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PROPOSED
CONSTITUTION AND BYLAWS
OF
MT. ZION BAPTIST CHURCH
OF WESTOVER, ALABAMA

*This Constitution
and by-laws were
approved by the Church
by 100% vote
Dec 6 - 1989*

PREAMBLE

For the more certain preservation and security of the principles of our faith, and to the end that this body may be governed in an orderly manner consistent with the accepted tenets of missionary Baptist belief, and for the purpose of preserving the liberties inherent in each individual member of this church, and for the purpose of preserving the freedom of action of this body with respect to its relation to other churches of the same faith, we do declare and establish this constitution and bylaws.

CONSTITUTION

Article I
Name

This body shall be known as Mt. Zion Baptist Church, Incorporated,
Westover, Alabama.

Article II
Church Covenant

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

For the Advancement of this Church

We engage, therefore, by the aid of 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; and to sustain its worship, ordinances, discipline, and doctrines.

As Christian Stewards

To contribute cheerfully and regularly to the support of the ministry, the expenses of the church, the relief of the poor, and the spread of the gospel through all nations.

Inst # 1993-37752

*C.A. Belen
1781 Rock School Rd
Harpersville, AL 35078*

11/29/1993-37752
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Alone and at Home

We also engage to maintain family and secret devotions; to religiously educate our children, and to seek the salvation of our kindred and acquaintances.

Before the World

To walk circumspectly in the world; to be just in our dealings, faithful in our engagements, and exemplary in our deportment; to avoid all tattling, backbiting, and excessive anger; to abstain from the sale and use of intoxicating drinks as a beverage; and to be zealous in our efforts to advance the kingdom of our Savior.

Toward One Another

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

When We Move

We moreover engage that when we remove from this place, we will, as soon as possible, unite with some other church, where we can carry out the spirit of this covenant and the principles of God's Word.

Article III Character

Section 1 - Polity

The government of this church shall be vested in the body of believers who compose it. It shall be subject to the control of no other ecclesiastical body but shall recognize and sustain the obligations of mutual counsel and cooperation which are common among Baptist churches.

Section 2 - Parliamentary Procedure

All business of the church shall be expedited through orderly, parliamentary procedures as presented in Robert's Rules of Order, Revised, General Henry M. Robery. Chicago, Illinois: Scott, Foresman, and Company, 1951.

Section 3 - Ownership of Property

All properties shall be owned by the members of the church. If at any time this church shall become defunct, the property shall become the property of the Shelby Baptist Association.

BYLAWS

Article I Membership

Section 1 - Qualifications

Members may be received at any regular service of the church by majority vote of the members present upon the following conditions:

- a. **Profession of Faith.** Any person making a public committal of faith in Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior and expressing the desire to become a member of the church, after due examination by the pastor, or someone acting in his place, may be received for membership, baptism being necessary.
- b. **Transfer of Letter.** Any person may be received for membership who holds membership in a recognized Baptist church and presents a letter of recommendation from that church.
- c. **Statement of Membership.** Any person may be received for membership who declares that he has been a member of a recognized Baptist church and is unable for good reason to obtain a letter of recommendation.

Section 2 - Duties

Members shall be equally responsible for the work of the church. They shall support the church with contributions in time, substance, and service. They shall be interested in her program and organizations, shall strive to attend her business conferences, shall enter into the service of worship, and shall endeavor to grow in Christian stature. They shall, further, support, encourage, and pray for her leaders.

Section 3 - Rights

All members of the church shall have equal rights, including the rights of free expression and of voting upon all issues and matters of business affecting the church. However, no member shall be privileged to infringe upon the rights of others.

Section 4 - Termination

Membership in the church shall be terminated under the following conditions:

- a. **Death.** Death shall automatically terminate membership.
- b. **Request of Letter.** Membership shall be terminated by majority vote of those present at a church conference when a request for transfer of membership has been received in writing from a recognized Baptist church. Since a letter of recommendation is a communication from one church to another, this church shall grant a letter of recommendation for one of her members after a request in writing has been received from another recognized Baptist church. However, at the insistence of a member a letter of dismissal may be granted.

- c. Membership in Another Church. Membership may be terminated by majority vote of those present at a church conference when information has been received that a member has united with another church.
- d. Withdrawal of Fellowship. Should a member become an offense to the church and to her good name by reason of immoral or unchristian conduct by reason of persistent breach of his covenant vows, the church may terminate his membership by majority vote of those present at a regular church conference. However, this shall be done only after due notice and hearing, and after faithful efforts have been made to bring such member to repentance and amendment.
- e. Restoration. Any person from whom the church has withdrawn fellowship may be restored to membership by a majority vote of those present at a regular church conference provided that adequate evidence has been presented of the person's repentance and of his intention to live faithfully as a Christian.

