

Constitution
& BYLAWS

MARTINSVILLE BAPTIST TABERNACLE

TABLE OF CONTENT

ARTICLE I, NAME	2
ARTICLE II, OBJECT	2
ARTICLE III, DOCTRINE	2
ARTICLE IV, ASSOCIATIONS	2
ARTICLE V, MEMBERSHIPS	2
ARTICLE VI, ORDINANCES	5
ARTICLE VII, OFFICERS AND BOARD	5
ARTICLE VIII, COMMITTEE	8
ARTICLE IX, FINANCES	11
ARTICLE X, AUXILIARY ORGANIZATIONS	11
ARTICLE XI, BUSINESS MEETINGS	12
ARTICLE XII, AMMENDMENTS	13

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ARTICLE I, NAME: The name of this organization shall be the Martinsville Baptist Tabernacle.

ARTICLE II, OBJECT: Our object shall be to promote the worship of God by preaching of the Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ at home and abroad, and carrying out the Great Commission of Mt. 28:19, 20, trusting that as a result sinners shall be saved and believers edified.

ARTICLE III, DOCTRINE: Our doctrine shall always be in conformity with the verbally inspired Word of God as expressed in our Confession of Faith.

ARTICLE IV, ASSOCIATIONS: As a New Testament Church cannot “join” anything outside itself, but only affiliate therewith on ground of fellowship, this church declares itself to be an Independent Baptist fellowship and cannot be changed, by any form, other than a three-fourths majority of the members present and voting.

ARTICLE V, MEMBERSHIPS:

SECTION 1. RACIAL NONDISCRIMINATION:
The church shall have a racially nondiscriminatory policy and therefore shall not discriminate against

members, applicants, students, and others on the basis of race, color, or national or ethnic origin.

SECTION 2. PRESENT MEMBERSHIPS: All whose names appear upon the rolls of this church are members, but only those upon the “Active” list are considered in good and regular standing. Those whose names appear upon the “Inactive” list have no right of franchise and may not be granted a letter of “good and regular standing.”

SECTION 3. RECEPTION OF MEMBERS:

Paragraph A: Anyone professing faith in the Lord Jesus Christ as personal Saviour, giving evidence of a change of heart, and declaring himself (or herself) in accord with the principles, practices and doctrines of this church may become a candidate for church membership.

Paragraph B: Candidates may become members of the church in one of four ways: (1) By baptism, (2) By letter, (3) By Christian experience, or (4) By restoration.

Paragraph C: Candidates for church membership shall appear personally before the pastor and deacon(s), who shall pass upon their qualifications and prescribe any restriction that may seem advisable for the best interests of the church. Having been recommended by the pastor and deacon(s) the name shall then be submitted to the Church for acceptance or rejection, five dissenting votes constituting refusal of admission, but any member objecting may be required to present the grounds of his objection before the deacon(s) at their meeting. A two-thirds vote of the deacons shall overrule the objection and the name

shall be submitted once more to the church.

SECTION 4. DISMISSAL OF MEMBERS:

Paragraph A: Church Letters:

(1) Letters of transfer may be granted any member in good and regular standing; such letters must be addressed to some particular church of like faith and order and sent by the clerk to the pastor or clerk of the church to which the member is transferred. Such letters shall be valid only for six months from date, and the member so transferred shall remain subject to the discipline of this church until notification has been received of the acceptance by the church addressed. (No letter shall be granted except to a designated church of like faith and order.)

(2) Members not in good and regular standing or those desiring to unite with a church not of our faith and order may be given a Certificate of Standing to date, but not a letter of transfer.

Paragraph B: Discipline of Members:

(1) The matter of discipline of the membership shall be in the hands of the pastor and deacons assisted by the church. No member shall be expelled until every effort has been made, including, if physically possible, personal visits to reclaim him (or her) for Christ and the church.

(2) Members failing to support the church by their attendance within a period of six months without legitimate excuse, (such "support" and "excuse" to be defined by the pastor and deacons) may be placed on the "Inactive" list and so lose their right of franchise. Names on the "inactive" list may be removed from the church membership roll at any time subject to (1) of

this paragraph and any who remain on the inactive list for six months will be removed from the church membership roll subject to (1) of this paragraph.

ARTICLE VI, ORDINANCES: The ordinances of the church shall be two:

SECTION 1. BAPTISM: Baptism shall be the dipping of the body of the Believer in and under water, commonly called immersion. It shall be administered by the pastor, or some person authorized by the church, to those who have professed a personal faith in Jesus Christ as Savior. Immersion shall be a prerequisite to church membership.

SECTION 2. THE LORD'S SUPPER: The Lord's Supper or Communion, shall be served monthly to the assembled church by the pastor, or some person authorized by the church, or at other designated times at the discretion of the pastor and deacons. Since it is the Lord's Table, none who are His shall be barred, but the pastor shall frequently state the Scriptural order, which places baptism as a prerequisite to Communion, and shall explain the meaning of the ordinances. The deacons shall prepare and assist in servicing the Supper.

