

CONSTITUTION
of
GOSPELWAY BAPTIST CHURCH

China Grove, North Carolina

Affirmed: September 8th, 2019

Amended: October 1st, 2023

PREAMBLE

Since it pleased Almighty God, by His Holy Spirit, to call certain of His servants to unite here in 2019 under the name Gospelway Baptist Church; for the worship of God and the spread of the gospel of Jesus Christ, and He has sustained and prospered this work to the present day; and

Whereas we, the members of Gospelway Baptist Church, having searched the Scriptures under the guidance of His Spirit, have recognized the need to constitute ourselves to closely conform to His will for the Church in this age and prepare ourselves for greater efforts in His name.

Now therefore we, the members of Gospelway Baptist Church, do hereby organize ourselves in accord with the North Carolina Nonprofit Corporation Act and adopt this Constitution as our articles of governance, to be always interpreted to reflect the character of and bring glory to Jesus Christ, and as revealed in the Holy Scriptures and as articulated in our confession of faith.

I. ARTICLE: NAME

The name of this church is: Gospelway Baptist Church.

II. ARTICLE: REASON

Seeing the need, and through the leading of the Spirit; Like-minded believers, partnering with, and through Mercy Baptist Church [2995 Filbert Highway, Clover, South Carolina], and Pastor Benjamin Workman, to establish a gospel-centered church in Rowan County.

III. ARTICLE: PURPOSE

To Promote, Propagate and Proclaim the Gospel to All.

IV. ARTICLE: GOAL

A. To be Gospel Focused:

We are committed to knowing what the gospel is, and what it is not.

To focusing on the good news that God has given to mankind, and allowing this to be the structure, fiber, and cause for everything that we do in this life.

B. To be Gospel-Centered:

We are committed to expositional, gospel-centered preaching.

We are committed to a gospel-centered function in church government, membership, discipleship, and missions.

We are committed to understanding the implications of gospel-centrality in the songs & procedures of our worship services.

We are committed to leading strategic transitions toward the gospel-centeredness of our home, church, and daily lives.

We are committed to a youth and children's ministry that is gospel centered. Encouraging growth in the grace of God from an early age.

C. To be Gospel Driven:

1.) In our Worship – Seeking to worship God in, and through the truth of His word.

We want our worship services to be pleasing to Him. We want our corporate worship to inspire and instruct our all-of-life worship Monday through Saturday. To gather with God's people on the Lord's Day to worship at God's throne under the authority of God's word is our solemn duty and joyful privilege.

2.) In our Ministry – Seeking to show the gospel in our actions.

We want to edify the body of Christ, using the gifts that we have been given to produce a healthy, thriving church.

3.) In our Evangelism – Seeking to declare the gospel intentionally, and clearly.

Declaring the Gospel is a job given to every Christian. We will be intentional in searching for an opportunity to contact a neighbor, co-worker, and others to share the Gospel with at least one person who does not know the Savior.

4.) In our Fellowship – Seeking to find our identification in Christ and with the Christian community.

In Christ, we are fundamentally new and belong to the people of heaven. The language, values, customs, and expectations of this world increasingly feel foreign to us. We're sojourners, we're strangers. We're pilgrims together in this world. No matter our

background, racially, culturally, or traditionally, we come together as members of the body of Christ.

5.) *In our Discipleship* – Seeking to intentionally pour ourselves into each other’s lives, growing in grace together.

“Make disciples” implies intentionality and process. Disciple-making does not just happen because a church exists, and people show up. It is a deliberate process. We are called to pour ourselves into the lives of one another, as Christ poured Himself out for us.

6.) *In our Duplication* – Seeking to duplicate ourselves through the planting of churches, locally, and abroad, as the Spirit leads.

God promised to build His church, and this will be done through the establishment of local assemblies, which are produced from, and by local assemblies. The church is not meant to be a cul-de-sac on the Great Commission highway. The nations—and the lost in this nation—need new church plants.

V. ARTICLE: VISION

Above all else, we will be found seeking to find rest in Christ.

We believe that Jesus meant it, when He said, "Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavily laden, and I will give you rest", and we will make it our mission to take Him at His word.

VI. ARTICLE: MEMBERSHIP

A. Qualifications

To qualify for membership in this church, a person must be a believer in Jesus Christ who gives evidence of regeneration, who has been baptized in obedience to Christ following his or her regeneration, and who wholeheartedly believes in the Christian faith as revealed in the Bible. Each member must agree to submit to the teaching of scripture as expressed in the Statement of Faith. The elders shall be responsible for determining each person’s qualification for membership. In making this determination, they may rely on a person’s profession of faith, or such other evidence, as the elders deem appropriate.

B. Admission of Members

To be admitted into church membership, applicants shall be ordinarily, but not necessarily, recommended by the elders for admission and must be accepted by vote of the members at any regular or special meetings of the members, and shall at that point relinquish their membership in other churches.

C. Duties and Privileges of Membership

Church membership is a responsibility; therefore, each member shall be expected to participate in and contribute to the ministry and life of the church, consistent with God's leading and with the gifts, time, and material resources each has received from God. Only those shall be entitled to serve in the ministries of the church who are members of this congregation.

Notwithstanding, non-members may serve the church for purposes of administration and professional consultation. Under Christ, this congregation is governed by its members. Therefore, it is the privilege and responsibility of members to attend members' meetings and vote on the election of officers, on decisions regarding membership status, and on such other matters as may be submitted to a vote.

For this cause and for voting purposes only any member or members who have, without just reason, withdrawn themselves from the regular meetings and purpose of this body for three consecutive months (90 days) shall forgo any right to vote on matters brought before its members.

Examples of the just reason may be but are not limited to military service, school attendance, job requirements, or health difficulties.

These same persons shall be given an additional consecutive three-month period to become a regular and consistent participant once again in the activities of this body. A failure to do so will result in being removed from the membership. This removal from membership will be a result of said member's unwillingness to bring themselves back to good standing and will therefore not require the vote of the membership.

D. On Church Discipline

Any member consistently neglectful of his or her duties or guilty of conduct by which the name of our Lord Jesus Christ may be dishonored, and so opposing the welfare of the church and/or rendering doubtful a profession of faith, shall be subject to the admonition of the elders and the discipline of the church, according to the instructions of our Lord in Matthew 18: 15–17 and the example of scripture. Church discipline, then, should ordinarily be contemplated after individual private admonition has failed.

1. Church discipline can include admonition by the elders or congregation, deposition from office, and ex-communication

(See Matt. 18: 15–17; 1 Tim. 5: 19–20; 1 Cor. 5: 4–5).

2. The purpose of such discipline should be for the repentance, reconciliation, and spiritual growth of the individual disciplined

(see Prov. 15: 5; 29: 15; I Cor. 4: 14; Eph. 6: 4; I Tim. 3: 4–5; Heb. 12: 1–11; Ps. 119: 115; 141: 5; Prov. 17: 10; 25: 12; 27: 5; Eccl. 7: 5; Matt. 7: 26–27; 18: 15–17; Luke 17: 3; Acts 2: 40; I Cor. 5: 5; Gal. 6: 1–5; II Thess. 3: 6, 14–15; I Tim. 1: 20; Titus 1: 13–14; James 1: 22);

3. For the instruction in righteousness and the good of other Christians, as an example to them

(See Prov. 13: 20; Rom. 15: 14; I Cor. 5: 11; 15: 33; Col. 3: 16; 1 Thess. 5: 14 [note this is written to the whole church, not just to leaders]; I Tim. 5: 20; Titus 1: 11; Heb. 10: 24–25).