Article II

Church Officers, Standing Committees, and Their Duties

A church officer shall be any person elected by the church to fill a position.

The term of service of general church officers, except for the pastor, deacons, and trustees, shall be one year, from October first through September thirtieth. The term of service for all members of standing committees, teachers, and workers in organizations likewise shall be one year and for the same period. However, there shall be no limitation placed upon their re-election.

Section 1 - General Church Officers

The general officers of the church shall be the pastor, deacons, trustees, clerk, treasurer, Sunday School superintendent, Training Union director, Woman's Missionary Union president, and Brotherhood president.

- a. Pastor. A pastor shall be chosen and called by the church whenever a vacancy occurs. His election shall take place at a meeting called for that purpose, of which at least one week's written notice shall be given. The pastor, thus elected, shall serve until the relationship is terminated by either party. He shall be moderator of the church and shall preside at all meetings of the church, except, as hereinafter provided. As moderator, he shall be privileged to observe, recommend, and vote. In his absence, the chairman of deacons shall preside at all church meetings; in the absence of both, the vice-chairman shall preside.

When the church is without a pastor, the general nominating committee shall recommend a pulpit committee composed of three or more members. Before this committee is elected, opportunity shall be given for other nominations from the floor. The pulpit committee then shall seek out a suitable pastor, and its recommendation shall constitute a nomination, though any church member shall have the privilege of making other nominations. Only one man at a time may be brought by the committee to the church for consideration. A pastor shall be called by a vote of the majority of those members present and voting. The pulpit committee must be in agreement before a prospect can be presented to the church.

The pastor shall be an ex-officio member of all organizations and committees.

- b. Deacons. In accordance with the meaning of the word and the practice of the New Testament, deacons are to be servants of the church. They shall maintain general oversight of all areas of church life and be always alert to assist the pastor, church officers, and committees to improve and to implement the work of the church. Their first interest shall be to heighten the spiritual tone of the church and to deepen the consecration of her members through word, example, and deed.

The deacons shall also serve as a pulpit supply committee. When the pastor is away or unable to preach, they shall provide for pulpit supplies, looking to the pastor for counsel and suggestion. In any period when the church is without a pastor, unless the church otherwise provides, the deacons shall arrange a temporary ministry of Southern Baptist faith. This shall in no way affect the method the church has established to secure a pastor.

It shall be the privilege of all ordained deacons, who are members of the church, to assist in serving the Lord's Supper.

Those elected to the deaconship shall be ordained by the church at a special service arranged by the pastor and the chairman of deacons. The ordination shall be for life. However, the church shall reserve the right to rescind the ordination of anyone who brings reproach upon the Lord and His church.

- c. Trustees. There shall be three trustees, who shall be charged with the duty of executing such legal documents as may be required by law and other documents that may from time to time be authorized by the church. They shall, further, be entrusted with the care of all current papers, documents, maps, and blueprints. The chairman, if not an active deacon, shall attend all meetings of deacons in an advisory capacity. The trustees shall also be in charge of maintenance of church properties.

A trustee shall be elected by the August church conference. A nomination shall be made by the nominating committee, and other nominations may be made from the floor. Vacancies during the year shall be filled by the same procedure. Each year, the chairman and vice-chairman of trustees also shall be nominated by the nominating committee.

- d. Church Clerk. The primary responsibility of the church clerk shall be the keeping of accurate minutes of all church conferences. The minutes shall be carefully typed and, at the end of the year, bound as permanent records. He, in cooperation with the church staff, shall keep an accurate, up-to-date record of the membership. He shall keep a permanent record of all dismissals and those removed from the roll by death along with all pertinent information related thereto, such as communications relative to their reception and dismissal. On file at all times there shall be a current list by name of all additions by baptism and by letter and of all dismissals. Further, the clerk and his assistants shall be prepared to assist the pastor in the reception of new members at services of worship.

At the end of the church year, the clerk shall prepare the annual report to the Association and after church approval, submit it to the secretary of the Shelby Baptist Association prior to the annual meeting.

- e. **Treasurer.** The treasurer and those elected by the church to assist him shall have sole authority to discharge church funds as provided in Article V, Section 4. All disbursements shall be made promptly by check, in accordance with the bank deposit receipts which he has received from the tellers. He shall keep an accurate set of books and make a detailed monthly report to the deacons and to the church, and, at the end of the fiscal year, an annual report.

