also avoid conflict. If the Pastor should leave the Church for any reason and has banked vacation, he will be paid for the banked week/weeks at that time.

Anytime the Pastor is unable to fill the pulpit, he should secure a suitable replacement. In the case of vacation or sickness, the church will compensate the replacement minister. If the absence is due to

sickness and the sickness should become long term (months or longer) the Deacons should bring a recommendation to the church for approval or disapproval of continued payment.

**Pastor Performance:** The Pastor will be given a performance evaluation by the Deacons each year in August as this is the end of the church year. The evaluation process is to be positive, reviewing his accomplishments and also giving constructive criticism that will help him in his ministry and his relationship with the members of this congregation, individually and collectively. These written evaluations will be kept on file by the Deacons and may be available to the church members on an as needed basis only.

The Pastor thus elected shall serve until the relationship is terminated by his request or by the request of the church. The Pastor or the church shall give at least a two weeks' notice of resignation or termination before his responsibilities cease.

2 Associate Pastor:

The role of Associate Pastor encompasses many of the same functions as Senior Pastor. He should be a co-worker of the Pastor. In the absence of the senior pastor, the associate pastor shall perform the duties normally expected of the senior pastor. In the event that neither can perform their duties, they shall secure a replacement and shall be responsible for compensating the replacement. In the case of sickness, the church will then be responsible for compensating the replacement.

B. Church Staff:

This church shall call or employ such staff members as the church may need. When the need for vocational staff (custodians, etc.) is determined and approval to employ such personnel is granted, the Personnel Committee will be responsible for recommending the applicant(s) to the church for approval. The personnel committee shall be responsible for writing a job description for that position before the person is employed. The job descriptions will be maintained by the personnel committee in a separate document from these by-laws, and kept on file in the church office. When the church calls or employs a Pastor/Associate Pastor, the personnel committee has no responsibility in this matter, as the Pastor Selection Committee has sole responsibility for a recommendation to the

church. In case of resignation, it is requested that a two week notice be given to the church before leaving the position.

1. Church Secretary:

The position of church secretary is considered a part-time position, but depending on the needs of the church could become a full time position. The Secretary will report to the Pastor. In the absence of the Pastor, then the Associate Pastor when available, or to the Chairman of Deacons. This position is a confidential position and must be treated as such. This being a confidential position, the personnel committee should not be involved with the day to day operations. In absence of the pastor, a list of appropriate contacts is to be left with the Secretary for her discretion in calling for advice, if needed. The secretarial position **should not** be filled with a member of Talatha Baptist Church. The church secretary is expected to conduct herself/himself in a Christian Professional Manner. The church secretary's salary is to be reviewed at least annually. **In case of dismissal, the Pastor should discuss this probability with the Chairman of Deacons and together both should agree that dismissal is best for concerned. This is just so that the church is covered in case of any repercussions.**

2. Music Minister/Director:

The position of Music Director is a paid part-time position. The Music Director shall be under the direction of the Pastor and/or personnel committee. The director shall be a devoted Christian, acting under the conviction of the Holy Spirit to guide him/her in their ministry. The director shall also be an active member of Talatha Baptist Church. The director shall conduct himself/herself in a Christian manner. The director shall be responsible for overseeing all musical equipment. Duties should be spelled out in the job description on file in the church office. The director shall be given two weeks of paid vacation after one year of service. Paid sick leave will be approved by the personnel committee and forwarded to the pastor and deacons for approval. Again if sickness should become long term, a determination should be made and a recommendation brought to the church for approval or disapproval as to continued pay. If there is no active director, the personnel committee has the responsibility of submitting a recommendation to the church for an interim or a permanent director.

### 3. **Youth and Children Minister/Director**

The position of Youth and Children Minister/Director is a paid part time paid position. This position shall be under the direction of the pastor and personnel committee. The director shall conduct himself/herself in a manner becoming a Christian, and of highest integrity when dealing with children and youth. He/She is expected to provide bible studies, quality Christian training, and recreation and activities for the children and youth. Two weeks paid vacation will be given upon completion of one year service. The director shall be an active member of Talatha Baptist Church. Other duties should be spelled out in a job description document and kept on file in the church office. Paid sick leave will be handled in the same manner as the music director(Item #2, above).

