

***CONSTITUTION
& BY-LAWS***

OF

***BACON'S CASTLE
BAPTIST CHURCH***

(Proposed Changes to be voted on
Sunday night, October 3rd, 2004)

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Article I, Name of the Church	1	
Article II, Purpose	1	
Article III, Affiliation	1	
Article IV, Government	1	
Article V, Statement of Faith	1-3	
Article VI, Church Covenant	4	
Article VII, Membership	5-6	
Section I, General	5	
Section II, Qualifications for Membership	5	
Section III, Reception of Members	5	
Section IV, Non_Resident/Inactive Members	5	
Section V, Responsibilities	6	
Section VI, Privileges	6	
Section VII, Termination of Membership	6	
Article VIII, Church Elders	7-12	
Section I, General	7	
Section II, Qualifications		7
Section III, Senior Pastor as Elder	7	
A. Responsibilities		7
B. Qualifications		7
C. Calling	8	
D. Pastoral Support	8	
E. Termination	8	
Section IV, Associate Pastors as Elders	9	
Section V, Number and Term of Service for Elders	9	
Section VI, Recognition of Elders	9	
A. Recommendation for Consideration	9	
B. Elder Candidate Status	10	
C. Congregational Feedback Solicitation	10	
D. Elder_In_Training (EIT) Status	10	
E. Confirmation Requirement	10	
F. Confirmation Method	10	
Section VII, Responsibilities of Elders	10	
Section VIII, Relationship Between Elders & Congregation	11	

Article IX, Assistant Pastoral and Support Staff	12-13
Section I, Calling Other Pastoral, Ministerial & Support Staff	12
A. Assistant Pastoral Staff	12
B. Support Staff	12
C. Offer of Contract	12
D. Probationary Period	12
E. Termination of Staff	13
Section II, Staff Policy Manual	13
Article X, Ministry Leaders and Ministry Positions	13-14
Section I, General	13
Section II, Ministry and Ministry Leadership Authority	13
Section III, Qualifications	13
Section IV, Responsibilities	14
Section V, Recognition	14
Article XI, Ministry Teams	14
Section I, General	14
Section II, Ministry Teams/Positions	14
Article XII, Church Services and Conferences	14-15
Section I, Regular Worship Services	14
Section II, Regular Church Family Conferences	14
Section III, Special Called Conferences	14
Article XIII, Conduct of Business	15-16
Section I, Quorum	15
Section II, Voting	15
Section III, Absentee Voting	15
Section IV, Voice of the Church	15
Section V, Moderator	15
Section VI, Rules of Order	15
Section VII, Ministry and Budget Year	16
Section VIII, Policies and Procedures	16
Article XIV, Amendments	16
Section I, Ratification	16
Section II, Amendment Procedure	16
Section III, Flexibility	16

CONSTITUTION AND BY-LAWS
OF
BACON'S CASTLE BAPTIST CHURCH
Proposed Revision of the Constitution Adopted on January 28th, 2001

PREAMBLE

We declare and establish this Constitution for the preservation of our faith and for the orderly government of this church family.

ARTICLE I: THE NAME OF THE CHURCH

The church shall be called ***BACON'S CASTLE BAPTIST CHURCH***.

ARTICLE II: PURPOSE

Our purpose is to *Lead* people to Jesus, *Involve* them in the Body of Christ and meaningful worship, *Guide* them to maturity in Christ, *Help* them discover and develop their ministries and *Train* them to be on mission for God!

We are the L.I.G.H.T. of the world!

ARTICLE III: AFFILIATION

This church shall be a cooperating member of the Southern Baptist Conservatives of Virginia and the Southern Baptist Convention.

ARTICLE IV: GOVERNMENT

The government of this church is vested in both the Elders who lead her and in the body of believers (members) who compose it. This is an autonomous Baptist church operating under the Lordship of Jesus Christ and led by her Elders. It is subject to the control of no other ecclesiastical body, but it recognizes and sustains the importance of mutual counsel and cooperation which are common among evangelical churches. The governing documents of the church are its Constitution and By-laws, which include our Statement of Faith and Church Membership Covenant, our Church Policy Manual and our Staff Policy Manual.

ARTICLE V: STATEMENT OF FAITH

We as a church accept those large areas of doctrinal teaching on which, historically, there has been general agreement among all true Christians. We also desire to allow for freedom of conviction and freedom of interpretation on other doctrinal matters, provided that any interpretation is based upon the Bible alone, and that no such interpretation shall become an issue which hinders the ministry that God has called us to as a church. We believe that we should have unity in the essentials, grace in the non-essentials and love in all things.

