



CONSTITUTION

AND

BYLAWS

**SECOND EDITION
2018**

Revised: 4 December 2018

ZION HOPE BAPTIST CHURCH

353 ZION HOPE ROAD

TIFTON, GA 31793

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PREAMBLE

We declare and establish this constitution to preserve and secure the principles of our faith, and to govern the body in an orderly manner. This constitution will preserve the liberties of each individual church member and the freedom of action of this body in its relation to other churches.

CONSTITUTION:

I. NAME:

This body shall be known as the ZION HOPE BAPTIST CHURCH, INC., located at 353 Zion Hope Road, Tifton, GA

II. OBJECTIVES:

To be a dynamic spiritual body of baptized believers empowered by the Holy Spirit to share Christ with as many people as possible in our church community, and throughout the world.

To be a worshipping fellowship, experiencing an awareness of God, recognizing His person, and responding in obedience to His leadership.

To experience an increasingly meaningful fellowship with God and fellow believers.

To help disciple people in a growing knowledge of God and man.

To be a church that ministers unselfishly to persons in the community and world in total commitment of life, personality, and possessions to the lordship of Christ.

III. STATEMENT OF FAITH:

The Holy Bible is the inspired Word of God, and is the basis for the statement of faith. The church subscribes to the doctrinal statement of "THE BAPTIST FAITH AND MESSAGE" as adopted by the Southern Baptist Convention in 2000 and their Statement of Marriage, Gender and Sexuality.

We band ourselves together as a body of baptized believers in Jesus Christ personally committed to sharing the good news of salvation to last mankind. The ordinances of the church are Baptism and the Lord's Supper.

IV. RELATIONSHIPS:

The government of this church is vested in the body of baptized believers who compose it. It is subject to the control of no other ecclesiastical body, but it recognizes and sustains the obligation of mutual counsel and cooperation which are common among Baptist churches. Insofar as is practical, this church will cooperate with and support the Mell Baptist Association and the Georgia Baptist Mission Board affiliated with the Southern Baptist Convention.

V. CHURCH COVENANT:

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

We engage, therefore, by the aid of the Holy Spirit to walk together in Christian love; to strive for the advancement of this church in knowledge, holiness, and comfort; to promote its prosperity and spiritually; to sustain its worship, ordinances, discipline, and doctrines; to contribute cheerfully and regularly to the support of the ministry, the expenses of the church, and the relief of the poor, and the spread of the gospel through all nations.

We also engage to maintain family and secret devotions; to religiously educate our children, to pray for the salvation of our kindred and acquaintances; to walk circumspectly in the world; to be just in our dealings, faithful in our engagements, and exemplary in our deportment; to avoid all gossip, backbiting, and excessive anger; to abstain from the sale and use of intoxicating drinks as a beverage; to use our influence to combat the abuse of drugs and the spread of pornography, and to be zealous in our efforts to advance the kingdom of our Savior.

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

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

BYLAWS

ARTICLE I

MEMBERSHIP:

Section 1. GENERAL:

This is a sovereign and democratic Baptist church under the Lordship of Jesus Christ. The membership retains unto itself the exclusive right of self-government in all phases of the spiritual and temporal life of this church.

The membership reserves the exclusive right to determine who shall be members of this church and conditions of such membership.

Section 2. CANDIDACY:

Any person may offer himself/herself as a candidate for membership in the church. All such candidates shall be presented to the church at any regular church service for membership in any of the following ways:

1. By profession of faith and for baptism according to the policies of this church.
2. By promise of a letter of recommendation from a Baptist church of like faith and practice.
3. Those who, because of circumstances beyond their control are not able to secure letters, but can give satisfactory statements of an experience of grace, baptism by immersion in a Baptist church of like faith and practice, and desire fellowship with the church.
4. Membership shall be granted to the candidate(s) after they have spoken with the pastor and/or chairman of deacons. During counsel with the pastor and/or chairman of deacons, requirements of church membership will be presented to the candidate(s). After speaking with the pastor and/or chairman of deacons, the candidate(s) will be presented to the church for acceptance by vote to become a member of Zion Hope Baptist Church.