When his successor takes office, he shall promptly deliver to him all books, records, and accounts pertaining in any manner to the office of treasurer.

- f. **Sunday School Superintendent.** The Sunday School shall be under church control, and its superintendent shall be elected no later than the June church conference. Upon election, as hereinafter provided, the superintendent shall work to place in nomination officers and teachers for the Sunday School. Other general officers and department superintendents shall be nominated no later than the July church conference. The department superintendents thus elected shall then work with the Sunday School nominating committee in securing officers and teachers for their respective departments, who shall be placed in nomination no later than the September church conference.

The duties of the Sunday School superintendent, officers, and teachers shall be those as outlined in the guidebooks of the Sunday School Board of the Southern Baptist Convention, and all these officers and teachers shall endeavor to develop the Sunday School according to the recommendations therein contained.

- g. **Training Union Director.** The Training Union shall be under church control, and its director shall be elected no later than the June church conference. Upon election, as hereinafter provided, the director shall work to place in nomination officers and leaders for the Training Union. Other general officers and department directors shall be nominated no later than the July church conference. The department directors thus elected shall then work with the Training Union nominating committee in securing officers, leaders, and counselors for their respective departments, who shall be placed in nomination no later than the September church conference.

The duties of the Training Union director, officers, leaders, and counselors shall be those as outlined in the guidebooks of the Sunday School Board of the Southern Baptist Convention, and all these officers, leaders, and counselors shall endeavor to develop the Training Union according to the recommendations therein contained.

- h. **Woman's Missionary Union President.** The Woman's Missionary Union shall be under church control, and its president shall be elected no later than the June church conference. Upon her election, as hereinafter provided, the president shall work to place in nomination officers, leaders, circle chairmen, and committees for the Woman's Missionary Society and auxiliaries, who shall be elected in accordance with the recommended procedure for Woman's Missionary Unions.

The Woman's Missionary Society shall sponsor, staff, and support the auxiliary organizations, as follows: Sunbeam Band, Junior Girls' Auxiliary, Intermediate Girls' Auxiliary, and Young Woman's Auxiliary.

- f. Flower Committee. Provision of floral arrangements for all regular services of the church, revivals, and certain designated special services shall be entrusted to the flower committee. This responsibility shall include the securing, arranging, and disposing of flowers as well as the procuring of all necessary supplies. At times, this committee will need to work with decorating the church for special occasions.
- g. Music Committee. All phases of the church music program are the concern of the music committee. The committee's primary responsibility, however, is to assist the minister of music and the organist in reaching and enlisting members for the choirs, in providing adequate assistance for the youth and children's choirs, and in keeping the organ and all pianos tuned and repaired. Having general oversight over all church music properties, it shall endeavor to keep the choir robes clean, to safeguard all choir music, hymnals, and supplies, and to recommend the purchase and replacement of hymnals and properties of the music department. A further responsibility of the committee, along with the minister of music and the organist, shall be to assist the nominating committee in providing pianists and song leaders for the organizations of the church. The minister of music and the organist are to serve as ex-officio members of the committee.
- h. New Members Committee. Members of this committee are to visit new church members as soon as possible. The purpose of this visit shall be to promote good will and to take information about church activities, organizations, and the financial program. Inquiry shall be made as to the person's previous religious activities, abilities, and desire to serve in the church and where, and the religious status of the members of the family. All such information shall be given to the pastor or minister of education. This committee shall have three members.
- i. Nominating Committee. The nominating committee shall be composed of a general committee, a Sunday School nominating committee, a Training Union nominating committee, and a Woman's Missionary Union nominating committee. The general committee shall be nominated by the pastor, chairman of deacons, Sunday School superintendent, Training Union director, chairman of trustees, and W.M.U. president.

Nominations for new officers, workers, and committees shall be made no later than the September conference after notice has been given to the membership in writing at least one week prior to such conference. The notice shall include a list of the nominees. Nominations to fill vacancies or unexpired terms may be made at any church conference without notice provided unanimous consent of those present and voting is obtained. Opportunity shall always be given by the moderator for any member of the church to make other nominations from the floor. However, no name may be placed in nomination by any individual or committee who has not previously given his verbal or written consent to serve if elected.

