

CONSTITUTION AND BYLAWS
of
OPEN DOOR CHURCH
Raleigh, NC
(Revised 01/01/2019)

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Section I: Constitution

1. Our Prayer

Almighty God and Heavenly Father, Creator of all and to whom all praise, honor, and glory are due, we humbly approach you in the name of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. We have assembled ourselves together through the help of your Holy Spirit and the Holy Scriptures to unite as a local church under the name Open Door Church. It is our utmost desire to bring glory to your name as we gather for worship, love one another in fellowship and service, and make disciples as we spread your gospel throughout the world. As a church, we do hereby organize ourselves and adopt this constitution and bylaws as our articles of governance. Help us to uphold it as we reflect the character of Jesus Christ as he has been revealed to us in the Old and New Testaments of your inspired and authoritative Word, the Bible. Amen.

2. Our Name

The legal name of our church is OPEN DOOR BAPTIST CHURCH, INC. of Raleigh, North Carolina. We operate as Open Door Church.

3. Our Purpose

Open Door Church exists as a gospel-centered community of transformed believers committed to loving God as our foremost desire and making disciples of Jesus Christ in our community and throughout the world. This local church shall be built upon the foundation of Jesus Christ who is the head of the church and the guideline for its conduct in all affairs shall be the Bible. (*Matthew 16:18–20; 22:35–46; 28:18–20; Ephesians 2:19–22; 1 Timothy 3:14–16; 2 Timothy 3:16–17*)

4. Our Mission

All those who unite with the fellowship of this church shall join us in our mission to:
Love God and make his gospel known.

We will accomplish our mission through these core values:

- **Believe** the gospel — as we respond to God’s Word
- **Live** the gospel — through authentic relationships
- **Share** the gospel — through making disciples in our community
- **Multiply** the gospel — by planting churches nationally and internationally

We will give generously of our time, giftedness, and financial resources to fulfill this mission.

5. Our Statement of Faith

5.1 The Bible

We believe the Bible is the Word of God contained in the Old and New Testament scriptures. The entire Bible is given to humanity as a gracious gift of God's special and authoritative self-revelation. All the Bible's original manuscripts were divinely inspired, having been written by individuals as they were carried along by the Holy Spirit. Because God is the ultimate author of the Bible, its contents are free from error and are totally true and trustworthy. The central theme of the Bible is to reveal God's saving purposes in Jesus Christ. God's Word has supreme authority in all matters of faith and conduct. The Bible alone is the infallible rule of faith for the church. For a local church to stray from the Bible in faith or practice is to be disloyal to Jesus to whom the church belongs. We believe the entire Bible should be taught in the local church so that its members will grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. (*Psalm 19:7; Psalm 119:105–106; Matthew 4:4; Mark 13:31; John 8:31–32; John 17:17; Acts 20:32; Romans 10:16–17; 2 Timothy 3:14–17; Hebrews 4:12; 2 Peter 1:20–21; 3:18*)

5.2 The Trinity

We believe that there is one living and true God, eternally existing in three persons — Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. These three persons contain the very nature of God and are equal in every divine perfection. They each execute distinct but harmonious roles in the work of creation, providence, and redemption. The Triune God is self-existent and self-sufficient, perfect and immutable, infinite and all-knowing, purposeful and all-powerful, sovereign and steadfast in love. God is worthy of our praise, loyalty, and love. Our church will worship the Triune God when we gather and will model our lives according to God's grace and goodness. (*Genesis 1:1, 26; Exodus 34:6–7; Deuteronomy 32:3–4; Psalm 48:10; Isaiah 43:10–13; Malachi 3:6; Matthew 28:19; John 1:1–3; John 4:24; Romans 1:19–20; Ephesians 4:5–6*)

5.3 God the Father

We believe in God the Father, an infinite, personal spirit who is good, righteous, and just. He is perfect in holiness, wisdom, power, and love. He is jealous for worship, opposed to idolatry, and wrathful in response to sin and rebellion. He reigns with providential care over his creation and foreknows all that shall come to pass according to his sovereign will. He deals mercifully in the affairs of people. He hears and answers the prayers of his children. He saves from sin and death all who come to him through faith in Jesus Christ. (*Exodus 3:14; Psalm 19:1; Matthew 23:9; Luke 10:21–22; John 1:12; 3:16, 36; 6:27; Romans 1:7; 1 Timothy 1:1–2; 2:5–6; 1 Peter 1:3; Revelation 1:6*)