4. For the purity of the church

(See I Cor. 5: 6–7; II Cor. 13: 10; Eph. 5: 27; II John 10; Jude 24; Rev. 21: 2).

5. For the good of our corporate witness to non-Christians

(See Prov. 28: 7; Matt. 5: 13 16; John 13: 35; Acts 5: 1–14; Eph. 5: 11; I Tim. 3: 7; II Pet. 2: 2; I John 3: 10); and

6. Supremely for the glory of God by reflecting His holy character

(see Deut. 5: 11; I Kings 11: 2; II Chron. 19: 2; Ezra 6: 21; Neh. 9: 2; Isa. 52: 11; Ez. 36: 20; Matt. 5: 16; John 15: 8; 18: 17, 25; Rom. 2: 24; 15: 5–6; II Cor. 6: 14–7: 1; Eph. 1: 4; 5: 27; 1 Pet. 2: 12).

E. Termination of Membership

The church shall recognize the termination of a person's membership following his or her death, and it shall also recognize the termination of a person's membership following his or her self-professed apostasy as confirmed by a congregational vote. Additionally, the church may recognize the termination of a person's membership after he or she has voluntarily resigned or joined another church.

Membership may also be terminated as an act of church discipline (ordinarily, but not necessarily, at the recommendation of the elders) upon the vote of at least three-fourths of the members present at any regular or special meetings of the members.

The church shall have authority to refuse a member's voluntary resignation or transfer of membership to another church, either for the purpose of proceeding with a process of church discipline or for any other biblical reason.

VII. ARTICLE: MEETINGS

A. Worship Meetings

Worship services shall be held each Lord's Day and may be held throughout the week as the church determines.

B. Members' Meetings

In every meeting together, members shall act in that spirit of mutual trust, openness, and loving consideration which is appropriate within the body of our Lord Jesus Christ.

There shall be a regular members' meeting annually, at some time apart from a public worship service agreed upon by the membership.

An elder designated by the elders shall preside as moderator at all members' meetings of the church. The elders shall see that the stated meetings of the church are regularly held and that required reports are submitted to the church by the responsible members.

Provided all constitutional provisions for notification have been met, a quorum shall be understood to be met by those members present. All votes shall be tallied based on the number of votes cast by members present.

A budget shall be approved by the membership at a members' meeting not more than three months after the start of the fiscal year. Congregational approval shall proceed, without amendment, as a single vote on the budget in its entirety. Prior to this approval and subject to the elders' discretion, expenditures may continue at the prior year's level.

At any regular or special members' meeting, officers may be elected, and positions filled as needed, so long as all relevant constitutional requirements have been met.

Special members' meetings may be called as required by the elders, or at the written request, submitted to the elders, of ten percent of the voting membership.

The date, time, and purpose of any special meeting shall be announced at all public services of the church within two weeks preceding the meeting and posted at all entrances to the church during that time.

In the event of a written request from the members, the elders shall call a special meeting to be held within one month of their receipt of the request.

VIII. ARTICLE: OFFICERS

A. Summary

The Biblical offices in the church are elders and deacons. In addition, our church recognizes the administrative positions under this constitution of clerk and treasurer. All officers must be members of this church prior to assuming their responsibilities.

B. Elders

The elders shall be comprised of not less than three men who satisfy the qualifications for the office of elder set forth in I Timothy 3: 1–7 and Titus 1: 6–9.

No elder shall hold the office of deacon during his tenure.

Subject to the will of the congregation, the elders shall oversee the ministry and resources of the church.

In keeping with the principles set forth in Acts 6: 1–6 and I Peter 5: 1–4, the elders shall devote their time to prayer, the ministry of the Word (by teaching and encouraging sound doctrine), and shepherding God's flock.

The church shall recognize men gifted and willing to serve in this calling, in accordance with the constitutional provisions on elections. These men shall be received as gifts of Christ to His church and set apart as elders.

This recognition shall be reaffirmed by the church triennially. After an elder, other than the senior or associate pastor(s), has served two consecutive three-year terms, he may only be elected to the office of elder after having not served at least one year.

An elder's term of office may be terminated by resignation or by dismissal. Any two members with reason to believe that an elder should be dismissed should express such concern to the elders and, if necessary, to the congregation.

Any such action shall be done in accordance with the instructions of our Lord in Matthew 18: 15–17 and I Timothy 5: 17–21. Any of the elders may be dismissed by a three-fourths vote of the members at any members' meeting of the church.

The elders shall take particular responsibility to examine and instruct prospective members, examine and recommend all prospective candidates for offices and positions, oversee the work of the deacons and appointed church agents and committees, conduct worship services, administer the ordinances of baptism and communion, equip the membership for the work of the ministry, encourage sound doctrine and practice, admonish and correct error, oversee the process of church discipline, coordinate and promote the ministries of the church and mobilize the church for world missions.

Further, the elders should seek to ensure that all who minister the Word to the congregation, including outside speakers, affirm our fundamental gospel convictions and do not teach our church anything contrary to the Statement of Faith.

The elders may establish ministry positions or committees to assist them in fulfilling their responsibilities. The elders may also propose funding for new paid staff positions. The membership shall approve all candidates to fill the positions of senior and associate pastor. The scope and approval of job descriptions for any staff position shall reside in the hands of those with hiring authority for that position.

Each year the elders, after consultation with the deacons and the membership shall present to the church an itemized budget. This budget shall be presented for discussion at a regular or specially called budget meeting and called up for a vote at the following members' meeting. No money shall be solicited by or on behalf of the church or any of its ministries without the approval of the elders.

The elders shall elect a chairman of elders' meetings and shall also elect one of their number to serve as moderator of members' meetings. For purposes of compliance with the nonprofit corporation laws of the State of North Carolina, the elders shall elect one of their number excluding the Senior Pastor or any Associate Pastor to serve as the president of the corporation.

C. The Senior Pastor

The senior pastor shall be an elder. He shall perform the duties of an elder described in Section 2, above, and shall be recognized by the church as particularly gifted and called to the full-time ministry of preaching and teaching.

His call shall not be subject to the triennial reaffirmation or to the term limitation set out in Article 8, Section 2, for elders. His call shall be defined as per Article 9, *Section 3*.

He shall preach on the Lord's Day, administer the ordinances of baptism and communion, and perform such other duties as usually pertain to that office, or as set forth in the constitution.

The senior pastor shall have primary responsibility for the supervision and evaluation of staff members.

This responsibility may, on a case-by-case basis, be delegated to another staff member. In the absence or incapacity of the senior pastor, the elders shall assume responsibility for his duties, any of which can be delegated.

D. Associate Pastors

The church may call additional pastors whose relationship with the senior pastor is that of an associate.

An associate pastor shall be an elder. He shall perform the duties of an elder described in Section 2, above, and shall be recognized by the church as particularly gifted and called to the full-time ministry of preaching and teaching. His call shall not be subject to the triennial reaffirmation, or the term limitation set out in Article 8, Section 2, for elders. His call shall be defined as per Article 9, Section 4.

