

Constitution and Bylaws of North Wake Baptist Church

(A North Carolina Non-profit Religious Corporation)

ARTICLE I

Name and Principal Office

The name of the Corporation is North Wake Baptist Church. This Corporation will be further referred to in the bylaws as the "Church, or NWBC." The Church maintains its principal office at 1212 South Main Street, Wake Forest, North Carolina. The elders of the Church shall have full power and authority to change the principal office from one location to another. Any change of this location shall be recorded by the Secretary on these bylaws opposite this section, or this section may be amended to state the new location.

ARTICLE II

Purpose

The mission of the Church is to reach the lost and equip them to join with us in the process of becoming mature and ministering worshipers of God.

By a *mature and ministering worshiper of God* we have in mind people who are developing three crucial relationships.

A. With God...In Worship: We want to see every follower of Christ established in a *growing relationship with God* that is marked by a wholehearted pursuit of God, the development of Christ-like character, and a life of worship.

B. With One Another...in Community: We believe every member of the body is uniquely gifted by the Spirit to serve God, minister effectively and humbly to other members, and advance his kingdom. *It is our intention to build a body of Christ-centered believers, fully devoted to serving one another through relationships full of grace and truth* that lead to Christ-honoring friendships.

C. With the Lost...In Witness: We desire to build *authentic, loving relationships with our friends, family, neighbors, coworkers and acquaintances*. Our hope is that God would then use our words and deeds to bring many people into a relationship of trust with Jesus Christ. We want to purposefully extend these relationships to include those who are yet to hear about Christ around the world, so that all peoples will know.

ARTICLE III

Statement of Faith

The following is a summary of the main points of our beliefs:

We believe that **the Bible** was written by divinely inspired men and is God's revelation of himself and his will to man. The Bible in its entirety is the Word of God, and as such is wholly true in everything it affirms. The Scriptures are the unique, full and final authority on all matters of faith and practice. (2 Tim. 3:16; 2 Pet. 1:20, 21; Ps. 18:30; 119:96)

We believe that **the Godhead** exists eternally in three persons - Father, Son and Holy Spirit - and that these three are one God and are worthy of precisely the same confidence, obedience, and worship. (Matt. 28:18-19, Mk. 12:29, Jn. 1:14, Acts 5:3-4)

We believe that **God created all things** and that by his sovereign power He continues to sustain His creation. (Gen. 1:1; Col. 1:17)

We believe that **Jesus Christ** in the flesh was fully God and fully man, that He was born of a virgin and that He lived a sinless life, in which He taught and worked mighty works and wonders and signs as recorded in the four gospels, that He was crucified, died as a penalty for our sins and was later raised from the dead bodily on the third day. Later, He ascended to the Father's right hand where He is head of the church and intercedes for believers, and from whence He is coming again personally, bodily, and visibly to this earth to **set up His millennial consummate His kingdom**. (Heb. 1: 2; 4:15; 1 Cor. 15:3-8; Rom. 8:34; Matt. 16:27)

We believe that the **Holy Spirit** is a person, is God and possesses all the divine attributes. He convicts the world of sin. He indwells all believers, and baptizes and seals all believers at the moment of salvation. He uniquely endows each believer with gifts for the building up of the body. He guides believers in understanding and applying the Scriptures and empowers us to lead a life of Christ-like character. (Jn. 16:7-15; Rom. 8:9; 1 Cor. 15:3-8; **Rom. 8:9;** 1 Cor. 12:13; Eph. 4:30; Jn. 16:13, Gal. 5:22-23)

We believe that all men have defied God and have chosen to go their own independent way and, thereby, stand condemned by God. We believe that God, by His sovereign choice and His love for mankind, sent Jesus into the world to bring people back into fellowship with God, and that this **salvation**, with its forgiveness of sin, is a gift, wholly a work of God's grace, not the result of human works, and that this salvation must be personally appropriated by repentance and faith. We believe that a true believer is eternally secure, that he cannot lose

his salvation, but that sin may interrupt the joy of his fellowship with God and bring the loving discipline of his heavenly Father. (Rom. 3:23; 5:8; Eph. 2:8; Mk. 1:15; 1 Jn 5:12-13; Jn. 10:28; Heb. 12:5-6)