5.4 Jesus Christ

We believe in Jesus Christ, God's only begotten Son, who exists having two natures: fully human and fully divine—which are without confusion, change, division, or separation. The Son of God took on flesh when he was conceived by the Holy Spirit. He was born of the Virgin Mary, lived a sinless life, died as a substitutionary atoning sacrifice for our sins, and rose bodily from the dead on the third day. He ascended into heaven where he intercedes for his people as an eternal high priest and from where he will return bodily and visibly in all glory to judge the earth and establish his eternal kingdom. He is the head of the church, having purchased it with his own shed blood. All who claim allegiance to Christ are to obey his commands, imitate his life, and promote his gospel. (*Matthew 1:18–25; 28:18–20; Luke 1:26–38; John 1:1; 13:15–16; 20:28–31; Acts 1:11; 20:28; Romans 3:21–26; 5:6–8; 6:9–10; 9:5; 2 Corinthians 5:21; Ephesians 5:23; Colossians 1:15–20; 1 Timothy 3:16; Hebrews 7:25; 9:28; 12:2; 1 Peter 2:21–23*)

5.5 Holy Spirit

We believe the Holy Spirit is the Spirit of God, fully divine, who proceeds from the Father and the Son. He convicts the world of sin, righteousness, and judgment. He graciously works to call, regenerate, sanctify, and empower all who profess saving faith in Jesus Christ. The Holy Spirit indwells every believer and serves as an abiding helper, teacher, and guide. He gave us the Scriptures and illuminates them for those who desire to know the truth and to be transformed through the renewing of the mind. The Spirit of God helps believers to fight the spiritual battle and gives his fruit to those who live in submission to him. He constitutes the Church as God's family and promotes its unity and maturity. He gives spiritual gifts to each believer, empowering them to serve the local church and promote the gospel. Providing endurance for all believers, he seals them for the final day of redemption. (*John 3:5–8; 4:24; 6:63; 14:16–17; Acts 1:8; 2:1–4; Romans 8:9–11; 12:2; Galatians 5: 22–25; Ephesians 1:13–14; 4:3–6, 11–16; 6:10–11; 2 Timothy 1:14; 3:16; 1 Peter 4:10–11; 2 Peter 1:21; 1 John 4:13; 5:6–7*)

5.6 Humanity

We believe the human person, both male and female, is the special creation of God, made in his image for his glory. Humanity was created that we might enjoy God, take delight in him, and worship him. Humans are unique in God's creation by having both a material body and an immaterial soul/spirit. Each person has an intellect and a will. Each person exists as a moral creature and is accountable before God. Humanity has been tasked by God with responsible stewardship of the earth's physical resources. Humanity was created to be relational and to commune with each other as families and as friends. Since all human persons contain the image of God, we must promote the dignity and sanctity of all human life. Therefore, every person from conception to the elderly, regardless of their abilities and resources, possesses dignity and is worthy of respect, love, and mercy.

The first man and woman were created innocent of sin, but rebelled against God and thus introduced sin into the human race. Ever since, people are born with a sinful nature. Only God's grace in Christ can restore people to a right relationship with God. Men and women are equal in the sight of God, receive giftedness from God, and have clearly defined roles in the institution of the family and the local church that complement each other and reflect the glory of our Triune God. God's good design to make male and female biologically distinct promotes human flourishing and affirms a proper self-conception of gender.