We explicitly affirm our belief in the following basic Biblical teachings:

A. The Holy Scriptures:

We believe the Scriptures, both Old and New Testaments, to be the verbally (meaning the very words) inspired Word of God, written by men in God's control, inerrant (meaning without error) and infallible (meaning perfect) in the original manuscripts, and the final authority in faith and life and all matters on which it speaks. (2 Timothy 3:15-17; 2 Peter 1:20; Psalm 19:7-9)

B. The Trinity:

We believe in one God, eternally existing in three persons, Father, Son and Holy Spirit; these three being identical in essence, equal in power and glory, and possessing precisely the same attributes and perfections and executing distinct but harmonious offices in the great work of redemption. (Deut.6:4; Matt.28:19; 2 Cor. 13:14; 1 Cor.8:6; Eph.4:6; 1 Timothy 1:17; John 14:16-17,26)

C. The Person and Work of the Father:

We believe that God as Father reigns with providential care over His universe, His creatures, and the flow of human history according to the purposes of His grace. He is all powerful, all loving and all wise. God is Father in truth to those who become Children of God by adoption through faith in Jesus Christ. He is fatherly in His attitude toward all men. (Rom.8:14-15; Gal.4:6; Jn. 1:12; Mk.1:9-11; Jn.8:42-44)

D. The Person and Work of the Son:

We believe that the Lord Jesus Christ, the eternal Son of God, became man without ceasing to be God, having been conceived of the Holy Spirit and born of a virgin, in order that He might reveal God and redeem sinful man. This redemption He accomplished by voluntarily giving Himself and shedding His blood as a sinless substitutionary sacrifice on the cross and thereby satisfying God's righteous judgments against sin. After substantiating the accomplishment of that redemption by His bodily resurrection from the grave, He ascended to the right hand of His Father where He intercedes on behalf of those who trust Him. (John. 1:1,2,14,18; Lk.1:34-35; Acts 1:9-11; Rom.3:24-26, 8:34; 2 Cor.5:21; Heb.7:25)

E. The Person and Work of the Holy Spirit:

We believe that the Holy Spirit is the Divine Person who convicts the world of sin, God's righteousness and the coming judgement; that He alone brings new life to those who are spiritually dead, that He baptizes (or places) all believers into the one true Church, which is the Body of Christ; that He indwells them, seals them and bestows spiritual gifts upon them and fills (or controls) those who are yielded to Him. (John 16:7-11, 3:5-8, 14:16-17; 1 Cor.12:7-12; Eph.4:30, 5:18)

F. Spiritual Gifts and Tongues:

We believe that spiritual gifts are given by God the Holy Spirit for the building up the body of Christ. (Eph.4:16ff, 1 Cor.12:7) We do not believe that the gift of tongues, or any other particular gift, is evidence of spiritual maturity or godliness. (1 Cor.3:1-3, 12:11) Instead we believe that the marks of maturity and godliness are the fruit of the Spirit exercised with godliness. (Gal.5:16-26) We furthermore reject the idea that tongues, or any other gift, will be given to all or even that we should expect everyone to have any particular gift. (1 Cor.12:11-12, 27-30) Instead we believe that God gifts

people according to how He wills and how He sees a need in the body. (1 Cor.12:11) Finally, we do not believe that tongues, or any other gift, is "the" evidence of the baptism of the Holy Spirit or of the filling of the Holy Spirit.

G. The Condition of Man:

We believe that man was created in the image and likeness of God in innocence and without sin, but that in Adam's sin the whole human race fell away from God, inherited a sinful nature, and became spiritually dead and alienated from God. No man is inherently capable of remedying his lost and depraved condition. (Gen.1:26, 3:1-24; Rom.3:10-18, 5:12; Eph. 2:1-3)

H. Salvation:

We believe that salvation is wholly a work of God's free grace. It cannot be gained by human works of goodness or religious ceremony, but is freely bestowed upon all who put their faith in Jesus Christ and His finished work at Calvary. All who trust the Savior are forgiven of their sins and born into the family of God by the regenerating work of the Holy Spirit. All who have been saved are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for God's own possession who have no need for any other mediator between them and God other than Christ Jesus. It is the privilege of all who are born again of the Spirit to be assured of their salvation from the very moment in which they trust Christ as their Savior. This assurance is not based upon any kind of human merit but is produced by the witness of the Holy Spirit, who confirms in the believer the testimony of God in His written Word. (Eph.2:8-9, 1:7; Jn.1:2; 1 Pet.2:9; 1 Tim.2:5, 1 Jn.5:13; Rom.8:16)

I. The Church:

We believe Jesus Christ is the Head of the Church, His Body, which is composed of all people, living and dead, who have been joined to Him through saving faith. The Scripture also teaches the establishment and continuation of the local church, groups of redeemed individuals joined together for worship, instruction, mutual encouragement and service. (Eph.1:22-23; Col. 1:18; Cor.12:13; Acts 2:42, 13:1-2)

J. The Second Coming of Christ:

We believe in the personal, visible and bodily return of the Lord Jesus Christ for His Church and the subsequent establishment of His righteous rule as King of Kings and Lord of Lords. The first time Jesus came He did so humbly and as a lowly servant in order that He might provide for us salvation, but at his second coming He will be clothed in righteousness, victory and glory as He comes to establish His Sovereign rule as King of kings and Lord of lords. (1 Thess.4:13-18, Rev.19:11-16, 20:1-6)

K. Ordinances:

We believe the Christian Ordinances this church should observe are Baptism and the Lord's Supper.

Since baptism is the outward testimony of an inward spiritual transformation, in obedience to our Lord's command, it shall be administered to those who have made a profession of faith in Jesus Christ. (Matthew 28:18-20) We believe that baptism by immersion best represents the meaning of baptism therefore all members shall be baptized by immersion except if physically unable.

The Lord's Supper shall be administered as a commemoration of Jesus' death, the elements being used symbolically of His body and blood. (Luke 22:19-20) The Lord's Supper shall be observed at least once every quarter. It shall be open to all self-examined believers regardless of church affiliation.