We believe there is **one church** universal, which is comprised of all who ~~place~~ **their have been saved by grace through** faith in the Lord Jesus Christ alone. The Scriptures command believers to gather together to devote themselves to worship, prayer, teaching of the Word, observance of **believer's** baptism and the Lord's Supper, fellowship, service to the body, and outreach to the world. Wherever God's people meet regularly in obedience to these commands, there is the local expression of the church. Under the watch care of elders ~~and deacons~~ its members are to work together in love and unity, intent on the one ultimate purpose of glorifying God. (Rom. 3:22; Acts 2:42-47; Matt. 28:19; Lk. 22:19; Heb. 10:24-25; Gal. 6:10; Acts 1:8; 1 Tim. 3:1 Peter 5:1-3; Jn. 4:7; Eph. 3:21)

In addition, this Church accepts "The Baptist Faith and Message, 2000," an affirmation of basic Christian beliefs, as a general statement of our faith.

ARTICLE IV *Affiliation*

This Church is autonomous and maintains the right to govern its own affairs. Recognizing, however, the benefits of cooperation with other churches, this Church voluntarily affiliates with the Southern Baptist Convention.

ARTICLE V *Membership*

SECTION I. Procedure For Admission To Membership

It is the desire of ~~North Wake Baptist Church~~ (NWBC) to freely extend its fellowship to all individuals. At the same time, NWBC desires to uphold the principles of commitment to Christ and to His church that Scripture teaches must accompany true membership in the body of Christ.

All individuals 18 years of age or older who have personally received Christ as their Savior and Lord, who have received baptism as a believer, and who desire to be committed to NWBC as a local body of believers shall become members of NWBC through the following procedures:

A. Membership Classes

Periodically membership classes shall be offered to provide teaching on:

1. The NWBC statements of faith and mission
2. The Scriptural principles of commitment to the body of Christ
3. NWBC principles of government and ministry

B. Personal Testimony and Membership Covenant

Following attendance at membership classes, the individuals desiring membership shall submit to an elder or appointed leader their personal testimony, to determine the integrity of their faith and their desire to be committed to NWBC as a local body of believers.

A signed statement of commitment shall be used as an instrument to affirm one's desire for membership and to serve as formal record of one's membership.

C. Public Affirmation of New Members Before the Congregation.

SECTION II. *Voting Rights of Membership*

Every active/resident member shall have the right to vote on the following matters **which require a two-thirds vote by the voting members present**: the annual budget of the Church, the disposition of all or substantially all of the assets of the Church, the merger or dissolution of the Church, acquisition of property and amendments to the Articles of Incorporation or **Constitution and Bylaws** of the Church, and the calling of a senior pastor.

SECTION III. *Termination of Membership*

Members shall be removed from the Church roll for the following reasons:

A. Death.

B. Transfer of membership to another church, or ceasing to be an active participant in the body of NWBC, as determined by the elders.

C. By personal request of the member, except when that member is in the process of church discipline. If it appears to the elders that a member has requested removal merely to avoid church discipline, that request may not be honored until the disciplinary process has been properly concluded.

D. Dismissal by the elders according to the following conditions:

1. The member's life and conduct is not in accordance with the membership covenant in such a way that the member hinders the ministry influence of the Church in the community.

2. Procedures for the dismissal of a member shall be according to Scriptures such as Matthew 18:15-17, and other relevant Scriptures as interpreted by the elders and the North Wake Baptist Church Discipline Policy.

SECTION IV. *Restoration of Members*

Members dismissed by the elders shall be restored by the elders according to the spirit of 2 Corinthians 2:7-8, and the North Wake Baptist Church Discipline Policy; when their life-styles are judged to be in accordance with the Membership Covenant.

SECTION V. *Voting Limitations*

Each member is entitled to one vote. Voting by proxy is prohibited.

SECTION VI. *Amendments*

This Constitution may be amended by a vote of two-thirds of the voting members present at a duly called business meeting called for the purpose of amending this Constitution providing the proposed amendment has been approved by the elders.

SECTION VII. *Dual/Watchcare Membership*

NWBC will allow those who comply with the above mentioned processes and qualifications for membership and choose to maintain dual membership at another church in another community (e.g., seminary students) to serve as fully functioning members in this fellowship, subject to the approval of the elders.