Should there be any dissent as to any candidate, such dissent shall be referred to the pastor and the deacons for investigation and the making of a recommendation to the church within thirty (30) days. A majority vote of those church members present shall be required to elect such candidates to membership.

Section 3. VOTING RIGHTS OF MEMBERS:

Every member of the church is entitled to vote at all elections and on all questions submitted to the church in conference, provided the member is present and has attended 3 of the last 6 business Meetings.

Section 4. TERMINATION OF MEMBERSHIP;

Membership shall be terminated in the following ways:

(1) Death, (2) Dismission to another Baptist church of like faith and practice, (3) Exclusion by action of this church,* (4) Deletion upon becoming affiliated with a church of another faith or denomination, and (5) By request of the member.**

*Should a member become an offense to the church and to its good name by reason of immoral or unchristian conduct, or by persistent breach of his/her covenant vows, the church may terminate his/her membership at any business meeting by a majority vote of active members present, after due notice and hearing, and after faithful efforts have been made to bring such member to repentance and amendment.

**If a member in good standing requests to be released from his/her obligations to this church for reasons which the church may finally deem satisfactory, after it shall have patiently and kindly endeavored to secure his/her continuance in its fellowship, such requests may be granted, and his/her membership terminated.

Section 5. MEMBERSHIP ROLLS AND STATUS:

The church clerk shall maintain a roll of the members of this church. Members shall be listed and delineated thereon as follows:

(a) Active members shall be those persons who are in full and regular membership of this church according to the provisions of these bylaws.

An active member should support the Sunday morning, Sunday night, and the Wednesday night services unless they are unfortunately hindered by illness or work.

(b) Inactive members shall be those persons who have ceased all communications with the church and all service in the church for a period of two (2) years. Before a person's name is placed upon the list of inactive members, diligent effort shall be made by the membership committee to bring such persons to renew their contact and communication with the church. A member shall be reinstated to the active list by review of the membership committee.

The roll of members of this church shall be revised annually by the church clerk and membership committee, and shall show thereon the dates the members enrolled were admitted into the fellowship of this church, the age of such members, and the dates upon which such members became Christians.

ARTICLE II

CHURCH COMMITTEES:

Section 1. NOMINATING COMMITTEE:

The nominating committee shall consist of two members who shall be nominated by the former nominating committee. After nomination, and election by the church, the Sunday School clerk, and the Church Training director shall become members of the nominating committee, unless they are already members.

At the June business meeting the four members elected as a new nominating committee will bring recommendations to the church for the Sunday School clerk and the Church Training director for the coming year. At this time the present Sunday School clerk and Church Training director will no longer function as a part of this nominating committee, unless they are re-elected.

The nominating committee shall at all times endeavor to select through guidance of the Holy Spirit, the best qualified persons suitable for the offices and after obtaining from the candidate their consent to serve will present the nominations to the church for election. After election these officers will serve from September 1st through August 31st, unless otherwise specified in this Constitution and Bylaws.

If at any time a vacancy should occur in any office under the jurisdiction of the nominating committee, the current nominating committee shall be responsible for bringing to the church a recommendation of the replacement of said office.

Section 2. CHURCH GROUNDS and PROPERTY COMMITTEE:

The church grounds and property committee shall consist of three members elected every three years. Any member shall be eligible to succeed himself/herself. The church grounds also includes the property where the parsonage is located.

The responsibilities of this committee shall be:

- (1) upkeep of grounds, shrubs, trees, etc.
- (2) Upkeep of buildings, furniture and equipment.
- (3) Supervision of custodial personnel, to define the duties of, and instruct such personnel.
- (4) Recommend employment of maintenance personnel and assign responsibility to appropriate personnel for supervision.