#### C. Deacons:

**Deacons are "men worthy of respect" who "keep hold of the deep truths of faith" (1 Timothy 3:8-9). The qualifications for the office of deacon include those qualities and abilities set forth in (Acts 6:3 and 1 Timothy 3: 8-12).** Deacons will serve at the pleasure of the church, one for every fifty (50) church members. Deacons shall be elected at a special called business meeting of the church for that particular purpose. The Deacons will meet on a regularly monthly basis the third (3rd) Tuesday of each month unless otherwise deemed necessary by the Chairman. For any special called meetings, the deacons will be notified by the Chairman. Deacons shall be expected to attend all meetings, unless absence is beyond their control, such as (work, sickness, etc.). When a deacon is unable to attend a meeting he should notify the Chairman prior to the scheduled meeting. If a deacon misses more than three consecutive meetings, the remaining deacons will take appropriate action.

Deacons shall serve on a rotation basis. Each year the term of office of one third (1/3) the number of deacons shall expire. An election shall be held to fill those vacancies. A deacon shall be eligible for re-election only after a lapse of one year. In case of resignation, death, removal from the board, or any incapacity to serve, the church **will, as soon as possible elect a deacon to fill the unexpired term.** A person elected to the unexpired term of another deacon can be re-elected to a full term without a one year lapse. There is no obligation to this church to elect as deacon

a person who comes to this church from another Baptist Church where he has served as deacon, but utmost consideration shall be given to that individual. **It is the responsibility of the Pastor and/or Chairman of Deacons to see that these rotation guidelines are followed each year.**

1. Election of Deacons:

Deacons shall be elected in the following manner:

**Each year, the deacons will set a nominating period in which the congregation can prayerfully nominate candidates to the position of deacon. Those wishing to nominate a candidate need to first ask that candidate if they are willing, able, and qualified to serve. The deacons will produce a nomination form to be filled out by those wishing to nominate a candidate. After a set period of time to nominate (no shorter than 4 weeks), the pastor and deacon chairman will contact the nominees to insure they are qualified, and then present the final list of candidates to the congregation. The congregation will select from the ballot however many active deacon positions need to be filled at that time. From this list, each member present and voting at the meeting called for this purpose would vote for no more than the number of men needed.** The men receiving the highest number of votes would be elected. Deacons Candidates must be 21 years of age and must have been a member of Talatha Baptist Church for more than one year. This a CONFIDENTIAL PROCESS, and anything the men may share with the Pastor and Chairman may not be repeated. If this confidentiality is violated, those responsible will be held accountable to the church.

- (1) In accordance with the meaning of work and practice of the New Testament, Deacons are to be servants of the church. The task of deacons is to serve with the Pastor and Staff in performing pastoral ministries. Deacons are to proclaim the Gospel to believers and non-believers, care for church members and other persons in the church to achieve its mission.
- (2) **The Deacons of Talatha Baptist Church also serve as Trustees of the Church as specified by (Article A, Section G) of these by-laws.**
- (3) **If a person is a paid employee and is elected as Deacon, any matter brought before the deacons to which he would be involved or have vested interest in, he would not be eligible to vote on that particular matter and must refrain from voicing his opinion and voting. To do**

**so, would be a conflict of interest.**

D. Moderator:

The Pastor shall serve a moderator **for all business meetings (or Associate pastor in the absence of the pastor). In the absence of both the Chairman of Deacons shall provide or the meeting postponed until a later date.** If there is a personal involvement of the Moderator, he is not preside. The Moderator has six important functions:

- (1) Maintain the fellowship.
- (2) Conduct orderly church business
- (3) Execute church business in a timely manner
- (4) Clarify church business for later action
- (5) Keep on course with the business meeting agenda
- (6) Speak for the church in times of crisis

E. Church Clerk/Assistant Clerk:

The church clerk shall keep a suitable record (preferably on computer), all actions taken by the church in the monthly business meetings or **special called business meeting**, and give legal notice of all meetings where such notice is required as indicated in the by-laws. The clerk will record all motions with exact wording, including the name of person making the motion and seconding the motion. The clerk is responsible for keeping a record of members to include name, address, phone number, dates of admission, how admitted (baptism, letter, statement of **faith, etc.**). **When a person unites with our church by promise of letter from another church, the clerk is responsible for requesting the letter from that church. When a person unites with another church by promise of letter from our church, upon receipt of the request the clerk will seek approval before sending the letter. All records are church property, and as such, is to be preserved and kept in church office. THESE TYPE RECORDS ARE NOT TO BE DESTROYED UNLESS APPROVED BY TALATHA BAPTIST CHURCH.**