- j. Nursery Correlating Committee. This committee shall coordinate all nursery work of the church and plan and provide for an extended session of the nursery during worship. Members of the committee shall be familiar with nursery work, shall meet at least quarterly, and shall sponsor a conference of all nursery workers at least annually. It shall be this committee's responsibility to recommend and publicize nursery policies, to recommend the purpose of equipment and supplies, to oversee the care of rooms and equipment, and to make certain the nurseries are kept clean. This committee also shall employ and supervise all paid nursery workers.

The duties of the Woman's Missionary Union president and the officers, leaders, circle chairmen, and committees shall be those as outlined in the guidebooks of Woman's Missionary Union, Auxiliary to Southern Baptist Convention, and these officers shall endeavor to develop the organization according to the recommendations of the said southwide organization.

Section 2 - Standing Committees

- a. **Auditing Committees.** An auditing committee shall audit the books at the end of the fiscal year and report their findings to the church.
- b. **Baptism Committee.** The work of this committee shall be to assist the pastor in preparing for the ordinance of baptism by seeing that all of the candidates are notified, properly instructed, dressed, and prepared for baptism. It shall see that the baptismal pool or place of baptism is ready and prepared for the services. It shall, further, see that the church is in order after the service and arrange for the robes and other equipment to be laundered for use by the following Sunday.

Three members shall compose this committee: a general chairman, a sub-committee for men with a chairman and two members, and a sub-committee for women with a chairman and two members.

- c. **Benevolence Committee.** Members of the benevolence committee are charged with the responsibility of providing financial or other assistance to needy people. All requests for assistance shall be studied carefully, and funds shall be distributed with care and wisdom. If a need shall arise that cannot be met by funds provided in the budget, the committee shall discuss the case with the finance committee, and if mutually agreeable, present the case to the church with a recommendation for specific action. This committee shall authorize payment of funds according to regular church procedure as provided in Article V, Section 4.
- d. **Shelby Baptist Association Executive Board Committee.** The church may be represented upon the executive board of the Shelby Baptist Association by two members — the pastor and one other. These two shall represent the church at all meetings of the executive board and keep the church informed as to all actions taken by the board. Further, this committee shall strive to maintain a spirit of cooperation and good will between the church and association.
- e. **Finance Committee.** The finance committee shall be composed of three members, including the treasurer and at least one woman, all of whom are known tithers, progressive in their outlook, and fully cooperative with the financial and promotional program of the church. None need be the head of any organization or committee. This committee, along with its chairman and vice-chairman, shall be nominated by the nominating committee. The chairman and vice-chairman shall serve as the purchasing agents of the church. The chairman, if not a deacon, shall attend all meetings of deacons in an advisory capacity.

It shall be the responsibility of the finance committee to guide the financial program of the church as specified in Article V of these bylaws and to recommend an annual budget. It shall further recommend plans for raising funds, both with reference to the annual budget and special causes.

- k. Ushers Committee. The committee of ushers shall serve in accordance with the duties and suggestions of any recognized ushers manual. It shall be responsible for the welcome, seating, and comfort of worshipers at all regular and special services of the church and at funerals in the church. The committee shall consist of a chairman, vice-chairman, and it shall be their responsibility to assist in selecting and securing other ushers and in establishing the organization.
- l. Youth Committee. The youth committee shall be composed of adults who are vitally interested in intermediates and young people. It shall work closely with the youth director and leaders of youth and intermediate organizations to promote a program of activities that will meet the spiritual and recreational needs of youth. The work of this committee shall be both advisory and functional.

Section 3 - Resignations

The resignation of any member of the staff or church officer shall be made in writing to the church.

Article III Church Staff

Section 1 - Responsibility

- a. The pastor is to be the administrative head of the church staff which shall look to him for leadership, counsel, guidance, and suggestions.
- b. All members of the staff are to work cooperatively with each other, each being willing to assist the others as the need arises and upon the suggestion of the pastor. Their plans shall be made in accordance with the total program of the church and in consideration of the other staff members.
- c. All members of the church staff shall be ultimately responsible to the church, and they shall strive to maintain harmony in the church. Grievances of the staff toward the church or other staff members shall be addressed to the personnel committee. Likewise, grievances of church members toward members of the staff shall be addressed to the personnel committee, which shall take appropriate action.
- d. Staff members shall cooperate with and promote the work of the denomination in the church. The holding of denominational offices shall be encouraged as long as the responsibilities of these officers do not infringe upon local church responsibility.

Article IV Church Finance

Section 1 - Fiscal Year

The fiscal year of the church shall be from January 1 through December 31 inclusive.