ARTICLE VI: CHURCH COVENANT

Those who desire membership in the Bacon's Castle church family must be willing to affirm and abide by our church covenant. We understand that accountability for most of this covenant will be between the individual member and the Lord. The covenant reads as such;

THE BACON'S CASTLE MEMBERSHIP COVENANT

Having received Christ as my Lord and Savior and been baptized, and being in agreement with Bacon's Castle's statements, strategy, and structure, I now feel led by the Holy Spirit to unite with the Bacon's Castle church family.

In doing so, I commit myself to God and to the other members to do the following:

LEADING PEOPLE TO JESUS...

I will broaden the witness of my church

...by praying for its growth. (1 Thessalonians 1:1-2)

...by seeking to share my faith. (Matthew 28:18-20)

...by inviting the unchurched to attend and warmly welcoming those who do visit.

(Luke 14:23, Romans 15:7)

INVOLVE THEM IN THE BODY OF CHRIST

I will build the community of my church

...by opening my heart to others members. (1 Peter 1:22)

...by reaching out to the those who are hurting and needy in our church family. (Acts 4:34-35)

...by refusing to gossip. (Ephesians 4:29)

... AND MEANINGFUL WORSHIP;

I will enhance the worship of my church

...by being faithful in my attendance. (Hebrews 10:24)

...by participating with my mind, heart and will. (Matthew 22:37-38)

...by sharing with others what God is doing in me! (1 Thess. 5:11)

GUIDING PEOPLE TO SPIRITUAL MATURITY;

I will deepen the spiritual maturity of my church

...by disciplining myself to grow spiritually. (1 Timothy 4:7)

...by submitting myself to the authority of Scripture. (Psalm 119:11, Joshua 1:8-9)

...by obeying the Lord as He speaks to my heart. (Romans 6:12-14)

HELPING PEOPLE DISCOVER AND DEVELOP THEIR MINISTRIES;

I will participate in the ministry of the church

...by discovering my gifts and talents. (1 Peter 4:10)

...by being equipped to serve by my leaders. (Ephesians 4:11-13)

...by developing a servant's heart. (Philippians 2:2-8)

TRAINING PEOPLE TO BE ON MISSION FOR GOD!

I will support the mission of my church

...by encouraging and following the leaders as they follow Christ. (Hebrews 13:17)

...by giving regularly. (Leviticus 27:30, 1 Corinthians 16:2)

seeking to be on mission myself! (Mark 8:34-38)

ARTICLE VII: MEMBERSHIP

SECTION I -- GENERAL:

The membership of Bacon's Castle Baptist Church is composed of a group of local believers in the Lord Jesus Christ who have covenanted together as stated above.

SECTION II -- QUALIFICATIONS FOR MEMBERSHIP:

Any person professing faith in the Lord Jesus Christ and giving evidence of a change of heart, and adopting the views of faith and practices held by this church as set forth in its covenant, statement of faith, and by-laws, and who upon presentation by the Elders may be received into its membership.

SECTION III -- RECEPTION OF MEMBERS:

- A. Any person seeking membership in our fellowship must first participate in membership class designed to explain to them the purposes and direction of our church, our doctrinal beliefs and our covenant for membership.
- B. If a person still desires membership in our fellowship after having participated in our new member's class, and gives satisfactory testimony to one or more of the Elders of his/her personal faith in Jesus Christ as Savior, acknowledges his/her agreement with the Statement of Faith, and expresses his/her intention to abide by the Covenant and the Constitution and By-Laws of the church as best they understand, they shall be presented to the church by the Elders as new members.
- C. When a person whose membership is in another church unites with our church, our church clerk will notify that fellowship to inquire of the person's former membership standing and so the member's name may be removed from the previous membership roll.

SECTION IV -- NON-RESIDENT/INACTIVE MEMBERS:

1. When a member moves to a community beyond the ministry of this church and establishes a non-resident address, the member and his family should be encouraged by the Pastor and Elders to unite with a church in their community. Persons not uniting with another church, nor keeping the church advised of their desires to remain an active member, shall be placed on a Non-Resident/Inactive Membership Roll by the Elders. Such members shall not be counted in the reporting of the church membership totals. If individuals return to the community and once again demonstrate active involvement in the life of the church, they shall be reinstated to the active membership roll by the Elders.
2. If a member absents himself from the church for an extended length of time, and attempts to encourage their involvement are unsuccessful, this member shall be placed on a Non-Resident/Inactive Membership roll and shall not be counted in the reporting of the church membership totals. When individuals demonstrate active involvement once again they shall be reinstated to the active membership roll by the Elders.
3. It shall be the job of the Elders, with the help of the church secretary, to keep the active and non-resident/inactive rolls up to date and they shall do this at least yearly.
4. Individuals placed on the non-resident/inactive roll shall not be eligible to vote or hold positions of leadership in the church.

SECTION V -- RESPONSIBILITIES:

Realizing that most accountability for this statement lies between the individual and the Lord Himself, it shall be the responsibility of all members, empowered by the Holy Spirit, to seek to live Christ-centered lives, obedient to the Word of God and to the specifics mentioned in the church's governing documents and specifically the church covenant.