F. Church Treasurer/Assistant Church Treasurer:

**There shall be a Treasurer/Assistant Treasurer for Talatha Baptist Church. The Treasurer will be responsible for completion of deposit slips, making deposits, writing checks and paying the bills. Those counting the monies taken from each service, will give the Treasurer a written report of the total tithes and offerings are taken each service. It will be the responsibility of treasurer to verify that she/he has received the same amount. If there is a discrepancy, it should be reconciled immediately between those counting and the Treasurer. Once this has been accomplished and the Treasurer has made the deposit to the bank, she/he shall then submit a report to the outside bookkeeping services.**

G. Trustees:

The Deacons serve this church as Trustees. The trustees shall no power to sell, mortgage, lease or transfer any church property without a specific vote of the church **(in a special church business meeting called for that purpose)**. **Once the church gives its' approval, only then shall the trustees affix their signatures to such legal documents involving the sale, borrowing of money (mortgage of property), lease of transfer of church property.** In the process, if only several signatures are required, the church shall give its' approval for certain people to affix their signatures. **This process must be followed so that the people who sign these documents will not be held responsible, but ultimately the congregation of Talatha Baptist Church is held responsible for restitution.**

ARTICLE 3 CUSTODIAL SERVICES

- A. The custodians is a contracted service. There are two separate custodians, **and two separate contracts (one for the inside of buildings, and one for the outside grounds, etc.)**. If the church should ever desire, these services could be contracted to individuals (non professionals) outside the church. This would take the approval of the church to do so. Custodians will be expected to follow guidelines as prescribed by their contract. Custodians shall be responsible to the Personnel Committee.

ARTICLE 4 COMMITTEES AND COORDINATING GROUPS

**Only members of the church should serve on a committee. Non-members do not have voting rights in the church as stated in Article 1, Section C, of the by-laws.** Each committee shall elect a Chairman of the group. Each committee is expected to submit a budget request to the Stewardship Committee each church year. Upon approval of the budget, each committee will be expected to work within within their allotted budget. **Expected budget overruns should be approved by the church beforehand.**

- A. Nominating Committee:

**The nominating committee coordinates most of the church leadership positions filled by volunteer workers and subsequently elected by the church. The exception to this rule is when the church (in a church business meeting elects a committee for a specific purpose (such as Building Committee, or Planning Committee, etc.) then that committee will serve until completion of that particular project. This is to keep continuity throughout that project, consequently the nominating committee would not have responsibility for selection of these type**

**committees.** At least two or three months prior to the end of the church year, the active nominating committee will recommend four people at large to become the new committee for the coming church year. These four newly elected will nominate the Sunday School Director to be approved by the church. These five (5) will constitute the full nominating committee for the new church year. The Pastor and/or Associate Pastor will be advisory members (only) to this committee.

B. Personnel Committee:

The personnel committee shall consist of five (5) members selected by the nominating committee and elected by the church, and shall assist the church in matters related to employee personnel administration.

The Pastor and/or Associate Pastor will serve as ex-officio members. The duties of this committee shall be as follows:

- \*Survey the need for additional church staff positions.

- \*Prepare and update as necessary, job descriptions for all employed positions, **except the church Secretary**

- \*Prepare and maintain an organizational manual relating to the church's personnel

- \*Recruit, interview and recommend to the church, personnel for new or vacant non-pastoral positions.

- \*Develop and recommend a salary schedule and benefits plan (where applicable) for employed personnel.

- \*Develop and recommend to the church, policies and procedures for employed personnel administration.

- \*Provide opportunities for training and development

- \*Responsible for performance reviews (Pastor and Associate Pastor excluded)

(1) Employment

Before anyone can be employed the personnel committee first must be requested or instructed by the church to start the process. Recommendations are to be brought to the church for final decision and approval. When a person is employed, a personnel folder must be maintained for that person. Beginning immediately, a work history must be built on the employee. The hiring of a church member or family member is prohibited. This requirement does not apply to ministerial staff personnel. **The personnel committee will work closely with the Pastor in employing a church secretary, and is not**

**to be sole authority for employment or termination. The Pastor will interview anyone recommended for the church secretary position. It will be the Pastor's responsibility to maintain a personnel folder on the church secretary.**

(2) Termination of an employee:

When a problem arises with an employee, the employee should first be given an informal contact, and a notation made in the employee's personnel file. Anytime the employee is counseled thereafter, it must be documented as to date counseled, instances of unsatisfactory performance, and who contacted the employee. If the problem is not resolved after the first formal contact, then the full committee must meet with the employee to find a solution. Meetings between the committee and employee are to be non-confrontational, but are to be in manner to help the employee. The employee must be requested to sign the complaint, signifying that he/she has been counseled. If the employee refuses to sign the complaint, all committee members should do so in the presence of the employee, indicating that the employee refused to sign.