God has ordained the family as the foundational institution of human society. Marriage is the uniting of one man and one woman exclusively in covenant commitment for a lifetime. The husband is to be the head of the wife, which entails loving, Christ-like leadership. The wife is to respect her husband and to submit to him willingly as unto the Lord. Children, from the moment of conception, are a blessing from the Lord. They are to obey their parents in the Lord. Parents are to raise their children in the nurture and instruction of the Lord. The Bible opposes any sin that destroys the family. This includes all forms of sexual immorality, such as fornication, adultery, homosexuality, and pornography. (*Genesis 1:26–30; 2:5–7, 15–25; Deuteronomy 6:4–9; Joshua 24:15; Matthew 19:3–9; Romans 1:19–32; 3:10–18, 23; 1 Corinthians 1:21–31; Ephesians 2:1–22; 5:21–6:3; Colossians 1:21–22; 3:9–11*)

5.7 Salvation

We believe salvation is offered to all people and comes as a gift of God's grace through faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. It entails justification through divine election, calling, regeneration, and spiritual adoption. Salvation continues in sanctification and will culminate in the perseverance and glorification of all saints when Christ returns. Since human beings are born with a sinful nature and are sinners by choice, they naturally face the condemnation of God. Salvation comes only to those who repent of their sin and place faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. Salvation cannot be gained in any other way. In following our Protestant tradition, we believe that salvation comes by faith alone, in Christ alone, by God's grace alone, according to the holy scriptures alone, to the glory of God alone. There is no mixture of faith and works in reference to salvation. Those God has accepted in Christ and sanctified by His Spirit, will never fall away from the state of grace, but shall persevere to the end. (*Genesis 2:17; 3:19; Ecclesiastes. 2:11; John 1:12,13; 5:30; 8:12; Ephesians 2:4–10; Romans 3:23–24; Romans 8:28–39; 2 Corinthians 5:17–20; 1 John 3:2*)

5.8 The Church

We believe in the universal church, a living spiritual body of which Christ is the head and all born-again persons are members. We believe local churches are the visible expression of the universal church on earth. The local church is an autonomous congregation of baptized believers, who covenant themselves together under the Lordship of Jesus Christ. The congregation is to gather regularly for God-centered worship, be committed to the teachings of the Bible, exercise gifts for the work of service, and enjoy common fellowship and unity in the Holy Spirit. Every church member has the responsibility to give faithfully of his time, talents, and material possessions to support the mission and ministries of the church. The church is to obey the Lord's Great Commission to make disciples from all nations and to multiply churches all over the earth. (*Matthew 18:15–17; 28:16–20; John 20:21–23; 2 Corinthians 8–9; Galatians 6:1–2; Philippians 4:10–19; 1 Timothy 3:1–12*)

There are two ordinances instituted by the Lord Jesus Christ for the local church to regularly celebrate—Believer's Baptism and the Lord's Supper. Baptism is the immersion of a confessing believer in water in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, signifying a believer's death to sin and resurrection to new life in Christ. Water baptism is an act of obedience to Christ's command and a commitment to live in light of his Lordship. It also serves as an entry into the local church.

The Lord's Supper is a regular, congregational act of worship, instituted by Jesus Christ to take a portion of bread and receive the cup as symbols of the Lord's sacrificial death for his people on the cross. The Lord's Supper allows the local church to confess sin, seek purity, display unity, center itself upon the cross of Christ, and anticipate the Lord's glorious return. Self-discipline is encouraged during the celebration of the Lord's Supper. Church discipline may be enacted during the Lord's Supper. If so, it will be conducted according to scriptural principles under the oversight of the elders. (*Matthew 4:16,17; 18:15–20; Mark 14:22–25; Acts 2:38; Romans 10:8–10; 1 Corinthians 11:23–34*)

There are two scriptural offices in the local church: Elder and Deacon. The elders are charged with overall spiritual responsibility, managing oversight, and leadership of the local church before God. The elders are responsible for teaching the scriptures, and to interpret and enforce the church's statement of faith. Elders serve as pastors or under-shepherds of Christ. Deacons are chosen from the congregation and are to function as servants to the church, assisting the elders in caring for church members and church ministries. (*Philippians 1:1; 1 Timothy 3:1–13; 1 Peter 5:1–3*)

5.9 Liberty and Cooperation

We believe that every Christian is to relate to God directly and is personally responsible for all matters of faith. Each Christian should live for the glory of God and the well-being of others. Our conduct should be blameless before the world, and we should be faithful stewards of our possessions and positions of authority. Every local church is to be independent and free from interference by any ecclesiastical or political authority. The institution of the Church and the State must be kept separate as having different functions, each fulfilling its God-ordained duties and being free from dictation or patronage of the other.