He shall assist the senior pastor in the performance of his regular duties and shall perform any other duties as usually pertain to the office of pastor, or as outlined in the constitution, or which may be specifically assigned to him by the congregation.

In the absence or incapacity of the senior pastor for defined periods of time (such as sabbatical or illness), the associate pastor(s) shall assume the responsibility for his duties under the oversight of the elders.

E. Assistant Pastors

The church may call additional pastors, from within the congregation only, whose relationship to the senior pastor is that of an assistant.

An assistant pastor shall be an elder. He shall perform the duties of an elder described in Section 2, above, and shall be recognized by the church as particularly gifted and called to the full-time ministry of preaching and teaching.

His call shall be subject to the triennial reaffirmation and term limitation set out in Article 8, section 2, for elders. His call shall be defined as per Article 9, Section 5

He shall assist the senior pastor and associate pastor(s) in the performance of their regular duties and shall perform any other duties as usually pertain to the office of the pastor. The elders shall define the responsibilities of the assistant pastor(s).

F. Senior Pastoral Assistants

With the approval of the elders, the senior pastor may hire additional staff to assist with pastoral ministry, designated as senior pastoral assistants. These shall not be pastors, though they may be recognized as elders should they be nominated by the elders and elected by the congregation, in accordance with Article 8, Section 2.

Should the congregation recognize a senior pastoral assistant as an elder, he will assume the title and responsibilities of assistant pastor as described in Article 8, Section 5.

The elders shall define the responsibilities of the senior pastoral assistant(s). They shall serve at the will of the elders for an initial term of up to four years, though that term may be extended with the approval of the elders.

G. Pastoral Assistants

The senior pastor may hire additional staff to assist with pastoral ministry, designated as pastoral assistants.

These shall not be pastors, though they may be recognized as elders should they be nominated by the elders and elected by the congregation, in accordance with Article 8, Section 2.

The senior pastor shall assign the responsibilities of the pastoral assistant(s). They shall serve at the will of the senior pastor for a term of one year, though that term may be extended with the approval of the elders.

H. Deacons

The deacons shall be comprised of not less than three men described in I Timothy 3: 8–13. The church shall recognize, in accordance with the constitutional provisions on elections, men who are giving of themselves in service to the church, and who possess gifts of service.

In keeping with the principles set forth in Acts 6:1-6, these members shall be received as gifts of Christ to His church and set apart as deacons. They shall be elected to one term lasting for a maximum of four years and may only be elected to another term after not holding the office for at least one year.

Deacons shall care for the temporal needs of members, attend to the accommodations for public worship, and encourage and support those able to help others and those with gifts of

administration. Serving God through the service of His bride. In addition deposits of monies given to the church shall be gathered, counted, and deposited by the deacons, and reported to the treasurer.

The elders, with assistance from the deacons, shall receive, hold, and disburse a fund for benevolence, reporting on its use to the elders at their request, and reporting to the church its total receipts and total disbursements only.

The deacons with the agreement of the elders may establish unpaid administrative positions or committees of members to assist them in fulfilling their responsibilities in the church.

For purposes of compliance with the nonprofit corporation laws of the State of North Carolina, the deacons shall elect one of their number with the approval of the elders to serve as the vice president of the corporation.

I. Clerk

It shall be the duty of the clerk to record the minutes of all regular and special members' meetings of the church, to preserve an accurate roll of the membership, and to render reports as requested by the elders of the church. The clerk, who shall be a member in good standing, shall be nominated by the elders and elected by the congregation to serve a term of four years.

In the absence or incapacity of the clerk, the elders shall appoint a member to perform the duties of the church clerk. For purposes of compliance with the nonprofit corporation laws of the State of North Carolina, the clerk shall serve as the secretary of the corporation. The church clerk shall ensure that dated copies of the most recent revision of this constitution shall be available for all church members.

J. Treasurer

The treasurer, who shall not be an active elder, deacon, or paid church staff member shall be a member in good standing. The treasurer shall support the elders in providing oversight of the financial and accounting activities of the church, shall not have custody of church funds, and shall ensure that all funds and securities of the church are properly secured in such banks, financial institutions, or depositories as appropriate.

The treasurer shall also be responsible for presenting regular reports of the account balances, revenues, and expenses of the church at each annual members' meeting. This responsibility may be delegated with the approval of the elders.

The treasurer shall also see that full and accurate accounts of receipts and disbursements are kept in books, hard copy and/or digital, belonging to the church, and that adequate controls are implemented to ensure that all funds belonging to the church are appropriately managed by any officer, employee, or agent of the church.

The treasurer shall render to the elders, whenever they may require it, an account of all activities as treasurer and the financial condition of the church.

The treasurer shall be nominated by the elders and elected by the congregation to serve a term of four years.

For purposes of compliance with the nonprofit corporation laws of the State of North Carolina, the treasurer shall serve as the treasurer of the corporation.

K. Assistant Treasurer

The assistant treasurer shall be nominated by the elders and elected by the congregation to serve a term of four years or less in conjunction with that of the treasurer.

The assistant treasurer shall work in assistance to and alongside of the treasurer. He or she will be a subsequent signer on all accounts for which the treasurer is the primary signer. At the end of their term and at the nomination of the elders they may be presented to the membership for the office of treasurer.

IX. ARTICLE: ELECTIONS

A. Principles

The process for church elections shall be interpreted and conducted to fulfill the following principles:

Substantial prayer, both individually and corporately, should be an integral part of the election process; Nominations should proceed with the support of the elders; All candidates for church office should be treated with the grace, kindness, and honesty appropriate in evaluating fellow members; The election process shall express that spirit of mutual trust, openness, and loving consideration that is appropriate within the body of our Lord Jesus Christ.

B. Selection of Officers

The election of officers shall be held at a members' meeting of the church. Names of nominees to serve as elders, deacons, clerks, or treasurer shall be presented by the elders at the previous members' meeting (providing that the previous meeting occurred at least eight weeks prior), and the election shall proceed as directed by the moderator.

The elders should seek recommendations and involvement from the general membership in the nomination process. Any member with reason to believe that a nominated candidate is unqualified for an office should express such concern to the elders. Members intending to speak in opposition to a candidate should express their objection to the elders as far in advance as possible before the relevant church members' meeting.

The moderator shall declare elected all men receiving a three-fourths majority of all votes cast for the office of an elder at a regularly scheduled members meeting. For all other offices, the moderator shall declare elected all persons receiving a simple majority of all votes cast; abstentions will not be considered as votes cast.

The persons elected shall assume their respective offices upon election unless another date has been specifically designated.

C. Calling of the Senior Pastor

In the calling of any man to this position, the same basic process of calling an elder must be followed.

In addition, however, the church must be given adequate opportunity to assess the preaching gifts of any potential senior pastor and, before being asked to express its judgment, must receive assurance from the elders that, having interviewed the man concerned, they are in no doubt as to his wholehearted assent to the Statement of Faith.

Notice of the nomination of a man to be elected to membership and called as senior pastor (which shall include, if necessary, election to membership of his wife if he is married) must be given at two Sunday morning services following the nomination, prior to the vote at a members' meeting, with not less than a 90% vote of approval.