**If termination cannot be avoided**, the personnel committee will meet with the Pastor and Deacons and present all evidence and documentation. Afterwards, the Pastor and Deacons will meet and discuss the accusations and satisfy themselves that the evidence and documentation as presented warrants termination. The Deacons will submit final decision to the personnel committee **in writing** for necessary action.

**NOTE: The personnel committee does not have sole authority for employment or termination.**

C. Stewardship Committee

The Stewardship Committee shall be recommended by the nominating committee and elected by the church. The stewardship committee will develop and overall stewardship plan. The committee is responsible for developing the yearly budget once the church has established its annual program of work. In budget development, several areas of work need to be considered as indicated in their duties.

In preparation of a budget the Pastor's yearly performance shall be made available to the Chairman of this committee for information and use if requested.

Duties of the committee shall be as follows:

- \*Analyze giving and potential gifts of church members
- \*Analyze current strengths and weaknesses
- \*Evaluate budget request
- \*Present the budget to the Pastor and Deacons for review
- \*Make sure any questions and concerns between the Deacons and the committee are agreed upon before presentation to the church.**

D. Hostess and Kitchen Committee

The Hostess and Kitchen Committee shall be selected by the nominating committee and elected by the church. This committee shall have six (6) members. They are authorized to equip and maintain kitchen supplies and facilities at a cost not to exceed **their budgeted amount without church approval**. They shall supervise all church wide dining activities and be active in ornamentation and display of all foods for these activities, plus the necessary steps of securing the building and equipment following these activities

E. **Greeters**

**Greeters are men and women who have volunteered to greet people before the Sunday Service begin. Greeters are not selected by the nominating committee and approved by the church.**

F. Church Ushers

The church ushers shall be selected by the nominating committee and elected by the church. The ushers will greet people entering the church at the beginning of the morning worship service and during the service in the event of late arrivals, providing them church bulletins and other materials when available. They will receive the offerings at the proper time in the worship service. The ushers will be attentive to the needs of the congregation and the Pastor. In the event of any interruption of the worship service, trouble or harm, the ushers are to be the first line of defense. The ushers should maintain a security awareness during the service.

G. **Campus Security**

**At the present time, this group consist of only men. These are men who have volunteered to patrol the campus, while the worship service is ongoing. These men are not selected by the nominating committee or approved by the church.**

H. Flower Committee

The flower committee is responsible for providing flowers and/or memorials for bereaved members and their families. Upon notification of a death, the committee shall send flowers or memorials from Talatha Baptist Church to the family as stated below:

\*Death of a member of Talatha Baptist Church

\*Death of a member's spouse even though the spouse may not be a member of Talatha Baptist Church.

**\*Death of a child, father, or mother of a surviving member of Talatha Baptist Church**

\*Death of a former Pastor or Pastor's wife

\*Flowers or memorials may be sent to anyone other than the above

listed instances, if requested by the Deacons

I. Building and Grounds Committee

The building and grounds committee shall be selected by the nominating committee and elected by the church. The B&G Committee shall consist of six (6) members serving a **three year term, in order to have continuity and so that ongoing items will not be dropped from year to year.** They shall inspect all church properties at least very six (6) months or more often as deemed necessary. Inspection results will be shared with the Deacons and recommendations will be made to the Deacons of any repairs that may exceed \$300 dollars. The Deacons should give instructions to the B&G committee for resolutions of major repairs.