SECTION VI -- PRIVILEGES:

All active members, age fifteen years or older, without respect to length of membership, shall have equal rights as to voice and vote on all matters of business. All active members, without respect to age, shall be eligible for church leadership positions and shall be chosen on the basis of spiritual and Biblical fitness, ability and willingness to serve.

SECTION VII -- TERMINATION OF MEMBERSHIP:

A. Termination of membership will automatically occur if any of the following happens:

1. Death. The names of deceased members shall be removed from the roll.
2. Transfer. Members shall be removed from our church rolls if we are notified that they have joined with another church family.
3. Request. If members request that their names be removed from our membership roles, their requests shall be granted.
4. Lost address. If the current address of a church member becomes unknown, the Pastor and Elders shall make a diligent search for a new address. If contact has been lost for at least six months, and the search has been unsuccessful, this member shall be removed from the church membership rolls.
5. Discipline. The church shall emphasize to its members that every Biblical and reasonable measure will be taken to assist any troubled member. In keeping with Matthew 18:15-17, when another brother or sister sins, the individual who becomes aware of this should go to that person personally. Others should become involved only if repentance and restoration are not forthcoming. The Pastor and Elders and other members are available for counsel and guidance. Redemption and restoration and not punishment should be the guideline which governs the attitude of one member toward another in a spirit of kindness and forbearance.

Should some serious and public condition of sin exist in the life of one of the members, every Biblical and reasonable measure will be taken by the Pastor and Elders and other members of the fellowship to confront the sin, including the steps outlined in Matthew 18:15-17. But, if there is no evidence of repentance or change in heart, for the sake of the brother or sister in sin (1 Corinthians 5:5) and for the sake of the welfare of the whole church (1 Corinthians 5:6-8), this person should be placed on church discipline and excluded from the membership of the church.(1 Corinthians 5:2)

Upon evidence of repentance and reformation, any person whose membership has been rescinded may request to be restored to membership by a recommendation of the Elders and majority vote of the church.

- B. The church shall be informed annually of those whose membership have moved their membership or have been terminated for one reason or another.

ARTICLE VIII: CHURCH ELDERS

SECTION I -- GENERAL:

The church, guided by 1 Timothy 3:1-7, 1 Timothy 5:17-22, and Titus 1:5-9, shall elect church Elders to pastor the church as a leadership team. Through out the New Testament the terms Elders, Pastors and Overseers are often used interchangeably of the same office and are viewed as synonymous but in this document we shall refer to the office as that of Elder. The Board of Elders will consist of the Senior Pastor and other men duly recognized as such through the processes mentioned here in our Constitution. The term Pastor will refer to Elders the church supports in full-time capacity but the Board of Elders will consist of a mixture of men who are fully supported financially by the church and other who are not.

SECTION II -- QUALIFICATIONS:

The qualifications for an Elder are listed in 1 Timothy 3 and Titus 1. A church Elder shall be: "...above reproach, the husband of one wife, temperate, prudent, respectable, hospitable, able to teach, not addicted to much wine or pugnacious, but gentle, uncontentious, free from the love of money, good manager of his household, not a new convert, having a good reputation outside the church, having children who believe, not self-willed, not quick-tempered, loving what is good, sensible, just, devout, self-controlled..."

Elders serving at the church should meet the above qualifications. He must be a spiritual man, demonstrating a Spirit-filled life and a consistent walk with Jesus. He should also be a man who has a strong prayer life, a commitment to the authority of Scripture and a witnessing lifestyle. He must be in full agreement with the church's Statement of Faith.

SECTION III -- THE SENIOR PASTOR AS AN ELDER:

The church will call a Senior Pastor to serve as the senior Elder or chairman of the Elders. Though he shall serve as their chairman, the Pastor should be looked at as an equal with the other men the church recognizes as her Elders. He is to lead the Elders in giving spiritual oversight and care to the church body through its various ministries and organizations (Acts 20:17, 28; 1 Peter 5:1-3).

A. His Responsibilities

The Senior Pastor shall serve as the senior Elder or chairman of the Elders. Though he shall serve as their chairman, the Pastor should be looked at as an equal with the other men the church recognizes as her Elders. He is to lead the Elders in giving spiritual oversight and care to the church body through its various ministries and organizations (Acts 20:17, 28; 1 Peter 5:1-3).

As the senior Elder or Pastor, he will serve as the primary teaching Elder of the church. He will preach and teach the Word of God with the goal of "Equipping the saints for the work of the ministry, unto building up of the body of Christ" (Ephesians 4:11-12).

He will also seek to lead the church to fulfill its evangelistic and edifying mandates (2 Timothy 4:5 & Eph.4:11-16). He may preside at meetings of this church in keeping with the rules of order authorized in these by-laws.

B. His Qualifications:

His qualifications as an Elder are listed in 1 Timothy 3 and Titus 1. A church Elder shall be: "...above reproach, the husband of one wife, temperate, prudent, respectable, hospitable, able to teach, not addicted to much wine or pugnacious, but gentle, uncontentious, free from the love of money, good manager of his

household, not a new convert, having a good reputation outside the church, having children who believe, not self-willed, not quick-tempered, loving what is good, sensible, just, devout, self-controlled..."

The Senior Pastor should meet the above qualifications. He must be a spiritual man, demonstrating a Spirit-filled life and a consistent walk with Jesus. He should also be a man who has a strong prayer life, a commitment to the authority of Scripture and a witnessing lifestyle. He must be in full agreement with the church's Statement of Faith.