D. Calling of Associate Pastor

In the calling of any man to the position of associate pastor, the same basic process of calling an elder must be followed.

In addition, however, the church must be given adequate opportunity to assess the preaching gifts of any potential associate pastor and, before being asked to express its judgment, must receive assurance from the elders that, having interviewed the man concerned, they are in no doubt as to his wholehearted assent to the Statement of Faith.

Notice of the nomination of a man, to be called as associate pastor (which shall include, if necessary, election to membership of him and his wife if he is married) must be given at two Sunday morning services following the nomination, prior to the vote at a members' meeting.

E. Calling of Assistant Pastor

The calling of any man to the position of an assistant pastor requires that this man has been recognized and called by the congregation to the office of elder, according to the process described in Article 8, Section 2.

Such a man may then be called by the elders to serve as assistant pastor with defined duties for a fixed period specified by the elders in the terms of his call.

X. ARTICLE: INDEMNIFICATION

A. Mandatory Indemnification

If a legal claim or criminal allegation is made against a person because he or she is or was an officer, employee, or agent of the church, the church shall provide indemnification against liability and costs incurred in defending against the claim if the elders determine that the person

acted (a) in good faith, (b) with the care an ordinarily prudent person in a similar position would exercise under similar circumstances, and (c) in a manner the person reasonably believed to be in the best interest of the church, and the person had no reasonable cause to believe his or her conduct was unlawful.

B. Permissive Indemnification

At the discretion of the elders, the church also may indemnify any person who acted in good faith and believed that his or her conduct was in the church's best interest and lawful.

C. Procedure

If a quorum of the elders is not available for an indemnification determination because of the number of elders seeking indemnification, the requisite determination may be made by the membership or by special legal counsel appointed by the membership.

XI. ARTICLE: DISPUTE RESOLUTION

Believing that the Bible commands Christians to make every effort to live at peace and to resolve disputes with each other in private or within the Christian Church (see, e.g., Matthew 18: 15–20, I Corinthians 6: 1–8), the church shall require its members to resolve ordinary civil disputes among themselves according to biblically based principles, without reliance on the secular courts.

In the case of criminal activity within the congregation, the State has a God-given responsibility to protect the peace and security of its citizens that should be supported and encouraged. Consistent with its call to peacemaking, the church shall encourage the use of biblically based principles to resolve disputes between itself and those outside the church, whether Christian or pagan and whether individuals or corporate entities.

XII. ARTICLE: DEVIATIONS OF PRACTICE

If a church member believes the church to be out of accord with this constitution, he or she should inform an elder. When the elders determine that the church is out of accord with this constitution, they must provide an update at each member's meeting until the situation is remedied.

XIII. ARTICLE: AMENDMENTS

The Statement of Faith and Church Covenant may be amended by a three-fourths (75%) vote of the members present and voting at a members' meeting, provided the amendment shall have been offered in writing at the previous members' meeting, and shall have been announced from the pulpit at church services two successive Sundays prior to such vote.

This constitution may be amended by a three-fourths (75%) vote of the members present and voting at a members' meeting, provided the amendment shall have been offered in writing at the previous members' meeting, and shall have been announced from the pulpit at church services two successive Sundays prior to such vote. The revised version of this constitution shall be made available to all church members by the church clerk.

XIV. ARTICLE: DISSOLUTION

If the elders of the church determine that there is reasonable cause to dissolve the Gospelway Baptist Church as a corporate entity, the elders shall recommend dissolution to the membership. The elders shall call a special members' meeting as set out in Article 7, Section 2.

Notice of the meeting shall be sent in writing to the membership and posted at all entrances to the church building no less than thirty days prior to the meeting. The notice shall state that the purpose of the meeting is to consider the dissolution of the corporation and how the assets of the corporation will be distributed after all creditors have been paid. At least three-fourths of the members present at the meeting must vote in the affirmative to approve the proposal of dissolution.

After approval of dissolution by the members, all the corporation's debts shall be fully satisfied. None of its assets or holdings shall be divided among the members or other individuals, but shall be irrevocably designated, as approved by a simple majority of the members present at a members' meeting, to one or more religious organizations which meet the qualifications described in Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code and which are in agreement with the letter and spirit of the Statement of Faith. Any such assets not so disposed of shall be disposed of exclusively for such exempt purposes by a court of competent authority where the principal office of the corporation is then located.

XV. ARTICLE: AMENDMENTS *(Affirmed October 2021)*

**Any following mention of Gospelway Baptist Church will refer to Gospelway Baptist Church – Rowan*

Amendment I - Church Planting

A. Purpose

The primary purpose of a church plant of Gospelway Baptist Church shall be to bring glory to God by worshipping Him, ministering to the spiritual needs of the flock, and pointing people to the rest found in the sufficiency of Christ.

B. Statement of Faith

A church plant of Gospelway Baptist Church shall maintain the same Statement of Faith as defined in *the Preamble* section of the Gospelway Baptist Church Constitution.

C. Incorporation

A church plant of Gospelway Baptist Church shall not file Articles of Incorporation until authorized to do so by the Gospelway Baptist Church Elders.

D. Covenant of Membership

A church plant of Gospelway Baptist Church shall maintain the same provisions as defined in *Article VI*, the Membership section of the Gospelway Baptist Church Constitution.

E. Ordinances

A church plant of Gospelway Baptist Church shall maintain the same ordinances as defined in *the Preamble* section of the Gospelway Baptist Church Constitution.

F. Congregational Meetings

A church plant of Gospelway Baptist Church shall maintain the same provisions as defined in *Article VII*, the Congregational, and Member Meetings section of the Gospelway Baptist Church Constitution.

G. Elders, Deacons, and Other Matters

The Elders of Gospelway Baptist Church have the ultimate responsibility for church planting.

Upon the establishment of a church plant, the Elders of Gospelway Baptist Church will appoint Church Plant Elders.

The goal of the church plant of Gospelway Baptist Church is to be a fully autonomous independent local church. An agreed-upon timeframe to achieve independence will be determined by the Gospelway Baptist Church Elders.

In determining this timeframe, several factors, including the presence of qualified spiritual leadership will be considered. A specific effective date for the church plant to become a fully autonomous independent local church must be approved by the Gospelway Baptist Church Elders.

Prior to such an effective date being approved, the Church Plant Elders must have prepared and have ready for approval and implementation a proposed church constitution to govern the affairs of the church plant as it becomes an independent local church.

The Church Plant Elders will have functional responsibility for the ongoing, day-to-day ministries and decision-making regarding the church plant.

The Church Plant Elders have the responsibility for determining a name for the new church plant in consultation with the Gospelway Baptist Church Elders. If it is determined by the Church Plant elders that the name Gospelway will be used, use the www.gospelway.church website as an alternative location may be addressed. This will in name only connect the two churches, and Gospelway Baptist Church will act in name only as a *network head* for the stewardship of the resources.

All decisions addressed specifically by the Gospelway Baptist Church Constitution, including but not limited to the discipline of members, the appointment and termination of Elders, pastoral staff, support staff, and Deacons, and matters pertaining to the physical property, finances, budget, and contracts of a church plant, shall be subject to the review and approval of the Gospelway Baptist Church Elders.