Section 4. KITCHEN AND SOCIAL COMMITTEE:

The kitchen and social committee shall consist of three members elected every three years.

This committee is responsible for formulating and recommending to the church; policies for the kitchen and for communicating these policies to the church members.

Section 5. FLOWER COMMITTEE:

The flower committee shall consist of two members and shall be responsible for providing flowers for all known hospitalized and deceased church members plus scheduling of floral arrangements for church services and revivals.

Section 6. USHER COMMITTEE:

The nominating committee shall select a chairman and one other member to serve as the usher committee. This committee shall present to the church their slate of ushers and junior ushers which may be either a man or woman of the church, who will then be elected by the church members.

The responsibilities of the ushers shall be to greet people as they enter and leave the church, seat people at the proper time, provide bulletins or other materials at the time of seating. The ushers will be attentive to the needs of the congregation and the pastor.

The committee will have personnel to take over in case of disturbances and to be in charge in case of any emergency during church services.

Section 7. HOMECOMING COMMITTEE:

The homecoming committee shall consist of a chairman and two members. This committee, along with the Pastor, shall be in charge of planning and carrying out all activities connected with Homecoming Day. This committee shall be presented by the nominating committee.

Section 8. NURSERY COMMITTEE:

The nursery committee shall consist of two members. The principal function of the nursery committee shall be to make preparations for nursery attendants and to take care of the nursery during all church related activities, except during hours of Sunday School and Church Training. This committee will be presented to the church by the nominating committee. **Any person age 18 or older, who serves in the nursery, must have a background check. The results will be discreetly reviewed by the pastor, chairman of deacons, and the Sunday School clerk.**

Section 9. MEMBERSHIP COMMITTEE:

This committee shall consist of three members. These members are to be the church clerk, Sunday School clerk, and Discipleship Training director.

The duties of this committee shall be as thus stated in the BYLAWS, MEMBERSHIP ROLL AND STATUS, Section 5.b, page 5.

Section 10. PULPIT COMMITTEE:

Upon the occurrence of a vacancy in the office of pastor, a committee shall be elected by the church in regular or called conference, to function as directed in BYLAWS, ARTICLE VIII, CHURCH OFFICERS AND STAFF, Section 5, page 13.

The number elected shall be decided at the time of election.

Section 11. FINANCE AND BUDGET COMMITTEE:

The finance committee shall generally oversee the financial matters of the church.

They will prepare and recommend to the church the annual church budget based upon expected income, and upon request from various church leaders.

The finance committee shall be composed of the treasurer, and chairman of deacons, these being permanent members. **Three additional members shall be elected from the church floor at the July business meeting for a three year term. Any member shall be eligible to succeed himself/herself. The committee will meet every 2 months.**

Section 12. AUDITING COMMITTEE:

This committee shall be composed of the chairman of deacons, or his appointee, and the church financial secretary.

This committee shall be responsible for an in-house annual audit of the treasurer's records.

Section 13. THE COUNTING COMMITTEE:

This committee shall be composed of the Sunday School clerk, church treasurer, and the chairman of deacons or his appointee. Their responsibility shall be to:

1. obtain all offerings from the depository.
2. total receipts, record in the general secretary report, and prepare records for the church treasurer.

Section 14. CHURCH COUNCIL:

MEMBERSHIP: The church council shall consist of the pastor, other staff members, the chairman of deacons, the Sunday School clerk, the Discipleship Training director, Music Director, and a representative from the Youth department, as well as such other persons as the council may invite to participate in its activities.

DUTIES: The church council shall coordinate the work of the church's organizations and committees and maintain a calendar of activities of the church. The council shall act generally in an advisory capacity, but shall make recommendations to the church or its committees where the matter involved does not fall within the responsibility of an established committee or other organization of the church. They shall meet annually in September to discuss the upcoming year's events.