SECTION VIII. *Church Discipline*

Church discipline shall be carried out according to the North Wake Baptist Church Discipline Policy, as developed and interpreted by the elders.

ARTICLE VI *Meetings of Members*

Business meetings of the members shall be held in the times, in the manner and the purposes set forth below:

- A. An annual business meeting of the Church will be held to adopt an annual budget and conduct any other business deemed appropriate by the elders.
- B. A special business meeting of the Church may be called at any time by the elders.

C. Notification of business meetings shall be given to members by ~~any one of the following methods: oral announcement to the congregation at all Sunday services or in writing.~~

- ~~1. Distribution of written material to the congregation in attendance at all Sunday Services.~~
- ~~2. Announcement of the meeting in the Church newsletter.~~
- ~~3. Oral announcement to the congregation at all Sunday services.~~
- ~~4. By first class letter to members.~~

D. Members shall be notified no less than one week prior to a business meeting.

E. A quorum shall consist of those members present and voting.

Article VII ***Church Government***

Scripture indicates that the responsibility for shepherding and leading the church under Jesus Christ belongs to the elders. As necessary, the Scriptures also provides for the appointment of deacons to serve the church, particularly in areas of ministry that would cause the elders to neglect their Biblical responsibilities. (cf. Acts 6:1-7)

SECTION I. *Elder Responsibilities*

- A. He will be responsible to manage or administrate the local church before Almighty God. (Tit 1:7)
- B. He will be responsible to be a guardian to the truth and to care for the welfare of the members of the local church in every area (I Tim 3:1-2; Tit 1:7) responsible to God. (Heb 13:17)
- C. He is to exercise leadership and authority in the local church as a member of the board of elders. (I Tim 3:4-5)
- D. He will be required to hold fast to the Scriptures and to be able to apply them to life situations. (Tit 1:9)
- E. He will be required to reprove, rebuke and exhort according to the principles of Scripture as necessary. (Tit. 1:9, 13; 2 Tim. 3:16)
- F. He will be required to “feed the flock,” by ministering the Word of God whether publicly or privately. (I Tim 3:2, I Pet 5:2-3; Acts 20:28)
- G. He will be an example to the membership of the church. (I Pet 5:3)

H. He will be required to “shepherd” (pastor) the members of the local church.
(Acts 20:28)

SECTION II. *Elder Qualifications*

Elders shall meet the qualifications and standards of the Word of God prescribed for their office. They shall endeavor, by God’s grace, to live and serve in full conformity to the standards found in John 21:16; Heb. 13:17; 1 Tim. 3:1-7; 1 Peter 5:1-3; and Titus 1:5-9.

SECTION III. *Elder Selection*

The elders, ~~other than the senior pastor, shall serve one year terms and are subject to an annual congregational evaluation. Elders shall not serve more than 3 consecutive one year terms, at which time they shall rotate off for a minimum of one term. Exceptions to this term limitation shall require the unanimous consent of the remaining elders.~~ shall serve an undesignated term and may serve until they are dismissed by the remaining elders, resign, or voluntarily become inactive for a season. The selection process shall be as follows:

- A. The current elders shall provide the congregation with Biblical teaching concerning the tasks and qualifications of elders.
- B. The ~~elders and/or~~ congregation shall submit names of nominees to the elders for their consideration.
- C. The nominees shall perform extensive self-evaluation based upon the Scriptural teaching concerning elders.
- D. The elders¹ shall interview those nominees who remain in the process following the self-evaluation.
- E. The elders shall recommend to the congregation the nominees they ~~believe~~ ~~feel~~ best fulfill the Biblical requirements for elders.
- F. The congregation shall then evaluate the recommended nominees. Any concerns shall be taken up first with the nominee in question and then with the current elders.
- G. Following ~~the~~ congregational evaluation, ~~and contingent upon elder evaluation,~~ a time of dedication, ~~congregational affirmation,~~ and prayer shall be held for the new elders during a regular church service.

¹ The elders may choose to select a nominating committee from among the congregation to interview the nominees and make initial recommendations to the elders

SECTION IV. *Dismissal of Elders*

The dismissal of an elder shall be the responsibility of the remaining elders. Action to dismiss an elder shall require the unanimous consent of the remaining elders.