We believe the local church can best promote the gospel of Jesus Christ by cooperating with like-minded churches in an organized structure. Such an organization exists and functions by the will of the churches choosing to be involved. Cooperation is voluntary and may be terminated at any time. Open Door Church will cooperate within the context of the Southern Baptist Convention. (*Acts 15:36,41; 16:5; Romans 12:1,2; 14:7-9, 12; 1 Corinthians 10:31; 16:1; Galatians 1:1-3; Colossians 1:9,10; 1 Timothy 2:5; Hebrews 12:1,2; Revelation 1:4, 10, 11*)

5.10 Last Things

In his own time and way, God will bring the world to its appropriate end. Jesus Christ will return to the earth bodily and visibly in glory, the bodies of the dead will be raised, and Christ will judge all people in righteousness. The unrighteous, along with the Devil and his demons, will be consigned to hell, the place of eternal punishment and torment. The righteous, in their glorified bodies, will receive their reward and will forever dwell, along with the elect angels, in the glory of heaven with the Lord. (*Matthew 16:27; Mark 14:62; John 14:3; Acts 1:11; 1 Corinthians 4:5; 1 Corinthians 15; Philippians 3:20; 1 Thessalonians 4:15; 2 Thessalonians 1:7-10; 2 Timothy 4:1; Titus 2:13; Revelation 20:4-6, 11-15*)

6. Our Covenant

In affirming our purpose, mission, and statement of faith, we pledge to God the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, to respond to the gracious provision of salvation in Jesus Christ with obedience, faith, hope, and love. Individually and corporately, we will seek first Christ's kingdom and his righteousness rather than pursue our self-interest. We pledge to make every effort to live in a manner worthy of our calling, to be exemplary in our conduct, and to treat one another with love, respect, and forgiveness. We promise to avoid sin, to abstain from sexual immorality, and any practice which brings harm to the body or jeopardizes our faith.

We promise to unite in regular worship, biblical preaching and teaching, fellowship, prayer, observance of the ordinances, and where necessary, church discipline. We commit to watch over one another in brotherly love; to remember one another in prayer; to aid each other in sickness and distress; to show grace in our speech; to be slow to take offense, and to be ready for reconciliation without delay.

We promise to conduct our families according to the pattern laid out in Scripture, to honor biblical marriage, and to raise our children in the instruction of the Lord. We promise to seek the salvation of the lost and to be ambassadors for Christ on this earth, to be loving, just, and willing to serve all people. We promise to promote ethnic diversity within the body of Christ. We commit ourselves to willingly submit to the leaders of the church as unto the Lord, to contribute cheerfully and regularly to the support of the ministry, the expenses of the Church, the relief of the poor, and the spread of the gospel to all nations.

We moreover promise that when we remove our membership from this church, we will, if possible, unite with another like-minded church where we can carry out the spirit of this covenant until we are all united in heaven as we eagerly await the return of our blessed Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

Section II: Bylaws

7. Church Membership

Open Door Church will promote meaningful church membership. To become a candidate for membership, a person must be a committed believer in Jesus Christ, showing evidence of salvation, and having experienced believer's baptism. Each member must covenant with the church by affirming the Statement of Faith and promising to live in accordance with the Church Covenant. The elders and pastoral staff will oversee the membership process. (*Romans 12:4–8; 2 Corinthians 8:1–5; Ephesians 4:11–16; Philippians 1:1; Hebrews 10:23–25; 13:17*)

7.1 Admission of Members

The process of membership will involve:

- a. Successful completion of a membership orientation class
- b. Submitting a membership application
- c. Meeting with an elder or a member of the pastoral staff
- d. Identifying with a small group
- e. Congregational approval by a simple majority during a members' meeting

7.2 Non-voting Members

Any baptized believer under the age of sixteen (16) will be considered a non-voting member. After sixteen (16), he or she will be encouraged to pursue membership. A visiting student may request to be a non-voting member in order to receive financial support from their home church. Non-voting members may be restricted from members' meetings at the discretion of the elders.