A meeting involving the Gospelway Baptist Church Elders and the Church Plant Elders will take place no less than once every three months, and more often as deemed necessary to facilitate such reviews.

In addition, a church plant of Gospelway Baptist Church shall maintain the same provisions as defined in Articles X through XIV of the Gospelway Baptist Church Constitution.

Amendment II

A. Elders of a Church Plant

The functioning elders of any church planted will be added to the elder board of Gospelway Baptist Church for the purpose of decisions pertaining to the Church Plant.

The functioning elders of any church planted will remain on the elder board of Gospelway Baptist Church until the official chartering of the Church Plant. At which time they will be commissioned, and if necessary, ordained, by Gospelway Baptist Church as the autonomous leadership of the Church Plant

During their time on the elder Board of Gospelway Baptist Church, functioning elders of the Church Plant will serve in a representative capacity only in matters pertaining to Gospelway Baptist Church.

B. Statement of Faith for Elders

To be considered for an eldership role at Gospelway Baptist Church or a Planted Church, one must adhere to the teaching of the 1689 London Baptist Confession*.

**of Gospelway Baptist Church*

C. Financial Procedures for Church Plant

All monies received from the church plant will be directed through Gospelway Baptist Church and applied to the account specifically to the Church Plant. The monies will be redistributed back to the Elders of the Planted Church. Monies will be left at the discretion of the Elders of the Church Plant, who will be responsible and accountable to update the Elders of Gospelway Baptist Church.

BYLAWS
of
GOSPELWAY BAPTIST CHURCH

China Grove, North Carolina

Affirmed: August 21st, 2022

Amended: October 1st, 2023

**Any following mention of Articles or Sections refer to the Constitution of Gospelway Baptist Church*

I. ARTICLE: NAME

In accordance with Article 1, the name of the church shall be Gospelway Baptist Church.

II. ARTICLE: STATEMENT OF FAITH

A. The Bible

We hold that the Holy Scriptures are God's verbally inspired, inerrant, and infallible Word – and are, therefore, authoritative, and sufficient (Ps. 19:7-9; John 10:35; 2 Tim. 3:16-17).

As He promised, we believe that His Word was inspired in its autograph, preserved in its original language, and translated into various languages through the ages.

B. Membership

In accordance with *Article 6*, each member must affirm a Subscription of Unity with the Confession of Faith held by Gospelway Baptist Church.

C. Leadership

In accordance with *Article 8*, each teaching officer shall also affirm the statement of faith of Gospelway Baptist Church.

To maintain constancy and unity, all members of the elder board of Gospelway Baptist Church shall subscribe to the 1689 London Baptist Confession of Faith. (of *Gospelway Baptist Church*)

The eldership shall also affirm the following hermeneutic in their teaching ministry.

- 1) A historical understanding of the distinction between the law and the gospel.
- 2) A historically Baptist covenantal hermeneutic of scripture. (*Redemptive Historic*)
- 3) A confessional understanding of the Christian faith and the church.
- 4) A Two Kingdoms Principle of politics and civil governing

D. Preferred Translation:

A preferred translation for preaching and public reading shall be held by the leadership of Gospelway Baptist Church for the sake of consistency among those who teach and lead the body. This shall have no bearing or effect on the reading and/or study of any individual with the congregation. Changes in preferred translation may be made by a vote of the elders.

The preferred translation for the preaching and public reading of the elders of Gospelway Baptist Church shall be the *King James Version* of the Scripture.

III. ARTICLE: COVENANT OF MEMBERSHIP

A. Membership Application

In accordance with *Section 6*, Membership may be applied for, with oversight by the elders, in the following manners:

- 1.) Statement of intent
- 2.) Transfer of a letter
- 3.) The profession of faith and baptism

B. Membership Agreement/Affirmation

In accordance with *Section 6*, all who would wish to join with this assembly shall:

- 1.) Affirm the Covenant of Gospelway Baptist Church
- 2.) Affirm the Subscription of Unity
- 3.) Affirm the Constitution and Bylaws of Gospelway Baptist Church
- 4.) Participate in a Next Steps class and an interview with the elder(s)

C. Qualifications for Membership

Members must give a clear testimony of saving faith in the person and work of Jesus Christ, have been baptized, agree with the Statement of Faith (or have made their disagreement known to an Elder), adhere to the Covenant of Gospelway Baptist Church, and have their membership approved by the Elders and affirmed by the membership in a scheduled Members Meeting.

Following their acceptance, new members will be introduced and welcomed by the congregation following a regular worship service.

D. Voting Privileges

The voting privileges of the membership shall be restricted to those 18 years of age or older.

E. Submitting to the Elders

The members of the church are called to be submissive to the leadership of the Elders according to the biblical mandate. Members are called to serve in the church by exercising their spiritual gift(s) for the edification of the body of Christ, and by stirring up the gift(s) of others. (Heb. 13:7,17; 1 Thess. 5:12,13; 1 Pet. 5:16; Rom. 16:17; 1 Cor. 1:10; 1 Tim. 5:17)

F. Spiritual Oversight of the Elders

The Elders accept the responsibility for the spiritual supervision of those who have believed in Christ and are members of this local church. They shall be responsible to feed spiritually, care for intentionally, and fervently guard the reputation and spiritual well-being of those that have been placed under their care. They shall be responsible to identify and stir up the giftings of the Spirit with the members of this assembly.

G. Termination of Membership

Membership may be terminated in one of three ways:

- 1.) By transfer: When it is requested, the Elders may approve, and the church may affirm the departing of a member in good standing or a letter of transfer to the fellowship of another church. No such letter may be given to a member who is at the time under the corrective discipline of this church. The Elders may refuse to grant a letter of transfer to any church which is in their judgment disloyal to the gospel (Jude 3), but at such time may draft a letter of refusal.
- 2.) By exclusion: In accordance with *Article 6, Section 3*, If a member is habitually absent from the worship services and ministry of the church without just cause, or if due to relocation a member ceases to maintain vital contact with the church, for 90 days, that member may be excluded from the privileges of membership.
 - i.) By Removal: This same person, after an additional 90 days, shall be completely removed from the membership of Gospelway Baptist Church, in accordance with *Article 6, Section 3*
 - ii.) Return from exclusion: If an excluded member applies again for membership, the Elders may approve the reinstatement of the privileges of their membership.
 - iii.) Return from removal: If a removed member applies again for membership, they shall be subject to all steps of membership.
- 3.) By dismissal: As the last step of church discipline, and in accordance with *Article 6, Section 4*, the Board of Elders shall exclude from membership in the church a member who has gone through the steps of church discipline described in *Article V, Section H* of the bylaws.

H. Discipline of Membership

To maintain the peace and purity of the church, Scripture directs the disciplining of any member or regular attender by restricting active participation and membership in the local church.

Discipline shall be applied whenever there is ongoing and unrepentant public sin, whether in doctrine or practice. (Rom. 16:17; 1 Cor. 5:1-13; 2 Thess. 3:6; 2 Tim. 2:16-21)

We hold that Matthew 18 delineates the discipline procedure in four steps:

1.) Step 1: One-on-one.