C. The Calling of a Senior Pastor: When the office of Senior Pastor has been vacated the Elders shall establish a 'Search Team'. This team will consist of the Elders, two members of the Personnel Team and the Team Captain from each of the seven key ministry leadership teams: Administration, Support, Worship, Community, Discipleship, Evangelism, Ministry and Leadership Development. The Search Team shall select one member to lead the team as Team Captain. The Elders shall name an alternate for each team member mentioned above that can't participate. During the time the Search Team is in place, it will make monthly progress reports to the church. The purpose of the "Search Team" shall be to recommend to the church the person they believe God is calling to serve as our Senior Pastor and they shall follow the procedure laid out in the Staff Policy Manual.

When the Search Team is convinced they have found the man God wants to bring to BCBC as our next Senior Pastor, they will invite the perspective candidate to come and spend at least a week-end with the church family where the candidate will teach and preach and have a series of meetings with different groups in our church for the purpose of them getting to know him.

The following week, at the morning worship service, the church will vote on whether or not to issue a call to the perspective Senior Pastor. The vote shall be by ballot and at least an affirmative vote of eighty percent (80%) of those active members present and voting will be necessary to call the man as Senior Pastor.

After a candidate has been called by the church, the Elders along with the Search Team will extend a call to the man which will list all job duties, responsibilities, salaries and benefits. If the man agrees that it is God's will and accepts the call, a time will be set for him to begin his official duties as Senior Pastor.

D. Pastoral Support:

The church will be responsible to adequately provide for the Pastor or any other person whom they call into full or part time work. The Pastor and the church leaders will negotiate a support package that sufficiently meets his family's needs.

E. Termination:

A Senior Pastor shall be called by the church to serve until the relationship is dissolved, either upon his request or the request of the church. In either case, at least thirty days notice of the termination of the relationship shall be given, unless otherwise arranged by mutual agreement.

If the rest of the Elders come to the church with a unanimous consensus that a Senior Pastor should be dismissed, they must first notify him of their intentions in writing in time for him to make the announcement public at least two (2) weeks in advance of the conference. The church may declare the office of Pastor to be

vacant upon a two thirds majority vote (66%) of the church by secret ballot of those active members present at a family meeting.

If any person or committee of persons has the intention of requesting the Pastor's resignation (or a vote of confidence for the Pastor) at a regular church conference, and they do not have the support of the Elders, they may not do so until they have first notified him of their intentions in writing in time for him to make the announcement public at least two (2) weeks in advance of the conference. The church may declare the office of Pastor to be vacant upon a three quarters majority vote (75%) of the church by secret ballot of those active members present at a family meeting.

SECTION IV – ASSOCIATE PASTORS AS ELDERS:

When men have served as Assistant Pastoral Staff and God calls them to serve as Elders in our church family, and that calling is confirmed by eighty percent (80%) the body of Christ and evidenced in their ministry, the church will recognize these men as Associate Pastors and they will be viewed as fully supported full-time Elders. The same guidelines that apply to the termination of Senior Pastors will now apply to men who serve the Bacon's Castle Family as Associate Pastors.

SECTION V -- NUMBER AND TERM OF SERVICE` FOR THE ELDERS:

The number of Elders shall consist of the Pastor and as many men as God calls to serve.

The Elders shall serve an indefinite term. Any Elder may be disciplined according to biblical principles, although no accusation against an Elder is to be taken seriously unless there are two or three witnesses (1 Timothy 5:19). When a confronted Elder "continues to sin," he is to be rebuked by the other Elders before the whole assembly, that others may fear (1 Timothy 5:20). An Elder will be subject to scrutiny not only in the areas which might call for general church discipline, but also as to his continued meeting of the qualifications for Eldership listed above.

When an Elder ceases to meet those qualifications, he shall be asked by the Elders to step aside for a time so that he may get his life in order in that area. Such a request from the other Elders shall be made only when they are in unanimous agreement.

An Elder may also desire to be relieved from office either temporarily or permanently, if he feels unable to serve for any reason. Such an Elder should submit his resignation to the Elder Board, and the church shall be notified of Elders that have stepped aside. The process of his possible reinstatement at a later time will be determined by the Elders in relation to the attendant circumstances.

SECTION VI -- RECOGNITION OF ELDERS:

Since it is really God who makes men Elders by maturing them and burdening them with such a ministry, then it is the responsibility of the church to recognize the men whom the Holy Spirit is appointing for pastoral functioning (Acts 20:28, Eph.4:11). The process of recognition will be as follows.

1. Recommendation for Consideration: Any member of Bacon's Castle Baptist Church may present one of the male members of the congregation for consideration as an Elder by completing and signing a nomination form. The nomination form includes an explanation of why this man should be considered as an Elder and how he fulfills the Scriptural qualifications for Elder. The form should be submitted to the existing Board of Elders of the church. Each person so presented will be considered seriously.