Section 15. YOUTH COMMITTEE:

PURPOSE: To coordinate all the youth activities of our church and to establish a program of youth activities each year.

MEMBERSHIP: This committee shall be two church members, which shall be nominated and elected by the church. It will also consist of a president elected by the youth, two representatives (a boy and a girl) from the Youth Department.

Section 16. BAPTISMAL COMMITTEE:

This committee shall consist of at least one male and one female member and shall be presented to the church by the nomination committee and then voted on by the church.

Section 17: CEMETERY COMMITTEE:

This committee shall be responsible for:

- (1) The upkeep of the cemetery.
- (2) Strive to keep updated burial records.

ARTICLES III

PROGRAM ORGANIZATIONS:

Section 1. SUNDAY SCHOOL:

This organization shall be in general accordance with the Southern Baptist practices with such changes as the church may deem desirable. It shall be under the direction of a clerk and such other officers and teachers as the church may elect. **All teachers and workers who are 18 years or older, and work with children who are under the age of 18 are required to have a background check. The results will be discreetly reviewed by the pastor, chairman of deacons, and the Sunday School clerk.**

Section 2. DISCIPLESHIP TRAINING:

This organization shall be in general accordance with the Southern Baptist practices with such changes as the church may deem desirable. It shall be under the supervision of a director and such other officers as the church may elect.

Section 3. CHURCH MUSIC PROGRAM:

There shall be a Church Music program under the direction of the music director. Such officers and/or organizations shall be included as needed.

Section 4. ELECTION OF GENERAL AND ORGANIZATIONAL OFFICERS:

The general elected officers of the church, departmental officers and teachers of the Sunday School and Discipleship Training, shall be nominated by the nominating committee, and presented to the church for election. All other organizational officers shall be elected within and by the organization concerned, under such procedures as such organizations may determine.

ARTICLE IV

CHURCH MEETINGS:

Section 1. WORSHIP SERVICES:

The church shall meet regularly each Sunday morning, Sunday evening, and Wednesday evening for praying, preaching, instruction, evangelism, and for the worship of Almighty God. These meetings will be open for the entire membership of the church and for all people and shall be conducted under the direction of the pastor or body of deacons.

Section 2. SPECIAL SERVICES:

Revival services and any other church meetings which will be essential in the promotion of the objectives of the church shall be placed on the church calendar.

Revival services shall be held at such time as the church may find desirable.

Section 3. REGULAR BUSINESS MEETINGS:

Regular business meetings shall be held monthly on the 3rd Sunday following the worship service.

Section 4. SPECIAL BUSINESS MEETINGS:

Special business meetings of the church may be called by the pastor, or one-half of the deacons. In all cases of special business meetings of the church, the person or persons calling same shall give **two church service notices** of the subject, date, time and location for the special called business meeting, unless extreme urgency renders such notice impractical, **which will be determined by the pastor and deacons.**

Section 5. QUORUM:

The quorum consists of a minimum of 12 members, including at least three deacons, who attend the business meeting provided it is a stated meeting or one that has been properly called.

Section 6. PARLIAMENTARY RULES:

ROBERT'S RULES OF ORDER, REVISED, is the authority for parliamentary rules of procedure for all business meetings of the church.

ARTICLE V

AMENDMENTS:

Changes in this Constitution and Bylaws may be made at any regular business meeting of the church, provided each amendment shall have been presented in writing at a previous meeting, and copies of the proposed amendment be furnished to each member present. Amendments to the constitution shall be a majority vote of all members of the church present entitled to vote; amendments to the bylaws shall have a concurrence of a majority of the members present.

ARTICLE VI

PROGRAM SERVICES:

Section 1. OTHER ORGANIZATIONS:

Any other organization or department which may be necessary or desirable for the advancement of the purposes and activities of the church may be organized upon authorization of the church at a regular or special business meeting after due notice.