7.3 Privileges of Membership

Under the Lordship of Christ, this congregation will be led by its elders and governed by its members. It is the privilege and responsibility of each member to participate in members' meetings and to vote on the election of officers, on membership, the annual budget, and other matters submitted to the congregation by the elders.

7.3.1 Serving and Giving

Each member is privileged and expected to contribute to the ministries of the church, consistent with the gifting, time, and material resources each has received from the Holy Spirit. Only members may be asked to serve in leadership positions, including elder and deacon, under the discretion of the elders. Non-members may serve on an ad-hoc basis with the approval of the elders.

7.3.2 Care

Each member is expected to faithfully participate in a CareGroup (small group ministry) for the benefit of spiritual growth and mutual care among the members of the group. Additionally, the CareGroup Leader assists the elders in providing shepherding oversight of the group members.

7.3.3 Church Discipline

Scripture encourages discipline of believers involved in persistent, unrepentant sin for the purpose of restoring them to a right relationship with God and fellowship with their local church. When discipline is enacted, it should be carried out with an attitude of love, humility, and commitment to biblical process as defined in Matthew 18:15–18 (*1 Corinthians 5:1–12; Gal 6:1–2; 1 Thessalonians 5:14*). Typically, the first step of the biblical process is a private attempt at resolution by the person who has been sinned against or who has become aware of a Christian’s unrepentant sin. If unsuccessful, the second step involves another resolution attempt with the addition of one or two spiritually minded witnesses (*Galatians 6:1–2*). If unsuccessful, the third step requires consultation with the elders (*Titus 1:9, 3:10*), which may lead to exposure of the sin before the whole church. The final step is removal of the individual from church fellowship and termination of membership (*Matthew 18:18; 1 Corinthians 5*). It will be the sincere desire of the local church that all members be lovingly brought to repentance and restoration. A former member who has been under discipline can be restored back to membership under the guidance of the elders. Church discipline is necessary for the purity of the church as a whole; for the good of our corporate witness to non-Christians; and supremely, for the glory of God by reflecting his holy character.

7.4 Termination of Membership

Our desire is to maintain active membership at Open Door Church. Membership will be relinquished by the following under the oversight of the elders:

- a. Death
- b. Transfer of membership to another church (if the member is not undergoing church discipline).
- c. Personal request of the member (if the member is not undergoing church discipline).
- d. An act of church discipline.
- e. Periodically, at the discretion of the elders, members will be removed who have left the church without consulting the elders or who have been inactive for more than six (6) months.

8. Our Structure and Government

8.1 Our Congregation

Under the authority of Jesus Christ and the Word of God, the Congregation of Open Door Church is the final authority within this local church. This authority is exercised through the election of officers to govern the church.

8.2 Our Officers

The officers of Open Door Church shall be elected by the congregation and function in the role of Elder or Deacon. All officers shall be biblically qualified members whose characters display the humility and servant’s heart of Jesus Christ.

- a. The primary leadership of the Church shall be vested in the elders (pastors) who are responsible for governing the Church, leading in corporate worship, teaching the Bible, equipping the saints to do the work of the ministry, and providing pastoral care for members. All elders shall be equal in authority but may be specialized in their function.
- b. Deacons shall assist the elders by performing service to the membership and coordinating ministries under the direction of the elders.

8.3 The Ministry of Our Elders

The elders of Open Door Church shall be men called of God who aspire and are elected by the church to be overseers (bishops) and shepherds (pastors) of this church. (*Acts 20:28; Philippians 1:1; 1 Timothy 3:1–7; 1 Peter 5:1–3*). They are to be men only (*1 Timothy 2:12*) and number no less than five (5). The majority of the elders will not derive income from the church although the church may honor their faithful service with financial gifts. (*1 Timothy 5:17, 18*)

All elders must meet the applicable qualifications in 1 Timothy 3:1–7 and Titus 1:6–9, pertaining to personal integrity, family relationships, and doctrinal fidelity. All elders are annually to affirm the Statement of Faith and renew their promise to live in accordance with the Church Covenant.