J. Cemetery Committee

The Cemetery Committee shall be selected by the nominating committee and elected by the church. The cemetery committee shall consist of three (3) members. **This committee shall serve a three year term for continuity purposes.** The committee in conjunction with the trustees shall develop proposed changes to rules and regulations for the cemetery as needed, and present those proposals to the church for approval. **If anyone needs a burial plot, they should contact one of the committee members. The committee will investigate and assign you a plot.** The committee is responsible for creating and maintaining a cemetery plot diagram. The diagram is to be posted in the church office. History records should be compiled for each person buried in the cemetery. Established rules and regulations are as follows:

- \* Any member of this church, at the time of death may be buried in the church cemetery at no cost. If there is not a burial plot already available, the committee must first be contacted before any grave site is opened.
- \* A steel, concrete, or other approved vault must be used on every burial in Talatha Baptist Church Cemetery. **"NO EXCEPTIONS WILL BE GRANTED TO THIS RULE"**. This is to prevent future cave-in of grave sites, any property damage, or personal injury that may result due to grave site cave-in.
- \* A non-member of Talatha Baptist Church may be buried here who has a (parent, spouse or child) buried in Talatha Church Cemetery providing there is a space within that particular plot. In this instance, a \$400 fee will be required and **must** be paid to Talatha Baptist Church for opening of the grave site. These funds will be placed in the cemetery fund account and will go toward the upkeep of the cemetery.

- \* As of January 1, 1997, any person who is not a member of Talatha Baptist Church and has systematically supported the church and its ministry by their financial gifts of at least \$400 may be provided a burial plot **at no cost**.
- \* No burial plots will be assigned to persons who are not members of Talatha, except in the above instances.
- \* The descendants of those who are buried in Talatha Cemetery, will be encouraged to assume financial responsibility for the upkeep of their individual burial plots.
- \* Flowers, etc., removed from grave sites are NOT to be thrown over fence on to adjoining property, but must be placed in the dumpster provided at the church, or taken with you.

K. Baptism Committee

The Baptism Committee shall consist of at least one (1) man and one woman. They shall be responsible for assisting the candidates with any need in preparing for the baptismal service. They shall see that the pool is ready when needed and shall work with the pastor whenever and wherever needed.

L. Lord's Supper (Communion) Committee

The Lord's Supper committee shall consist of the Deacons. They shall have all necessary equipment and materials in place prior to each observance of the communion service. The committee will help the Pastor develop the plan and schedule for the ordinance to be conducted throughout the year. They shall arrange for the equipment to be gathered, cleaned, and stored after each observance, and shall maintain an inventory of equipment and recommend the purchase of additional equipment as needed.

M. Pastor Selection Committee

A Pastor Selection Committee shall be recommended by the nominating committee when needed and approved by the church. There shall be no less than five (5) members plus two (2) alternates. At least two (2) of the five members shall be women. There shall be one (1) man and one (1) women as alternates. Expenses incurred by the committee (travel, phone calls, food, etc. shall be paid by the church. The first duty of the committee will be to elect a Chairman for the committee, and their second (unless instructed otherwise by the church) is to secure an interim pastor to be voted on by the church. The committee shall bring to the church only one person at a time for consideration, and shall have the power to extend an invitation for a trial sermon. Election will be by secret ballot. An affirmative

vote of ninety percent (90%) of those present and voting will be required to extend a call.

N. Transportation Committee

The transportation committee shall be selected by the nominating committee and elected by the church. This committee shall consist of at least two (2) members. The committee shall be responsible for the upkeep and maintenance of all church vehicles. Any repairs or maintenance items over and above the budget amounts shall be presented to the Deacons before any work is scheduled.

O. Audio-Video Committee (Sound System)

The Audio-Video committee shall be selected by the nominating committee and elected by the church. This committee will work to provide consultation and resources to church leaders in the use of audio-video system. The committee shall be responsible for operating the equipment as needed and keeping the system in good operating condition. Every person approved to operate the system shall be **thoroughly** trained before being allowed to operate the equipment by themselves.

P. Children's/Youth Committee

**The Children's/Youth Committee shall be selected by the nominating committee and elected by the church. The Children's/Youth committee shall consist of three (3) members. This committee shall be responsible for organizing Bible studies and activities for both age groups (children ages 6-11 and Youth ages 12-18). This committee will work with the Youth Minister to provide the highest quality of Christian service to both age groups.**

Q. Decorating Committee

The decorating committee shall be selected by the nominating committee and elected by the church. This committee is responsible for placing flowers in the church from time to time, and for decorating the church for special occasions (Easter, Christmas, etc.).