2. Elder Candidate Status: The Board of Elders, will prayerfully decide whether the man suggested should be regarded as a true candidate for the office of Elder. If they believe that to be so, the Board will contact the man himself in order to determine his assessment of God's will for him in this matter (1 Timothy 3:1;; 1 Peter 5:2)

3. Congregational Feedback Solicitation: If the man desires the office under the Lord's direction, the Board will then place his name before the congregation to solicit feedback about the man in question. The whole fellowship will be given at least two weeks to express themselves regarding the candidate, remembering to follow the steps in Matthew 18 if there is the prospect of a bad report. They may acquaint the Board of their reactions by personally talking to one of the Elders but they need to also put their concerns in writing to the Board. Any objections concerning the candidate which might surface during this process will be worked through in a constructive manner with the man involved and those expressing concern, so that any deficiencies or misunderstandings may be corrected in a Biblical fashion.

4. Elder in Training (EIT) Status: After addressing the concerns that members of the congregation bring forward, and if nothing presents itself that immediately disqualifies the brother from serving and his heart is still inclined to serve as an Elder, the Elders can invite him to join the team as an Elder in training (EIT). This period of serving as an EIT will allow reasonable time to get to know the candidate and provide a time of testing. It will also provide for: (a) continued prayer and fasting in order to discover God's will (Acts 14:23); (b) a period to familiarize the man with the functions of an Elder and; (c) a sufficient opportunity for the existing leaders to develop their relationship with the person and to evaluate his spiritual depth, character and vision for the church as one who might share in the ministry of leading and equipping saints (1 Timothy 5:22). Any areas of life in which the man is found lacking will call for a discipler/disciple relationship between one of the existing Elders and the EIT, so that these deficiencies may be dealt with directly. Men will serve as 'Elders in training' for at least a year before being recognized as Elders..

5. Confirmation by Congregation: When the Board of Elders is assured of God's direction and is also confident that any former objections have been dealt with properly, they may present the candidate to the congregation for confirmation as an Elder. Confirmation will require an 80% approval rate by the church. Votes in this confirmation process will not be counted unless they also include the specific Biblical reason for the affirmation or the negation. If a brother is not confirmed but still desires to serve as an Elder, the Elders will evaluate the reasons why and work with the man for another year in a training manner.

6. Elder Confirmation Before the Body: The new Elder will be confirmed by the laying on of the hands of the Board in the presence of the congregation. Men who have been ordained as Elders in other assemblies will not be automatically recognized as Elders at Bacon's Castle Baptist Church; such men will be subject to the same process of recognition as any other man in the assembly.

SECTION VII -- RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE ELDERS:

The church Elders shall oversee the entire ministry of the local church. Specifically they shall be responsible for the following. Their leadership should be looked on as divinely ordained and with great seriousness.

1. They shall direct or lead (1 Timothy 5:17) the church to fulfill its purpose. They will help the church understand its purpose, its process and define its priorities.

2. They shall organize, set up and establish leadership and ministry teams as they best believe it will help the church.
3. They shall teach the Word of God (1 Timothy 3:2, Titus 1:9) and oversee the entire teaching ministry of the church. They shall uphold the doctrine of the church to ensure that the flock is being cared for and spiritually fed.
4. They shall help equip God's people to do the work of ministry so that the Body of Christ might grow to full maturity. (Ephesians 4:16)
5. They shall protect the church as shepherds protect the flock. (Acts 20:28-31) They are to help guard against false doctrine and divisiveness.
6. They shall be prayer warriors and pray diligently for the church, its people and its ministry. They shall pray for the sick when asked. (James 5:14)
7. They shall watch over the souls of those in our church family as ones who will give an account to God. (Hebrews 13:17)

SECTION VIII --

THE RELATIONSHIP

BETWEEN ELDER LEADERSHIP AND CONGREGATIONALISM:

The Elders of our church will function as overseers and leaders with authority to lead, guide, direct and protect the church. The church recognizes their authority to lead and rule by voluntary submission. The Elders are authorized to act as a leadership team for our church, and make decisions without a church vote of approval, except on (1) the calling of Senior Pastors, (2) the appointment of legal trustees, (3) the yearly budget, (4) the purchase or sale of land and buildings and (5) changes to the Constitution. However, there may be items that Elders believe should be voted on and they may bring these to the church whenever they feel necessary.

If individuals in the church family, or even ministry teams, believe the Elders have made a wrong or unwise decision they are encouraged to appeal to the Elders to reconsider. It would be most helpful to the Elders if the reasons for disagreement are clearly stated. However, if after consideration of the appeal the Elders believe their decision is right and should stand, the individual or ministry team should willingly and with a joyful heart submit to that direction.

Recognizing the fact that every individual in the church has an obligation to protect the church, and acknowledging the potential for ungodly Elders to rise to leadership, (Acts 20:30) if believers in our church family still strongly believe the Elders have made an unbiblical decision, they may appeal to the body at a regular church conference-family meeting.

If an individual appeals directly to the body at a church conference, asking for a reversal of a decision the Elders have made, and a simple majority of the church agrees to consider the matter, the issue will be returned to the body for discussion and a decision. At this time it will take the Constitutional two-thirds majority to decide the matter. However, if less than a majority are willing to take up the matter, the Elder's decision will stand.

The church Elders, acting as overseers, shall be careful not to do the work assigned to others. An Elder may also serve in another service position such as a ministry leader or on one of the primary leadership teams. The Elders and ministry leaders will conduct many family meetings to gather feedback from the congregation, to help keep the church family informed, and to offer ample opportunity for the congregation to openly communicate with the Elders. However items would not be brought to the church for a vote at these meetings unless the Elders deemed it necessary.