When a member or regular attendee is made aware of the public sin of another, he or she has the responsibility to approach the accused person privately. The sin of the individual is to be clarified, and if found to be in sin, he or she shall be lovingly admonished and exhorted to repent and believe again the gospel.

When the gospel is extended, and again believed, you gain again a brother (Matt. 18:15; Luke 17:3; Gal. 6:1).

2.) Step 2: Two or three witnesses.

If this person continues in sin, the matter shall be brought again to the offender by one or more additional witnesses, including the elder(s), to whom the care for this person has been given.

They shall offer further reproof and spiritual counsel (Matt. 18:16; Deut. 19:15). If the offender repents, exhibited in the confession of sin, and believes again the gospel., the matter shall be dropped.

However, if the offender refuses to repent, continuing in the pattern of his or her sin, the witnesses stand as additional evidence of the person's unwillingness to repent and embrace the gospel.

This step shall include the removal, by the elders, of the person(s) in sin from the Lord's Table. The neglect of the gospel in practice shall be held by the neglect of the gospel in the sacrament.

3.) Step 3: The admonition of the church.

After reasonable attempts toward restoration have failed, the church body, at the next scheduled members' meeting, will be informed of the individual's sin (Matt. 18:17a). The church will collectively be encouraged to admonish the person to turn from his or her sinful ways and return to the safety of the gospel.

4.) Step 4: Exclusion from the church.

If, however, the sinning person refuses to repent, the offender shall be excluded from the participation, fellowship, and membership of the congregation at large, as well as excluded from *Christian** fellowship with individuals of the church (Matt. 18:17b).

A unanimous vote of the Elders and affirmation of the membership is necessary to impose steps three or four of the disciplinary action. Steps three and four shall not be announced at a regular

worship service but a called meeting of the membership of the church. (Matt. 18:17; 1 Tim. 5:20; 1 Cor. 5:1-5; 1 Tim. 1:20; Rom. 16:17; 2 Thess. 3:6,14,15).

Persons who have been disciplined under steps three and four, but who demonstrate repentance, shall be *lovingly* and *fully* restored to fellowship by a unanimous vote of the Elders and affirmation of the membership.

*(*Christian fellowship shall refer to the acceptance of a person within the bounds of Christ. When a sinful person has again refused the gospel, fellowship that remains shall be such as one would have with an unbeliever.)*

IV. ARTICLE: ORDINANCES

A. Believers' Water Baptism

1.) The Statement of Baptism

Baptism is the visible, physical sign and seal of spiritual transformation. Whereby professing Christians are immersed in water and raised to new life. (Rom. 6)

Baptism shall be administered only to those who profess that they have placed their faith in Jesus Christ. (Matt. 28:18-20)

2.) The Requirement for Baptism:

The essential and only requirement for baptism is a profession of faith.

B. The Lord's Supper

The Lord's Supper shall be administered as a sign and seal, proclaiming Christ's death till He comes. The elements are used as symbols of His body and blood.

Worthy recipients who outwardly partake of the visible elements in this ordinance also by faith inwardly receive and feed on Christ crucified and all the benefits of his death. They do so really and truly, yet not physically and bodily but spiritually. The body and blood of Christ are not present bodily or physically in the ordinance but spiritually to the faith of believers, just as the elements themselves are present to their outward senses. (1 Cor. 10:16; 11:23–26)

The Supper shall be observed on the first Sunday of each month, and on such occasions as the Elders deem fitting.

The Supper shall be open to all those who have come to believe and trust the good news of salvation that comes by grace alone through faith alone in the finished work of Christ alone. (1 Cor. 11:23-34)

Only those who are ignorant and unlearned, by profession unbelieving, or under the discipline of the church may be restricted from the table.

V. ARTICLE: OFFICERS

A. Qualifications of Elders

1.) Gender

Elders shall be male. (1Tim. 3:1-7, Titus 1:5-9)

2.) Age

All Elders shall be a minimum of 21 years of age.

3.) Continuing Qualifications

The Elders shall have the responsibility to assess the ongoing qualifications of all members of the board of Elders.

4.) Duty

The families under the care of an individual elder shall not exceed (12). The Board of Elders shall determine the number of elders.

B. Duties of Elders: Governing the Body

1.) Overseeing

The oversight and government of the church, under the headship of Jesus Christ, shall be exercised by the Elders of Gospelway Baptist Church. Their authority as Elders is derived from the order established in Scripture (Titus 1:5-9; Acts 14:23; 20:28; 1 Tim. 3:1-7; 5:17).

2.) Leadership and Management

The Elders shall lead the congregation without compulsion, but with loving willingness, as examples to the church. The biblical authority must be exercised with care, exhibiting the servant-leadership of Christ as a shepherd, caring for the sheep (1 Pet. 5:1-4).

3.) Teaching and Shepherding

It shall be the duty of the Elders to care for the church in its spiritual condition, to guard the purity of doctrine and life of the church, and to oversee the discipline of the church in accordance with the Word of God. The Elders shall oversee the teaching of the Word of God, the administration of ordinances (baptism and communion), biblical instruction and exhortation, and protection against false teachers (1 Thess. 5:12; 2 Tim. 4:2).

4.) Leading

The Elders, and the other ministry committees they establish, shall comprise the leading bodies of the church and shall exercise authority on behalf of the church. (1 Tim. 5:17)

The duly appointed elders shall use patience and wisdom in decision-making for unity's sake. Affirmation from the congregation shall be sought and seen as God's confirmation on the matter. (Matt. 18:15-17, Acts 6:2-5, I Cor. 5:4-5, II Cor. 2:6).

C. Meetings

In accordance with *Article 8, Section 2*, regular meetings of the board of elders and deacons shall be held no less than once each quarter on such day and place as is selected by the board of elders.

D. Decisions and Voting of the Elders

1.) Quorum

A majority of all the Elders shall constitute a quorum (75% +). The acts of the majority of all the Elders (quorum) shall be the acts of the entire group, unless otherwise specifically required by the Articles of Incorporation, by law, or by this Constitution

2.) Decisions

i) The matters of business before the Elders shall be listed in an agenda for the meeting prepared by the Chairman or his designate. All items to be discussed at the meeting can be placed on the agenda by any Elder up to one week before the meeting. The prepared agenda should be available and distributed to each of the Elders at least twenty-four hours before the meeting. New agenda items raised at the meeting may be placed on the agenda by a unanimous vote of the Elders.

ii) Formal voting follows a discussion period where unanimity is sought. If any Elder has a reservation about a matter before the Elders, the members supporting an action shall table the item to allow the member opposed to such action to reconsider his position and agree with the majority or propose, and have accepted, an alternative plan.

iii) This provision (ii) does not provide for stalemating decisions. If after a reasonable length of time, based on the judgment of the majority of the members, the objection is not lifted nor is an acceptable alternative presented, the Elders may call for a formal vote on the issue.

a. The minority,

i) shall submit, for the sake of unity, to the majority and support the decision or,

ii) resign from the board of Elders, or, if unwilling to resign, shall be automatically removed from the office of Elder.

3.) Voting (special consideration)

Elders may vote on any issue before them except as follows:

(i) His own personal salary and benefits

(ii) His own position as a staff member

(iii) His own membership as an Elder

E. Intra-Elder Disagreement

1.) It is possible that unity may not be maintained among the Elders. In such situations, the matter will be presented in full to the entire group for a decision based on a majority of the Elders' votes. If that Elder(s) submits to the majority Elders' decision, the matter is closed, and unity will be maintained.