ARTICLE VII

ORDINANCES:

Section 1. BAPTISM:

A person who receives Jesus Christ as Savior by personal faith; who professes him publicly at any worship service; and who indicates a commitment to follow Christ as Lord, shall be received for baptism.

1. Baptism shall be by immersion in water.
2. Baptism shall be administered by the pastor or such persons as approved by the pastor. The deacons and those serving on the Baptismal committee shall assist in the preparations for, and observance of Baptism.
3. A person professing Christ and failing to be baptized after a reasonable length of time shall be counselled by the pastor and/or staff and deacons. If negative interest is ascertained, he/she shall be deleted from those awaiting baptism.

Section 2. THE LORD'S SUPPER:

The Lord's Supper is a symbolic act of obedience whereby all believers through partaking of the bread and fruit of the vine, commemorate the death of Jesus Christ and anticipate his second coming.

1. The Lord's Supper shall be observed quarterly, preferably the first Sunday of the quarter, or as otherwise scheduled.
2. The Lord's Supper shall be observed in the morning or evening worship services.
3. The pastor and deacons shall be responsible for the administration of the Lord's Supper.
4. The deacons shall be responsible for the physical preparations of the Lord's Supper.

This Constitution and Bylaws, Second Edition – 2018, shall take precedence over any previous actions or traditions that may conflict with these Constitution and Bylaws.

ARTICLE VIII

CHURCH OFFICERS AND STAFF:

Section 1. CHURCH OFFICERS:

The officers of this church shall consist of a pastor, a church clerk, a treasurer, a body of deacons, a church financial secretary, a Sunday School clerk, a church training director, and a church music director. The church may create or delete offices as it may deem desirable in regular course by a vote at any business meeting after due notice.

Section 2. ELECTION AND TERMINATION:

All church officers shall be elected, and their tenure in office terminated as provided in these bylaws.

Section 3. PASTOR:

The duties of the pastor of this church shall be:

- (a) to preach at the determined hours of worship;
- (b) to administer the Ordinances of the church;
- (c) the pastor shall preside as moderator at all business meetings, and serve as ex-officio member of all committees. In the absence of the pastor, the chairman of deacons shall preside;
- (d) to do and perform all duties of his office as a minister of the gospel.
- (e) to minister to the needs and spiritual welfare of the members of this church;
- (f) to have in his charge the general welfare and oversight of this church;
- (g) the pastor shall be responsible for filling the pulpit the year round. At any time that the pastor is incapacitated the chairman of deacons or appointee will assume this responsibility.

Section 4. PASTOR'S BENEFITS AND RELATED RESPONSIBILITIES:

- (a) The pastor shall receive a salary and benefits agreed upon when the call is extended, and may be adjusted from time to time as approved by the church in a regular business meeting.
- (b) The pastor shall receive two weeks of vacation with pay per year.
- (c) The pastor shall be allowed to participate in two revivals outside of this church, not to exceed two weeks per year, or this time may be used as sick leave as deemed necessary.
- (d) If the pastor participates in revivals, he will be expected to compensate the one who fills the pulpit in his absence.

Section 5. SELECTION OF PASTOR:

Upon the occurrence of a vacancy in the office of pastor, the pulpit committee shall seek out a suitable person to fill said office. The recommendation of the pulpit committee shall constitute a nomination to said office, but only one man shall be nominated by said committee at any one time.

A pastor shall be voted upon at a regular worship service, after due notice. Election of a person to fill the office of pastor shall require an affirmative vote of a majority of the members present. Voting shall be by secret ballot. A pastor thus elected shall serve until his death, his resignation, or the termination of his tenure as an officer of this church, whichever shall occur first. A two weeks advance notice of resignation by the pastor or two weeks advance notice of dismissal by the church shall be required.