ARTICLE IX: ASSISTANT PASTORAL AND SUPPORT STAFF

SECTION I -- THE CALLING OF MINISTERIAL AND SUPPORT STAFF

When the Elders believe it is time to call additional staff, whether Assistant Pastoral Staff or Support Staff, they shall present the need to the church identifying the opening, a brief job description, salary ranges, and benefit package for approval by the body. The Elders will work with the Personnel Team in structuring the salary and benefit package.

A. Assistant Pastoral Staff: Assistant Pastoral Staff will be those men who feel called to serve vocationally in Christian ministry such as a Minister of Education, Worship or Youth. They will seek to serve the church and assist the Elders in the areas they have felt God's calling. Depending on a man's calling and experience some assistant Pastors will immediately begin as Elders in Training. The Elders will serve as the Search Team for all Assistant Pastoral Staff. The Elders shall follow the same general procedure as outlined for the search for a Senior Pastor. When they have found the candidate they wish to bring on staff, they shall work with the Personnel Team to put together a specific salary package that falls within the guidelines already approved by the church.

B. Support Staff: The Personnel and Administrative Teams will serve as the Search Team for finding Support Staff such as secretaries and custodians. When they have found the candidate they wish to bring on staff, they shall work with the Elders to put together a specific salary package that falls within the guidelines already approved by the church.

C. Offer of a Contract: After a candidate has been accepted by the Elders, the Elders along with the Personnel Team will prepare and extend an offer which will list all job duties, responsibilities, salaries and benefits if applicable. If an agreement has been reached by both parties, and all questions have been answered satisfactorily, a contract will be submitted for the applicant to sign and will then be entered into the employees personnel folder. This enters the new staff member into the probationary period.

D. Probationary Period: All newly hired Assistant Pastoral Staff and Support Staff will serve a 180_day (6_month) probationary period. During this period a new staff member will be able to demonstrate not only his / her job_related skills, but also positive character qualities that will make him / her an asset to BCBC. Employment will not be considered permanent until the probationary period has been successfully completed and employment may be terminated earlier if needed. Hospitalization insurance will commence upon employment; however, retirement benefits will not be effective until after the probationary period has been successfully completed. Retirement benefits will be made retroactive to

the date of employment. Permanent employment is contingent upon evaluation by the Senior Pastor on job performance and positive character qualities as documented by monthly evaluations. At the end of the probationary period, the Senior Pastor and Personnel Team will review the candidate's evaluations and provide a hire or terminate recommendation to the Elders. If the recommendation is to make employment permanent is agreed upon by the Elders, it shall be done. If at the end of the probationary period termination is recommended and accepted by the Elders, the new staff member will be notified by the Elders and Pastoral Staff will be given at least 30 days notice of termination, and if applicable, notice to vacate the parsonage.

E. The Termination of Staff: It will be the duty of the Elders to oversee the ministries of Assistant Pastoral Staff and Support Staff. If at some point after the probationary period the need to terminate a staff member arises, it will be the duty of the Elders to do so. All staff will be treated in a compassionate, Christlike manner if termination is determined to be needed.

SECTION II - STAFF POLICY MANUAL

The church will have a Staff Policy Manual constructed and maintained by the Personnel Team and approved by the Elders which will govern other staff issues not recorded here in the Constitution. Such items in the Staff Policy Manual will be procedures and instructions on things such as vacation, sick days, pay raises, etc. The Staff Policy Manual will be available to all in the church office.

ARTICLE X: MINISTRY LEADERS AND MINISTRY POSITIONS

SECTION I -- GENERAL:

The church, guided by Acts 6:3-8 shall choose from its membership men and women to lead the many different ministries that arise in and through our church. Their leadership should be looked on as divinely ordained and with great seriousness. Ministry leaders shall be servants of Jesus Christ and the church who have been commissioned by the church Elders to serve in various ways to meet an assortment of needs. Ministries will be added and removed by the Elders as the needs of the congregation and the leading of the Holy Spirit dictate so ministry leadership positions will also be somewhat fluid.

SECTION II -- MINISTRY AND MINISTRY LEADERSHIP AUTHORITY

Ministries and their leaders shall have the trust and authority of the church to perform the tasks they are commissioned to do. They have the authority to spend their assigned budget portion as they deem necessary and each ministry shall have the right to make decisions that affect their ministries. Decisions that affect the whole church family should be brought before the Elders for counsel and approval.

SECTION III -- QUALIFICATIONS:

Qualifications for ministry leadership shall be like unto most of those listed in 1 Timothy 3:8-13. They shall be people of integrity, dignity and proven spiritual maturity. Ministry Team Leaders shall be temperate, good stewards of possessions, faithful to Biblical doctrines, dedicated to their families and willing to serve. Team leaders shall be members of BCBC and can be men or women, though certain ministries may be better suited for one or the other, the appropriateness of which shall be determined by the Elders.

SECTION IV -- MINISTRY LEADERS RESPONSIBILITY

It will be the general responsibility of ministry leaders to give oversight to the ministry team they lead. They shall direct or lead their ministry team to fulfill its specific purpose. They will help the team understand its purpose, its process and define its priorities.

It will also be their responsibility to make sure that all those members of their ministry team are involved in decision making and ministry in their area of concern.

The team leader will work closely with the Elders to make sure that their team is being effective at helping the church fulfill her purpose.