2.) If the dissenting Elder(s) do not submit to the majority Elders' decision, the Elders will ask for the dissenting Elder(s) resignation. If the dissenting Elder(s) does not resign, he will be removed as an Elder by a majority vote. (*Bylaws: Article D, Section 2, Subsection ii*)

F. Appointment of Elders

1.) Elders

a) Titles and Definitions

(i) These are men who are appointed as Elders using the procedures as outlined in this section.

b) Selection

(i) Recommendations of candidates as additions to the elder board may be made by any church member to the board of Elders.

(ii) The board of Elders shall function as the interviewing agency.

(iii) After the candidate has been interviewed, successfully passed all examinations and testing, and received a unanimous affirmation from the Elders, he shall be presented to the congregation for prayer. If after two weeks from presentation to the congregation the candidate's qualifications have been exhibited and confirmed, the candidate may be affirmed at the next Members' meeting and appointed to the board of Elders.

(iv.) Representative or functioning elders may be added in a representative capacity. These elders will have the responsibility of an elder but shall not retain voting privileges. (*Constitution: Amendment II, Article A*)

c) Termination of the Appointment

An Elder relationship shall be considered terminated when any one of the following occurs:

(i) Death

(ii) Resignation

(i) It shall be the prerogative of any Elder to dissolve the relationship simply by giving written notice of such intention.

(iii) Ending of term

(i) In accordance with *Article 8, Section 2*, the termination of the role of elder shall be accepted at the end of his term as an elder.

(iii) Removal. The following reasons are grounds and procedures for removal:

(i) Refusal or inability to fulfill the responsibilities designated in this Constitution.

(ii) Absence from three consecutive regular meetings of the Elders without an excuse deemed acceptable by the other elders.

(iii) When an Elder has shown himself, by person or attitude, to be disturbing the purity, peace, or unity of the church, or has admitted to changing his views regarding the Statement of Faith and practices of the church or fails to live in harmony with the standards expressed in the Constitution of this church.

d.) Severance pay, if any, shall be determined by a unanimous vote of the Elders. All earned vacation days will be paid. Fringe benefits will terminate on the date of dismissal or as determined by a unanimous vote of the Elders.

G. Church Staff

1) Person(s) may be added to the church staff as deemed necessary by a majority vote of the Elder Board.

2) The procedure for removal of the church staff. He/she shall be removed by a majority vote of the Elders. Voting shall be at a duly called meeting of the Elders.

i.) Person(s) removed from a staff position shall be given no less than (2) weeks' notice before their termination.

3) Termination of Staff

Termination shall occur under any of the following conditions:

(i) Death

(ii) Resignation

It shall be the prerogative of any pastoral staff member to dissolve the relationship simply by giving written notice to the Elders of such intention. The termination time shall be effective one month from the date of resignation or sooner as set by

the Elders. Earned vacation days, if any, shall be paid upon termination. Fringe benefits such as medical insurance, life insurance, disability insurance coverage, retirement contribution, etc., will cease as of the last date of employment. The Elders have the prerogative to change the conditions with a unanimous vote of the Elders.

(iii) Dismissal

The following are grounds for dismissal:

- (i) Refusal or inability to fulfill designated responsibilities.
- (ii) Absence from (3) or more meetings of the staff without an excuse deemed acceptable by the Elders.
- (iii) Shows himself or herself, by person or attitude, to be disturbing the purity, peace, or unity of the church, or has changed his views regarding the Statement of Faith, practices, and philosophy of ministry of the church, or fails to live in harmony with the standards expressed in the Scriptures and Constitution of this church.
- (iv) Any direct appeal to members of the congregation by any staff member for support of a position other than that approved by the Elders is considered divisive and must not characterize any staff person. If such a practice exists, it is considered a serious offense worthy of dismissal from the staff.
- (v) He/she shall be removed by a majority vote of all the members of the Elders. Voting shall be at a duly called meeting of the Elders.
- (vi) Severance pays, if any, shall be determined by a unanimous vote of the Elders. All earned vacation days will be paid. Fringe benefits will terminate on the date of dismissal or as determined by a unanimous vote of the Elders.

A. Deacons

1.) Titles and Definitions

Deacons: These are men who are appointed to the office of Deacon using the procedures as outlined in this section. They support the Elders of the church.

2.) Selection

Recommendations for candidates for the office of Deacon will be considered by the Elders on no less than an annual basis. The Elders then shall function as the interviewing agency for Deacon candidates.

3.) Presentation to the Congregation.

After the candidate has been interviewed and has received unanimous approval by a vote of the Elders, he shall be presented to the congregation for affirmation.

B. Selection, Number, Tenure, and Qualifications

1.) Number Provided

The families under the care of an individual deacon shall not exceed (12). The Elders shall determine the number of Deacons. All Deacons shall be appointed by unanimous vote of the Elders.

2.) Qualifications

Deacons must meet the moral and spiritual qualifications of a Deacon as found in 1 Timothy 3:8-13.

C. Duties and General Powers

1.) Relationship with the Elders

It shall be the duty of the Deacons to assist the Elders or other Deacons in the administration of the church. Deacons shall meet with the Elders or Deacons on a regular basis for the purpose of addressing and reviewing area(s) of responsibility. It shall be the duty of each Deacon to take the necessary measures and steps to meet his responsibility in collaborating with the Elders or Deacons in the administration of the church.

2.) Spiritual Responsibilities

Deacons shall assist in guiding the spiritual life of the church as examples and in administering the ordinances and performing any other responsibility as directed by the Elders.

3.) Voting Rights

The Deacons have no voting rights other than those granted under the oversight of the elders in conducting assigned services.

D. Termination

Deacons shall be considered terminated for these reasons:

1.) Death

2.) Ending of term

(i) In accordance with *Article 8, Section 2*, the termination of the role of elder shall be accepted at the end of his term as an elder.

3.) Resignation

It shall be the prerogative of any Deacon to resign his appointment simply by giving written notice of resignation to the Elders.

4.) Removal

i) When a deacon shows himself, by person or attitude, to be disturbing the purity, peace, or unity of the church, or has admitted to changing his views regarding the Statement of Faith and practices of the church, or fails to live in harmony with the standards expressed in the Constitution of this church, he will be asked to resign his position or.

ii) He shall be removed from office by a unanimous vote of the Elders. Voting shall be at a duly called meeting of the Elders.

VI. ARTICLE: PHYSICAL PROPERTIES, CONTRACTS, SALARIES, CHECKS, DEPOSITS AND FUNDS

A. Property

It shall be the duty of the Elders to take care of all matters pertaining to the physical properties and finances of the church. The Elders shall take all necessary measures for the protection and maintenance of church buildings and property and shall supervise the use of same.

B. Funds

The Elders may accept on behalf of the church any contribution, gift, bequest, or device for general purposes or any special purpose of the church. They have the authority to establish special projects or ministries as they may determine.

While the funds for these special projects are given and received in good faith, the Elders reserve the right to redistribute any funds to any account that the Elders believe is in the best interest of the church.