Section 6. CHURCH CLERK:

The duties of the church clerk shall be:

- (a) to attend or be represented at all business meetings of the church;
- (b) to keep an accurate record of all business transactions during business meetings;
- (c) to conduct all official correspondence of the church including preparation of the Associational letter;
- (d) to preserve all valuable records and letters of the church, which are church property;
- (e) the church clerk shall grant letters of transfer to churches of like faith and practice, as voted on by the church;
- (f) to keep an accurate roll of active and inactive members of this church with pertinent information contained thereon;
- (g) to issue letters of dismissal as authorized by the church;
- (h) to exclude or erase member's names from the roll of the church as described in ARTICLE I, MEMBERSHIP, Section 5, page 5, of the BYLAWS;
- (i) to do and perform such other duties as are specified in these BYLAWS;
- (j) all records shall be, and remain the property of the church.

Section 7. TREASURER AND ASSISTANT TREASURER:

The treasurer of the church shall be bonded in an amount to be determined by the church, with the church to be responsible for the expense of such bond. The treasurer's records shall be audited every three years by a public accountant as the church shall determine and direct. All records shall be, and remain the property of the church. The assistant treasurer shall be the chairman of deacons or his appointee.

Section 8. DUTIES OF THE TREASURER AND ASSISTANT TREASURER:

The duties of the treasurer shall be:

- (a) to record all receipts and disbursements of the church;
- (b) to prepare a monthly statement, in detail, disclosing thereon receipts and disbursements of the church. This statement shall be prepared with items listed in the same order as the budget, unbudgeted items listed separately.
- (c) to make payment for all indebtedness incurred by the church upon proper authorization thereof;
- (d) the fiscal year of the church shall run concurrently with the church year which begins on September 1st and ends on August 31st.

Section 9. DEACONS:

There shall be a minimum of five deacons to serve on an active basis until such time when the growth of the church shall necessitate the need of additional deacons. The number may be increased to allow for ordained deacons who may become members of our church; after meeting the provisions under Section 9A below.

Section 9A. QUALIFICATIONS OF DEACONS:

To be eligible for and to serve in the office of deacon of this church, a person:

- (a) must meet the spiritual requirements outlined in I Timothy 3, and Acts 6 of the Holy Bible;
- (b) must be a qualified person at least twenty-five years of age;
- (c) must have been a Christian for three years;
- (d) must have been a member of this church for one year;
- (e) must be a faithful steward of his time and monies to the cause of Christianity and this church;
- (f) must regularly support and attend the organization and meeting of this church;
- (g) must strive to accomplish the purposes of the church as set forth in these BYLAWS.

Section 9B. NOMINATION AND ELECTION OF DEACONS:

- (a) When needed, the church clerk shall present to the church in a regular business meeting a list of all qualified church members over twenty-five years of age.

Section 9C. DUTIES OF DEACONS:

The duties of the active deacons shall be as follows:

- (a) to be zealous to guard the unity of the spirit within the bond of peace;
- (b) to serve as a council of advice for conference with the pastor;
- (c) to initiate, formulate and consider plans for a constant effort toward the welfare, work and progress of the church;
- (d) to establish and maintain personal fraternal relations and inspiring oversight with and of the membership of the church;
- (e) to seek to know, and to aid in the resolution of, the physical, moral and spiritual needs and struggles of the membership of this church;
- (f) to have the oversight of the discipline of the church according to the New Testament teachings and the direction of the Holy Spirit;
- (g) to serve as general finance consultants in and to this church;
- (h) to assist the pastor in the observance of the Lord's Supper and other ordinances;
- (i) to work actively in the fields of visitation, soul winning, hospital calls and the spiritual ministry of the church;
- (j) to be accountable to the Lord, pastor, and church.

Section 10. OTHER OFFICERS:

The other officers of the church shall be recommended by the nominating committee and elected by the church; and shall have the oversight of their respective organizations, and shall administer same according to the general policies of this church, and with the aid of such persons as the church may deem desirable. The term of office of each of said officers shall be one year, beginning September 1st of the succeeding year.