Section 2 - Annual Budget

The finance committee shall prepare an annual budget to guide the distribution of funds and present it to the church for approval or disapproval. The budget thus adopted shall not be a rigid guide. Upon recommendation of the finance committee, items may be revised and new items added by majority vote of members present at any regular church conference. At the end of the year, funds budgeted but not used shall remain in the general fund.

Section 3 - Accounts

Receipts from all sources shall be kept in a general account and in such other accounts as are authorized by the church. Special accounts may be established at any church conference, and monies may be transferred from the general to special accounts by majority vote of members present, and these monies must be used for the purpose designated unless later specifically authorized by the church. However, funds given and designated by individuals, groups, or institutions may not be used for other than the designated purpose without the written consent of the contributor, heir, or heirs. All budgeted items and others duly authorized by the church shall be paid from the general account.

Section 4 - Financing the Church

The church program shall be financed through the scriptural method of the tithes and offerings. Members shall be encouraged to present their tithes and such offerings as they desire to the church for distribution through the budget. This, however, shall not preclude the privilege and right of individuals to designate their offerings at any time as the Spirit of God may move them. A yearly record of all contributions shall be sent to all contributors for their information, tax, and personal record. The church may at no time hold anyone financially liable for the non-payment of a pledge.

Section 5 - Special Offerings

Special offerings shall be taken only upon the approval of the church. When preparing the budget, the finance committee shall endeavor to anticipate the special offerings that will be needed during the year and recommend them for adoption along with the budget. However, additional special offerings, when needed, may be authorized by majority vote of members present at any church conference.

Section 6 - Membership Obligation

It shall be understood that membership in the church involves financial obligation to support the church with regular, proportionate gifts. Each new member of the church and Sunday School shall be given opportunity to share in the financial stewardship of the church.

Article V Church Meetings

Section 1 - Worship

- a. Regular Meetings. Public services of worship shall be held statedly on the Lord's Day and on stated evenings each week.
- b. Occasional Meetings. Occasional religious meetings may be appointed by the pastor at his discretion or by vote of the church.

- c. Lord's Supper. The Lord's Supper shall be regularly celebrated on the first Lord's Day of each quarter. However, the pastor or deacons may have the privilege of making adjustments in the time to avoid conflicts in schedule or to aid the church program.

Section 2 - Business

- a. Regular Church Conference. A regular conference of the church shall be held to consider all matters pertaining to the church. The time of the meeting may be established or changed by majority vote at any regular church conference. However, it shall be the privilege of the pastor, deacons, or church council to change the time of meeting one week in any given month, provided that the church has been given sufficient notice of such change.
- b. Worship Services. At any regular services of worship, the church, without special notice, may act upon the reception of new members, upon the dismissal of members to other churches, upon the appointment of members as messengers to conventions, but not upon other business.
- c. Special Church Conferences. The pastor, as moderator, shall have the privilege of calling special church conferences, and he shall be required to do so when requested by the deacons, trustees, or committees. However, it is required that the membership be notified in writing of the meeting and its object at least three days in advance.

Special church conferences may also be called by the church clerk upon the written application of any five adult members. The application must state the object to the meeting. Notice of the special conference shall be read at a worship service on the Lord's Day, and the membership shall be notified in writing of the meeting and its object at least three days in advance, but the meeting may not be held prior to the succeeding Lord's Day.

Article VI Church Government

Government of the church shall be in the hands of the members with each member, regardless of age, having the right to make proposals, express opinions, and vote. All members shall consider it their sacred duty to be informed of all plans, programs, and proposals of the church and to attend all church conferences and vote. It shall, further, be the sacred responsibility of all members to promote, encourage, and support all duly authorized actions of the church in conference. The members shall further support, help, and pray for all the elected leaders and register all disagreements, or differences of opinions, through the channels of regular church conferences, or conferences with the pastor, church staff, deacons, or organization heads, who shall consider it their responsibility and privilege to seek harmonious settlement, thus promoting harmony and goodwill in the church.

Neither the position of the pastor nor of the deacons is authoritative. They are spiritual leaders of the church whose function is to advise, counsel, and lead. They shall have oversight of the church in spiritual matters and recommend courses of action.

Article VII
Amendments

This constitution and accompanying bylaws may be amended by a majority vote of 2/3 all active resident members having been duly notified in writing at least thirty days prior to proposed changes of bylaws or constitution.

Deacon Board

Lawrence L. Deletch Chm.

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Inst # 1993-37752

October, 1989

11/14/89/1993-37752
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