8.3.1 Duties

The elders are charged with the overall spiritual responsibility for the church before God, including the exercise of doctrinal oversight, the oversight over all areas of ministry, the oversight of the deacon ministry, the oversight of the staff, and the oversight of church resources. (*Acts 20:17, 28–31; Philippians 1:1; 1 Thessalonians. 5:12; 1 Timothy 4:14; 5:17; Titus 1:5; 1 Peter 5:1–2*)

The Lead Pastor will be the elder charged with the primary preaching and teaching ministry of the church. He will be tasked to promote the mission and vision of the church to the congregation on a regular basis. All of the elders may be called upon to teach. (*1 Timothy 3:2; Titus 1:9*)

The Executive Pastor will be the elder charged with the oversight of the day-to-day operation of the church and staff. He will be tasked to oversee the church finances in conjunction with the Board of Directors (refer to 9.1).

8.3.2 Election of Elders

Through prayerful consideration and under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, the church shall elect qualified elders. A man must be a member of the church for at least three (3) years before being considered as a candidate for the office.

The current elders will maintain a list of candidates and will initiate the process of calling a new elder as the need arises. Once an elder candidate has been determined, the existing elders will meet to judge his qualification and calling. Then the candidate will be presented to the church at least two (2) weeks before voting at a members' meeting. A 75% majority of those voting will be required to approve an elder.

Each elder will serve for three (3) years and may be asked to serve for an additional three (3) years. After three (3) years of service, each elder must be reaffirmed by the elders and approved by the congregation by a 75% majority vote at a members' meeting in order to continue serving as an elder. After six (6) years of service, each elder will be required to take a sabbatical. The structure and length of the sabbatical will be determined by the elders. Upon completion of the sabbatical, the church will be asked to approve the elder for another three (3) years of service.

An elder may resign at any time with the majority approval of the elders. The dismissal of an elder can be recommended to the church by a majority vote of the elders. Matters requiring church discipline of an elder are to be carried out in keeping with biblical procedure (*Matthew 18:15–17; 1 Timothy 5:19–21*). At least three (3) members of the congregation with reason to believe that an elder should be dismissed should express such concern to the other elders. The dismissal of an elder shall be by a 75% majority vote of those voting at a members' meeting, for which at least two (2) weeks' notice must be given.

8.4 The Ministry of Our Deacons

The deacons are godly men and women who are elected servants of the church. They are to meet the qualifications of 1 Timothy 3:8–12. The office of Deacon does not entail governing or teaching authority. As used in Scripture, the term deacon means servant. The biblical role of deacons is to take care of the physical and logistical needs of the church so that the elders can concentrate on their primary calling. (*Acts 6:1–7*) Deacons will be believers of spiritual maturity and wisdom, who demonstrate a servant spirit. They will serve under the direction of the elders.

The matter of whether women are to be officially recognized as deacons is debatable, with much of the discussion resting upon the interpretation of 1 Timothy 3:11 as to whether it pertains to the wife of a deacon, or to a woman deacon. Open Door Church interprets this as “women likewise” and thus shall designate women to serve as deacons (or deaconesses). (*Romans 16:1; 1 Timothy 3:11*).

As the need for deacons arises, there will be an active search initiated by the elders for men and women who meet the biblical qualifications and who have been active members of Open Door Church for a minimum of two (2) years. Those candidates will then be presented to the church and must be approved by a 75% majority vote of those voting at a members’ meeting, for which at least two (2) weeks’ notice must be given. Annually the elders will publish a list of all church officers.

Each deacon will serve for three (3) years and then may be asked to serve for an additional three (3) years. After three (3) years of service, the deacon must be reaffirmed by the elders and approved by the congregation with a 75% majority vote at a members’ meeting in order to continue serving. After six (6) years of service, the deacon will take a one (1) year sabbatical and then will be eligible to be renewed back to the office based on elder recommendation and church approval at a members’ meeting with 75% majority approval.