SECTION V. *Deacon/Ministry Coordinator Responsibilities*

Deacons, ~~also called Ministry Coordinators~~, are appointed by the elders to serve the church by coordinating and overseeing specific areas of ministry assigned to them ~~under the authority of~~ the elders (Acts 6:1-7). In this capacity, the task of the deacon is to protect the primary calling of the elders through taking care of necessary tasks that would otherwise detract or inhibit the elders' unique leadership ministry of teaching and shepherding. Women may serve as deaconesses in certain cases (1 Tim. 3:11; Rom. 16:1), provided such service is consistent with the biblical teaching concerning the role of women in church leadership. (1 Cor. 11:2-16; 14:33-36; 1 Tim. 2:11-15)

SECTION VI. *Deacon/Ministry Coordinator Qualifications*

Deacons shall meet the qualifications and standards of the Word of God prescribed for their office. They shall endeavor, by God's grace, to live and serve in full conformity to the standards found in 1 Tim. 3:8-13.

SECTION VII. *Deacon/Ministry Coordinator Selection*

Deacons shall serve ~~a 2-year term~~ and are subject to ~~a congregational~~ periodic elder-evaluations ~~at the end of each year~~. These terms may be extended provided that the person serving as a deacon (1) still meets the needed qualifications, (2) still desires to serve and (3) as long as the elders deem that there is still a need. There is no limit placed on the number of consecutive terms deacons may serve. The selection process shall be as follows:

- A. The current elders² shall nominate candidates for deacons as they determine a need is present.
- B. The nominees shall perform extensive self-evaluation based upon the Scriptural teaching concerning deacons.
- C. The elders shall interview those nominees who remain in the process following the self-evaluation.

² The elders may choose to select a nominating committee from among the congregation to interview the nominees and make initial recommendations to the elders.

D. The elders shall recommend the nominees to the congregation for their evaluation. Any concerns shall be taken up first with the nominee in question and then with the current elders.

E. Following the congregational evaluation, a time of dedication and congregational affirmation shall be held for the new deacons.

SECTION VIII. Dismissal of Deacons

The dismissal of a deacon shall be the responsibility of the elders. Action to dismiss a deacon shall require the unanimous consent of the elders.

Article VIII *Church Pastoral Staff*

SECTION I. Qualifications

All pastoral staff shall meet the Biblical qualifications ~~and serve as for~~ elders. All ministerial staff shall meet the Biblical qualifications for deacons. ~~The senior pastor shall serve as one of the elders. Other pastoral staff may serve as elders if selected according to Article VII of this Constitution.~~

SECTION II. Selection and Calling of a Senior Pastor

In the event of a vacancy in the office of senior pastor, the elders³ shall conduct a search for an acceptable candidate to present to the congregation. Having selected the candidate, he shall be presented to the congregation for a congregational vote. The extension of a call shall be made upon an affirmative vote by a minimum of two-thirds of the members present and voting at a duly called business meeting.

SECTION III. Hiring of Church Staff

The hiring of ~~support church~~ staff shall be the responsibility of the senior pastor. The hiring of pastoral and ministerial staff shall be subject to the consensus approval of the elders and the affirmation of the congregation.

SECTION IV. Dismissal of Senior Pastor

The dismissal of the senior pastor shall be the responsibility of the elders. Action to dismiss the senior pastor shall require the unanimous consent of all of the remaining, ~~active~~ elders.

³The elders may choose to select a nominating committee from among the congregation to interview the nominees and make initial recommendations to the elders.

SECTION V. Dismissal of Ministerial and Pastoral Staff

The dismissal of a ministerial or pastoral staff member shall be the responsibility of the elders acting upon the recommendation of the senior pastor. Action to dismiss a member of the ministerial and pastoral staff shall require the unanimous consent of all of the **remaining, active** elders.