R. Constitution and By-Laws Committee

This committee shall be selected by the nominating committee and elected by the church. **This committee is responsible for keeping the Constitution and By-Laws current. When changes need to be made, the committee will review these documents and make recommendations/proposals to the church for approval. Upon approval by the church, the committee will revise and make copies for distribution.**

S. Executive Committee

The Executive Committee shall represent Talatha at the quarterly business meetings of the Aiken Baptist Association. The committee shall consist of seven (7) members , **the Pastor automatically becomes one and the remaining six (6) will be nominated and approved by the church at the August church business meeting each year.**

T. Outreach committee

The Outreach Committee shall be selected by the nominating committee and elected by the church. The committee will provide church-wide outreach opportunities and visitation. The committee shall work with the pastor(s) in reaching out to prospects, the sick, shut-in, and non-active members.

U. Long Range Planning Committee

This committee shall be selected by the nominating committee and elected by the church. **This committee will serve a three year term before any changes to its membership is made.** The committee should be a cross section of the membership and should provide a vision for church growth and needs, **such as space, changes to buildings and structures, plans or growth, most efficient use of buildings, etc. They should meet at least twice per year to generate a plan for presentation at least once per year.**

Article 5

PROGRAM ORGANIZATIONS

A. General:

All organizations of the church shall be under church control, and all officers being elected by the church and reporting to the church.

B. Sunday School

There shall be a Sunday School, divided into departments and classes for all ages and conducted under the direction of a Sunday School Director, for the study of God's Word. The task of the Sunday School shall be to teach the Bible, reach persons for Christ and church membership, perform the functions of the church within its constituency, provide and interpret information regarding the work of the church and denomination.

C. Women's Missionary Union (WMU)

The Women's Missionary Union shall have such organizations as needed and officers as needed. This program shall be directed by a director elected by the

church. The tasks of the WMU shall be to teach missions, engage in mission action, support world missions through prayer and giving, provide and interpret information regarding the work of the church and the denomination.

D. Brotherhood

The Brotherhood shall have such organizations as needed. This program shall be under the direction of a director, elected by the church. The task are to teach missions, engage in mission action, support world missions through prayer and giving, provide and interpret information regarding the work of the church and the denomination.

E. Church Music Program

There shall be a church music program under the direction of a Music Director. The music director and pastor shall work together in obtaining expected results. The programs include functions such as revivals, VBS, cantatas, children's specials, etc. The director shall plan and oversee any choir practices or appoint a temporary alternate to assist. Choirs will be that of adults, youth, and children. The duties of the music director is described under the church staff section of these by-laws, and job description on file.

Article 6: USE OF CHURCH PROPERTY

**Use of church property is limited to church members and their families only. A non-member or anyone who does not have a family member who is a member of Talatha, will not be allowed the use of these facilities. This includes home owner associations, political meetings, weddings, and family reunions.**

**Use of Sanctuary or dining facilities will only be allowed for church membership (weddings, reunions, etc.). A \$200 deposit to reserve the date on the church calendar will be required. The deposit will be refunded in full within two weeks following the event, providing the facilities are left in satisfactory condition. NOTE: Funerals are exempt from the \$200 deposit.**

**Any member who wishes to use portable equipment, (tables, chairs, kitchen equipment, etc.), must first contact the Hostess Committee Chairman before removing anything from the building. (This is because there have been instances where things have been missing or removed from the building and not returned. This is to make sure items can be accounted for.**

**Concerning weddings, use of church facilities for a wedding is the same as**

**above. There is a separate written wedding policy where information can be obtained on how to apply as well as other information. (See Pastor) Consistent with our beliefs as recorded in "God's Holy Word", this church will conduct only wedding ceremonies for one man and one woman as Biologically Designed by natural birth. If this congregation is ever legally forced to perform same sex weddings, all clergy in the congregation will opt out of performing civil ceremonies, and will only perform biblically "covenant ceremonies" that bless the union between one man and one woman as biologically designed by their natural birth.**

Article 7: CHURCH ORDINANCES

A. 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 as a candidate for baptism.

1. Baptism shall be by immersion in water.
2. Baptism may be administered by the Pastor, Associate Pastor, interim pastor, **or ordained deacon.**
3. Baptism shall be administered as an act of worship during a worship service.
4. A person professing Christ and failing to be baptized after a reasonable length of time shall be counseled by the Pastor and/or Deacons.

B. Lord's Supper:

The Lord's Supper is a symbolic act of obedience whereby members of the church receive the bread and the fruit of the vine to commemorate the death of Jesus Christ and anticipate his second coming.

1. The Lord's Supper shall be observed preferably once every quarter or as otherwise scheduled. **This church observes it every 5th Sunday.**
2. The Pastor and Deacons shall be responsible for the administration of the Lord's Supper.
3. The Deacons shall be responsible for the physical preparation of the Lord's Supper.