A deacon may resign at any time with the majority approval of the elders. The dismissal of a deacon can be recommended to the church by a majority vote of the elders and must be approved by a 75% majority vote of those voting at a members’ meeting, for which at least two (2) weeks’ notice must be given.

8.5. The Ministry of Our Church Staff

The church staff will be comprised of three categories, as needed, to fulfill the mission of Open Door Church.

8.5.1 The Pastoral Staff

The Pastoral staff will be comprised of godly men elected by the church to assist the elders in carrying out the mission of the church. They must be “elder-like” men who meet the applicable qualifications found in 1 Timothy 3:1–7 and Titus 1:6–9, pertaining to personal integrity, family relationships, and doctrinal fidelity. The pastoral staff are annually to affirm the Statement of Faith and renew their promise to live in accordance with the Church Covenant.

Through prayerful consideration and under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, the elders shall examine and nominate, and the church shall elect, qualified pastoral staff as needed. The elders may call upon qualified church members to assist them in this process. After sufficient examination, the candidate will be presented to the church and voted upon after two (2) weeks’ notice by a 75% majority vote during a members’ meeting.

A pastoral staff may resign at any time with the majority approval of the elders. The dismissal of a pastoral staff can be recommended to the church by a majority vote of the elders and must be approved by a 75% majority vote of those voting at a members' meeting, for which at least two (2) weeks' notice must be given.

8.5.2 The Administrative Staff

The elders will identify and hire additional staff as necessary to properly handle the administrative tasks related to the mission of the church. The Executive Pastor will be responsible for the hiring process. Anyone serving as an Administrative Staff will be required to be a member of Open Door Church and annually affirm the Statement of Faith and renew their promise to live in accordance with the Church Covenant. The funding for administrative staff positions will be included in the annual church budget.

8.5.3 The Support Staff

Additional staff will be added as necessary to support the mission of the church. These positions will usually be part-time. The Executive Pastor will be responsible for the hiring process. Usually, those serving in this role will be members of Open Door Church in good standing, who annually affirm the Statement of Faith of the church and renew their promise to live in accordance with the Church Covenant. The funding for support staff positions will be included in the annual church budget.

9. Administrative Matters

9.1 Board of Directors

Open Door Church exists legally as a non-profit religious organization. As such, it will designate a Board of Directors to oversee the legal affairs of the church. This board shall consist of five (5) members from among the active membership, nominated by the elders, and approved by the congregation by a 75% majority vote of those voting at a members' meeting, for which at least two (2) weeks' notice must be given. In addition to these five (5) members, the Executive Pastor will represent the elders on the Board of Directors. The term of service on the board will be three (3) years (with staggered terms for each member) and each Board member may serve two (2) consecutive terms at which time he or she must step down for at least one (1) year before being considered for the position again. In the case of a vacancy before a term is over, the elders will nominate a church member to complete the unexpired portion of the term as described above. The Board itself will annually select its officers, which shall consist of: Chairman, Vice-Chairman, Secretary, Treasurer, and one (1) member at large—in addition to the Executive Pastor. The elders can recommend the removal of a director, and the church can approve removal by a 75% majority vote of those voting at a members' meeting, for which at least two (2) weeks' notice must be given.

The Board of Directors shall act as the trustees of the church property under the articles of incorporation. Upon specific vote of the membership authorizing each action, they shall have the power to buy, sell, mortgage lease or transfer any church property. When the signatures of the directors are required, three (3) shall sign legal documents involving the sale, mortgage, purchase, or rental of property, or other legal documents related to church approved matters.

The directors shall exercise the utmost good faith in all transactions pertaining to their duties to the church and its property. They must hold to a strict standard of biblical conduct consistent with a position as representative of the church. They shall not use their position as director or knowledge gained there from so that a conflict of interest might arise between the church's interests and the board.

The Board of Directors shall meet at least twice per year with a quorum of three (3) members present. The church will provide indemnification insurance to cover the expenses associated with a legal claim or criminal allegation made against a director who was acting as an agent of the church. (Refer to 9.8 Indemnification below.)