Article IX. *Biblical Counseling*

- A. We believe that the Bible provides **full thorough** guidance and instruction for faith and life. Therefore, our counseling shall be based on scriptural principles rather than those of secular psychology or psychiatry. Neither the pastoral staff nor the lay counselors of this church are trained or licensed as psychotherapists or mental health professionals, nor should they be expected to follow the methods of such specialists.
- B. Although some members of the church work in professional fields outside the church, when serving as pastoral or lay counselors within the church they do not provide the same kind of professional advice and services that they do when they are hired in their professional capacities. Therefore, members who have significant legal, financial, medical, or other technical questions should seek advice from independent professionals. Our pastoral and lay counselors shall be available to cooperate with such advisors and help members to consider their advice in the light of relevant scriptural principles.
- C. All Christians struggle with sin and its effect upon our lives and relationships. (Rom. 3:23; 7:7-25) Whenever a Christian is unable to overcome sin in any aspect of their life through private efforts, God commands that he should seek assistance from other members, and especially from the pastors, elders and trained lay counselors for pastoral counseling and oversight. (Rom. 15:14; Gal. 6:1-2; Col. 3:16; 2 Tim. 3:16-4:2; Heb. 10:24-25, 13:17; James 5:16) NWBC encourages and enjoins its members to make confession to and seek counsel from each other and especially from our pastoral and lay counselors.
- D. Our pastors and elders and lay counselors shall carefully refrain from gossip (Prov. 16:28, 26:20), respect the confidences of others and protect all information that they receive through pastoral counseling, subject to the following guidelines.

When pastors, elders, or lay counselors believe it is biblically necessary, they may disclose confidential information to appropriate people in the following circumstances:

1. When the pastor or elder or lay counselor is uncertain as to how to counsel a person about a particular problem and needs to seek advice from other pastors or elders or counseling supervisors, or if the person attends another church, from the pastors or elders of that church; (Prov. 11:14, 13:10, 15:22, 19:20, 20:18; Matt. 18:15-17)
2. When the person who disclosed the information or any other person is in imminent danger of serious harm unless others intervene. (Prov. 24:11-12)
3. When a person refuses to repent of sin and it becomes necessary to institute disciplinary proceedings (Matt 18:15-20 and North Wake Baptist Church Discipline Policy) or seek the assistance of individuals or agencies outside this church. (Rom. 13:1-5); or
4. When required by law to report suspected child abuse.

Article X.

Foundational "Statement on Marriage, Gender and Sexuality"

A. Inasmuch as the Bible was written by divinely inspired men and is God's revelation of himself and his will to man, is the wholly true Word of God, true in all it affirms, and is the unique, full and final authority on all matters, we believe only the Scriptures can describe what is true and beautiful about God's creation. As such,

1. We believe that God created each person as either male or female, and that these two unique complementary genders are in line with God's created intention and will for His image bearers who are designed to reflect the image of the one true God (Gen.1.26-27). We believe that the denial of one's given biological gender is a repudiation of God's intent and design, and constitute a distortion and rejection of His image within that person.
2. We believe that the term "marriage" has only one meaning: the God ordained uniting of one man and one woman into a single exclusive union (Gen 2.18-25). We believe that God intends sexual intimacy to occur only between one man and one woman so united to each other (1 Cor. 6.18; 7.2-5; Heb. 13.4). We believe that God designed and commanded sexual intimacy to be practiced exclusively within marriage between one man and one woman.
3. We believe that sexual intimacy outside of a marriage between one man and one woman to be immoral, sinful and offensive to God. This includes, but is not limited to, adultery, fornication, polygamy, transgenderism, homosexual and/or bisexual conduct, bestiality, incest and the use of pornography (Matt. 15.18-20; 1 Cor. 6.9-10).

B. North Wake Church, as the local Body of Christ, believes that in order to preserve its mission, its integrity, and to provide a biblical example to our members and the community in which we live, it will be required that all persons employed by North Wake Church in any capacity, or those who serve as volunteers, or those individuals and/or groups affiliated with North Wake Church in any official manner, agree to and abide by this Statement on Marriage, Gender, and Sexuality (Matt 5.16; Phil 2.14-16; 1Thess 5.22).

C. In accordance with the Mission of North Wake Church, we believe that every person should be afforded love, kindness, compassion, dignity and respect (Mark 12.28.31; Luke 6.31; 1Pet 3.15). Unloving attitudes or words directed toward any individual are not Christ-like, and are in opposition to the Mission of North Wake Church.