Further details regarding ministry teams and their responsibilities are outlined in the Church Policy Manual.

SECTION V -- RECOGNITION OF MINISTRY TEAM LEADERS:

Once a year there will be an opportunity for people to sign up and commit themselves to the different ministries. After this time the Elders will select ministry team leaders based on people's desire, their character, their past and present involvements and their spiritual gifts. Before these team leaders are confirmed, their names will be presented to the body for any feedback

ARTICLE XI: MINISTRY TEAMS

SECTION I -- GENERAL:

Because of the Lord's command that we serve one another and minister in his name we as a church have set it as part of our purpose to help people discover and develop their ministries. We believe everyone ought to be involved in ministry and regular attenders can help on ministry teams.

SECTION II-- MINISTRY TEAMS:

Once a year the church will give the people of our church family the opportunity to select a new ministry or change to another. If someone is a member of our church family, in most cases, they are welcome to minister wherever they feel the Lord is leading them. Ministry teams will not be bound by a specific number though certain ministries, such as the treasurer and clerk, need to be done by only one person.

ARTICLE XII: CHURCH SERVICES AND CONFERENCES

SECTION I -- REGULAR WORSHIP SERVICES:

The church shall conduct regular worship services on every Lord's Day unless otherwise agreed by the Elders. The church shall provide all other necessary services for the educational, stewardship, missionary, evangelistic and promotional functions of the church.

SECTION II -- REGULAR CHURCH FAMILY CONFERENCES:

The church will conduct regular church family conferences as needed but at least twice a year. The purpose of these conferences will be to keep the church family informed and to engage the congregation in feedback. Church family conferences shall be held in January and June. The church shall be notified as to the date and time through the bulletin.

SECTION III -- SPECIAL CALLED CONFERENCES:

Special church Conferences may be called by the Pastor or another Elder. Such called conferences must be announced publicly at the morning worship service of the church at least two Sundays prior to the called conference or by written notice placed in the Sunday bulletins.

ARTICLE XIII: THE CONDUCT OF BUSINESS

SECTION I -- QUORUM:

A quorum for the conduct of church business will consist of no less than twenty-five active members present at a church conference.

SECTION II -- THE CHURCH AND VOTING:

The church will vote as a congregation on (1) the calling of Pastors, (2) the appointment of legal trustees, (3) the yearly budget, (4) the purchase of land and buildings and (5) changes to the Constitution. The church may also be asked by the Elders to vote on other issues but ordinarily the church will be administered by her ministry teams under the general oversight of the Elders.

If a member disagrees with a decision the Elders have made they should first appeal to the Elders. If they are still not satisfied they may appeal to the body at a regular family meeting. If a simply majority (51%) of the church votes to hear the issue, then the church will discuss and vote on that matter. If however a majority refuse to hear it, the decision the Elders have made will stand. (For more details see Article VIII, Section VIII)

SECTION III — ABSENTEE VOTING

If active members are aware they will be out of town or unable to attend a church conference because of extenuating circumstances, they can vote on issues in absentia. It will be the members' responsibility to communicate their vote in writing, unless that proved impossible, to one of the Elders.

SECTION IV -- THE VOICE OF THE CHURCH:

At regular conferences and at all called conferences, a two-thirds majority of the members voting shall be considered the voice of the church unless deemed otherwise by these By-Laws.

SECTION V -- MODERATOR:

The moderator at church conferences shall be appointed by the Elders. Specifically, the moderator shall be responsible for the following:

1. He shall prepare the agenda for the church family meetings in consultation with appropriate church leaders.
2. He shall preside at such meetings, calling them to order at the proper time and preserving order and decorum.
3. He shall decide on all questions of order. He may consult someone more skilled in parliamentary procedure.

SECTION VI -- RULES OF ORDER:

The rules of order governing the conduct of business will be Christ-like character. Charity and respect are expected from all members present. If the need arises, someone may ask that we officially operate by "Roberts Rules of Order" and if a majority agree (51%) then it will be so ordered.

SECTION VII -- MINISTRY AND BUDGET YEARS:

The church ministry and budget year shall extend from September 1 until August 31.

SECTION VIII -- POLICIES AND PROCEDURES:

Any matter not covered in this Constitution and By-Laws is controlled by church policies as described in the Church Policy Manual. This manual shall consist of ministry descriptions and purposes and an assortment of

church policies and procedures. It shall be kept in the church office and made available to any member of the church. This manual shall be maintained by the Administration Team with oversight by the Elders.

Changes in policies and procedures may be initiated by any church member or organization. These changes shall be referred to the church's Elders, who in conference with the church ministry team leaders, will make additions, revisions or deletions if needed.

ARTICLE XIV: AMENDMENTS

SECTION I -- RATIFICATION:

This Constitution and By-Laws shall be considered adopted and in immediate effect when two-thirds of the members present and voting shall vote in favor of adopting them.

SECTION II -- AMENDMENT PROCEDURE:

These commitments may be amended by two-thirds vote of the active members present and voting at any regular church family meeting or at a meeting especially called for that purpose. The proposed amendments must be made in writing and made available to the church at least two weeks prior to the time of proposed adoption.

SECTION III -- FLEXIBILITY:

These By-Laws are intended to serve as a guide for conducting the work of the church, and no particular article should be considered unchangeable if a better method is discovered. **AMEN!**