9.2 Treasurer

Our Treasurer, who shall not be an active elder, deacon, or paid church staff member, shall ensure that all funds and securities of the church are properly secured in such banks, financial institutions, or depositories as appropriate. The Treasurer will be elected from within the Board of Directors. The Treasurer serves to sign checks and disburse funds in the manner prescribed by Elders and in accordance with the church budget. The Treasurer shall also ensure that full and accurate accounts of receipts and disbursements are kept in books belonging to the church, and that adequate controls are implemented to guarantee that all funds belonging to the church are appropriately handled by any officer, employee, or agent of the church. As required by the church, the Treasurer may be bonded.

9.3 Church 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, staff, and the Board. An administrative assistant who is employed by the church shall assume the duties of the clerk. The clerk shall ensure that dated copies of the most recent revision of this document shall be available for all church members. The church clerk will submit minutes from the previous members' meeting at the next scheduled members' meeting for approval.

9.4 Records

Open Door Church will keep 1) adequate and correct books and records of accounts, 2) written minutes of business meetings, and 3) an accurate listing of the membership. In accordance with the North Carolina Nonprofit Corporation Act, the request to inspect church records must 1) come from a current member of the church, 2) be exercised at a reasonable time, and 3) be for a proper purpose. All such requests should be made in writing to an elder. If approved, it is expected that the member will agree to exercise confidentiality with regard to any information obtained from the inspection of the records.

9.5 Worship Meetings

Regular corporate worship shall be held weekly and other worship events may be held throughout the week as the elders determine. Open Door Church worships corporately through prayer, the reading and preaching of the Scriptures, singing praises, and giving generously back to God. The church members will regularly celebrate Believer's Baptism and the Lord's Supper at the timing and direction of the elders.

9.6 Members' Meetings

Open Door Church will hold at least three (3) members' meetings each year. The elders may call the church to gather for a meeting of its membership at any time deemed necessary giving at least one (1) week's notice prior to the meeting. If the church will be asked to vote on any matter, a quorum of at least 10% of the active voting membership will be necessary. Unless otherwise prescribed in the bylaws, a simple majority of those voting will be needed for approval. No proxy or absentee voting will be accepted. An elder will be appointed to preside over the meeting, or a moderator appointed by the elders. If a member desires to make a motion on an item of new business, they may do so via written communication to an elder at least two (2) weeks prior to a scheduled members' meeting. An annual members' meeting shall be held during the last quarter of the church's fiscal year (October - December) for the purpose of approving an annual budget and other matters set before the church as deemed necessary by the elders.

9.7 Dispute Resolution

The Bible commands Christians to make every effort to live at peace and to resolve disputes with each other in private or within the local church. (*Matthew 18:15–20, 1 Corinthians 6:1–8*) Consistent with its call to peacemaking, the church shall encourage the use of biblically-based principles and the avoidance of suits of law or equity to resolve disputes between itself and those outside the church, whether Christian or secular and whether individuals or corporate entities. The elders shall adopt policies and procedures to affect these requirements and aspirations.

9.8 Indemnification

9.8.1 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.

9.8.2 Permissive Indemnification

At the discretion of the elders, the church also may indemnify any person who acted in good faith and reasonably believed that his or her conduct was in the church's best interest and not unlawful.

9.8.3 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.

9.9 Amendments

The elders may propose amendments to the Bylaws as well as the Articles of Incorporation as needed. All proposed amendments must be presented to the membership at least thirty (30) days prior to a called members' meeting. A 75% majority of those voting will be required to approve an amendment. The updated version of these document will be made available to all members.

9.10 Dissolution

Upon the dissolution of the corporation, the officers shall, after paying or making provision for the payment of all the liabilities of the corporation, dispose of all the assets of the corporation exclusively for the purposes of the corporation in such a manner, or to such organization(s) organized and operated exclusively for religious purposes as shall at the time qualify as an exempt organization(s) under section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code, or the corresponding section of any future federal tax code, as the officers shall determine. Any such assets not so disposed of shall be disposed of by a Court of Competent Jurisdiction of the county in which the principal office of the corporation is then located, exclusively for such purposes or to such organization or organizations, as said Court shall determine, which are organized and operated exclusively for such purposes.