Article 8: CHURCH MEETINGS

A. Worship Service:

The church shall meet regularly every Sunday morning, Sunday evening, and

Wednesday evening for preaching, instruction, and evangelism for the Almighty God. These meetings will be open for all people and shall be conducted under the direction of the Pastor, Associate Pastor, or Interim Pastor.

B. Special Services:

Revivals and any other church meetings shall be held as appropriate to carry out the objectives of the church and not necessarily at any preselected time.

C. Business Meetings:

(1) Regular church business meetings shall be held on the third Wednesday night of each month.

(2) A special meeting may be held to consider specific matters of significant and specific nature. A one (1) week notice must be given of the date, time, subject, and location of the meeting. Notification will be by verbal announcement and through the church bulletin, unless extreme emergency renders such notice impractical.

D. Quorum:

A quorum will consist of those attending the regular business meeting or a special called meeting provided the meeting has been properly called.

E. Parliamentary Rules:

Robert's Rules of Order (revised) shall be used as a basis for parliamentary procedure for all church business meetings.

Article 9: CHURCH FINANCES

A. Budget

By November 1st of each year, all departments leaders and organization chairmen shall submit to the Stewardship Committee Chairman their request in writing, the amount needed and sought for the coming financial church year. The Stewardship committee will then prepare a budget in consultation with the church treasurer and submit to the Deacons. If the Deacons have issues and concerns about the proposed budget, then those items in question will be agreed upon between the stewardship committee and the deacons, before submission for church approval. It is understood that membership in this church involves financial obligations to support the church and its causes by regular tithes and offerings. (Also see Article 4, Item C, Stewardship Committee).

B. Accounting Procedures:

**Once the weekly intake of monies has been deposited in the bank, and this information has been submitted to the outside bookkeeping service,**

**all accounting procedures are then handled by this outside contractor. The contractor should complete the accounting , and make a monthly report to the church for handout at the monthly business of the church.**

C. **Fiscal Year:**

The fiscal year of Talatha Baptist Church will begin January 1st and end December 31st.

D. Expenditures:

**No person, groups, department leaders, or committees shall spend more than their allotted budget amount during the church year, without the approval of the church.**

Article 10: LICENSING AND ORDINATION

A. Licensing:

When someone declares his call to the ministry, after a suitable period of personal examination, the Pastor and Deacons shall serve as a presbyter in questioning the person. The Deacons shall take their recommendations for a ministerial licensing to the congregation for approval. The license may be revoked at anytime if the licensee shall prove himself unfit for the ministry. A license may be discontinued if the person does not show continual interest in being a minister.

B. Ordination - Gospel Ministry

Request to ordain a man will be honored only if he has been called to a definite place of service. When such a request is made, the church or pastor shall call a council or presbyter to examine the qualifications of the candidate. If the candidate is approved, the council or presbyter shall in turn recommend to the church that he be ordained at a public meeting called for such purpose.

C. Ordination - Deacons

The responsibility for the ordination lies within the local church. Should the church feel that an individual meets the scriptural and practical qualifications of deacon, and hence elects him to serve the church in such a position, then it becomes the responsibility of the church to ordain the individual to deaconship at a public meeting called specifically for this purpose or a regular church service.

Article 11:

AMENDMENTS

The Constitution and By-Laws may be amended by two-thirds vote of those present and voting at any regular or special called business meeting of the church, provided that the proposed amendment shall have been submitted in writing to the church and specifically announced at least two (2) weeks before action is to be taken.

**NOTE:**

**THIS DOCUMENT IS A GUIDE FOR THE CHURCH AS TO HOW THE CHURCH WILL CONDUCT THE BUSINESS OF THE CHURCH. ANY CHANGES TO THIS DOCUMENT MUST BE DONE SO IN A CHURCH MONTHLY BUSINESS MEETING OR IN A FULL CHURCH CONFERENCE CALLED FOR THAT PURPOSE. WHEN CHANGES ARE MADE AND APPROVED BY THE CHURCH, THE CHAIRMAN OF THE CHURCH CONSTITUTION AND BY-LAWS COMMITTEE MUST BE NOTIFIED (IN WRITING) AS TO HOW THE CHANGES SHOULD READ, SO THAT THIS DOCUMENT CAN BE KEPT UP-TO-DATE.**