C. Salaries

The Elders shall set salaries for the pastoral staff. The Senior Pastor shall make recommendations for salary levels for each of the other Ministering Staff. These salaries shall be adjusted or approved by the Elders. The Elders may delegate the responsibility for setting individual salaries of the support staff; however, they must approve the aggregate amounts.

D. Contracts

The Elders may authorize any officer or officer's agent or agents of the church in addition to the officers so authorized by this Constitution to enter any contract or execute and deliver any instrument in the name of and on behalf of the church, and such authority may be general or confined to specific instances.

E. Checks, Drafts, etc.

All checks, drafts, or orders for the payment of money, notes, or other evidence of indebtedness issued in the name of the church shall be signed by such officer or officers, agent, or agents of the corporation and in such manner, as shall from time to time be determined by resolution of the Elders.

In the absence of such determination by the Elders, such instrument shall be signed by the Treasurer or an Assistant Treasurer and countersigned by the Chairman of the Vice-Chairman of the Elders.

F. Deposits

All funds of the church shall be deposited from time to time to the credit of the church in such bank, trust companies, or other depositories as the Elders may select.

G. Benevolent Funds

The Elders or their appointees shall control the distribution of benevolent funds (Acts 6:1-3).

VII. ARTICLE: MARRIAGE, SEXUALITY, AND GENDER

Gospelway Baptist Church affirms that gender is the gift and design of God—and that he made human beings male and female on purpose.

Gospelway Baptist Church affirms that the only appropriate venue for sexual expression is the covenant of marriage between one man and one woman.

God gave marriage to humanity which joins one man and one woman in an exclusive covenantal union for their good and his glory. More particularly, God has endowed the Christian marriage with the blessing of uniquely portraying Christ's saving relationship with his bride, the church. God gave the gift of sexual intimacy to be enjoyed exclusively within the marriage union and he has commanded that no sexual activity be engaged outside of a marriage between a man and a woman. Any form of sexual immorality, such as adultery, fornication, same-sex activity, bisexuality, bestiality, incest, or pornography is sinful (Genesis 2:22-24; Lev. 18:22-23; 20:13, 15-16; Mark 10:6-9; Rom. 1:18-31; 1 Cor. 6:9-10, 15-20; Ephesians 5:3-5; 1 Tim. 1:8-11; 1 John 2:15-17).

God made humanity male and female from the beginning of creation to reflect the glory of the Trinity, consequently, all conduct with the intent to adopt a gender other than one's birth gender is sinful (Gen. 1:26-28; Mark 10:6; 1 Cor. 11:1-3; Eph. 5:30-33).

In order to preserve the function and integrity of the church as the local Body of Christ, and to provide a biblical role model to the church members and the community, it is imperative that all persons employed by the church in any capacity, or who serve as volunteers, should abide by and agree to *Article VII* on Marriage, Sexuality, and Gender, and conduct themselves accordingly.

God offers forgiveness and reconciliation to all who trust in Christ. Every person must be afforded compassion, love, kindness, respect, and dignity. Hateful and harassing behavior or attitudes directed toward any individual are to be repudiated and are not in accord with Scripture or the doctrines of the church.

VIII. ORDINATION AND LICENSING

The Church will consider ordaining duly qualified pastoral, ministerial, and executive staff positions as determined by the Elders in accordance with the guidelines of Scripture. All ordained staff members are expected to assist in baptism, communion, prayer, and other ministerial duties. Furthermore, ordained males are expected to be available to officiate weddings and funerals.

The Church reserves the right to revoke ordination in cases such as moral failure or the removal from the body. The decision to rescind or extend ordination shall be at the discretion of the Elders.

The Church will consider licensing select individuals on a case-by-case basis for various aspects of ministry and mission.

Licenses can be issued for a specific term or indefinite period at the discretion of the Elders. The Church also reserves the right to revoke a license at the discretion of the Elders.

IX. WHISTLEBLOWER POLICY

A. Purpose

The Church requires all its Elders, Officers, employees, and volunteers to observe exacting standards of business and personal ethics in the conduct of their duties and responsibilities. As representatives of the Church, individuals must practice honesty and integrity in fulfilling their responsibilities and comply with all applicable laws and regulations.

Therefore, if an Elder, Officer, employee, or volunteer of the Church reasonably believes that the Church, by and through its Elders, Officers, employees, or volunteers, or entities with whom the Church has a business relationship, violates applicable law or regulation, or any policy or procedure of the Church, then that individual shall file a written complaint with either his or her Church supervisor or the elder board.

B. Reporting Responsibility

It is the responsibility of all the Church's Elders, Officers, employees, and volunteers to comply with all applicable laws and regulations, as well as all policies and procedures of the Church, and to report violations or suspected violations in accordance with this

If an Elder, Officer, employee, or volunteer of the Church reasonably believes that any policy, practice, or activity of the Church violates any applicable law, regulation, policy, or procedure of

the Church, then the Elder, Officer, employee, or volunteer should share their questions, concerns, or complaints with someone who may be able to address them properly. If the concerns are not addressed, the reporting individual should make a formal complaint as outlined herein.

C. Handling of Reported Violations

The Elder to whom the complaint was made shall notify the reporting individual and acknowledge receipt of the reported violation within seven (7) days. All reports will be promptly investigated, and appropriate corrective action will be taken if warranted by the investigation.

Any, and all violations that fall under the authority of the civil law, in accordance with Romans 13, shall be immediately reported to the civil authorities.

X. REQUIRED BOOKS AND RECORDS

The Church shall keep correct and complete books and records of account.

A. Fiscal Year

The fiscal year of the Church shall begin on the first day of October and end on the last day in September of the following calendar year.

COVENANT
of
GOSPELWAY BAPTIST CHURCH

China Grove, North Carolina

Affirmed: September 8th, 2019

Having shown expressed desire to join ourselves to this assembly, and having affirmed the statement of faith, Constitution, and bylaws of this assembly:

We commit that God's Word is our highest authority, and it drives everything we do. It is our aim to continually point sinners to Jesus and His righteousness and to build a God-centered culture where believers can walk together with intentionality, grace, charity, and patience.

We will pray for and work to preserve the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. We will be slow to take offense and always eager to seek the reconciliation Christ commands.

We will walk together in brotherly love, as is fitting for the members of a Christian Church, exercise an affectionate care and watchfulness over each other and faithfully admonish, correct, and plead with one another as occasion may require.

We will not forsake the assembling of ourselves together, nor neglect to pray for ourselves and others.

We will endeavor to use our spiritual gifts for the good of our brothers and sisters and for the glory of God. We will resolve to train the children of this church in the nurture, instruction, and discipline of the Lord, and by a pure and loving example to seek the salvation of our family, friends, and neighbors.

We will rejoice at each other's happiness and endeavor with tenderness and sympathy to bear each other's burdens and sorrows.

We will seek, by God's grace, to live carefully in the world, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, and remembering that, as we have been identified with Christ through baptism, so there is on us a special obligation to lead a new and holy life.

We will use Scripture alone as our ultimate and final authority, rejecting all heretical beliefs and practices.

We will work together for the continuation of a faithful Gospel ministry in this church, as we sustain its worship, ordinances, discipline, and doctrines.

We will 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 to the nations.

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

Amen.