ARTICLE VII, OFFICERS AND BOARD:

The officers of the church shall consist of pastor, deacons, trustees, treasurer, and clerk, all of whom, except the pastor, shall have been a member of this church for a period of at least one year before being placed in nomination, except charter members; and their terms of office shall begin on the first of the month following the annual meeting; and retiring officers should hold office until their term begins. Other minor officers may be created from time to time

as may be deemed necessary. No person shall hold more than two major offices at one time.

SECTION 1. PASTOR:

Paragraph A: The pastor shall be chosen for an indeterminate term by a vote of two-thirds of the members present and voting by ballot at any business meeting, notice of which shall be given publicly for two successive Sundays preceding. The pastor's tenure of office may be terminated by either the pastor or the church, providing a written notice is given to the other party at least thirty days preceding such termination.

Paragraph B: If the church should find unhappily that its pastor was living an immoral life, had become heretical in his beliefs, or was grossly negligent in his duties as Pastor, twenty or two-thirds adult members in good standing, representing as many families, may sign a petition requesting the Advisory Committee to call a meeting of the church for the purpose of considering the question. Announcement of this shall be made at the regular service for two weeks prior to the date of the meeting. When the meeting is called to order and properly organized, consideration shall be given to all sides of the question. Voting shall be by secret ballot and if three-fourths of the membership present and voting, vote adversely to the Pastor, his services shall be discontinued within thirty days, or in a shorter period by mutual consent.

Paragraph C: The Pastor shall be the Moderator of the church and member ex-officio of the Diaconate, Board of Trustees, and all committees.

Paragraph D: The Pastor shall be responsible for all church staff, and church staff is in turn to be responsible only

to the Pastor.

SECTION 2. DEACONS:

Paragraph A: The church shall elect from its membership not less than three or more men to serve as deacons, and these shall meet the Scriptural standards of I Timothy 3:8-13. Their terms shall be for three years and so arranged as to end alternately. Retiring Deacon or Deacons cannot be re-elected for a period of one year.

Paragraph B: It shall be the duties of the deacons to prepare the elements for and assist in administering the Lord's Supper, to cooperate with and assist the pastor in the performance of his duties to visit the sick and to assist members in distress.

SECTION 3. TRUSTEES:

Paragraph A: The church shall choose from its membership three or more to serve as trustees. Their terms of office shall be three years and so arranged as to end alternately. Retiring trustees cannot be re-elected for a period of one year.

Paragraph B: It shall be the duties of the trustees to (1) care for the property of the church – to hold, repair, invest, and preserve the same; (2) to superintend any improvements to the property not entrusted to a special committee by the church; (3) to hire the caretaker of the property, and (4) to transact any other business of the church that may come within their jurisdiction or be ordered by the church.

Paragraph C: The trustees shall have no authority to sell, lease, give away, or dispose of in any manner church property to exceed five hundred dollars, without the

express will of the church given by a majority vote at a regularly called business meeting; nor shall they mortgage or encumber the church to exceed the same amount without corporate action by the church.

SECTION 4. TREASURER:

Paragraph A: The treasurer shall be elected from the membership of the Church. He shall receive and have custody of all moneys of the church, except special designated funds, applying such as directed by the church. He shall make a full report of the finances, receipts and disbursements, annually as required by the church. The term of the office shall be for one year.

Paragraph B: At the recommendation of the advisory committee special funds such as property, building, bus ministry, radio, etc., may be set up from time to time in the best interest of the church.

SECTION 5. ASSISTANT TREASURER: The assistant treasurer shall be elected from the membership of the church and shall assist the treasurer. He shall be elected for a term of one year.

SECTION 6. CLERK: The clerk shall be elected from the membership of the church. His duties shall be to keep a complete record of the business meetings of the church, keep a register of all members, give notice of business meetings, and perform such particular duties as may be ordered by the church. The term of office shall be one year.

ARTICLE VIII, COMMITTEE:

SECTION 1. ADVISORY COMMITTEE:

Paragraph A: The Pastor, Deacons, Trustees, Treasurer,

Assistant Treasurer, and Clerk shall form an advisory committee. Its rulings shall not be considered final, but shall be submitted to the church for their approval or rejection. It shall make such recommendations to the church as will promote the peace, purity, and progress of the body. It shall function as a finance committee as the need arises and shall present to the church annually a budget for its consideration and adoption. Any matter brought before the church deemed by the moderator to require more prayer and consideration shall be referred to the advisory committee for their recommendation at the next business meeting.

Paragraph B: The advisory committee shall, when a vacancy occurs in the office of pastor, act as a pulpit committee and shall continue to function as such until a new pastor is on the field. The deacons shall act as the search committee in seeking a pastor and will bring all recommendations back to the advisory committee.

The advisory committee shall bring before the church suitable candidates for the pastorate and care for the entertainment of these candidates while they are on the field. When it seems wise it shall present to the church at a regularly called business meeting the name of one of these candidates and conduct the voting upon the same. At no time shall two names be placed before the church at one meeting. The senior deacon shall be chairman of the pulpit committee and the moderator of the Church, while it is without a pastor.

SECTION 2. MISSIONARY COMMITTEE:

Paragraph A: A missionary committee shall consist of the Pastor, who shall act as chairman, the senior deacon, president of the ladies' missionary organization, Sunday School superintendent, church treasurer or

assistant treasurer, and three members elected from the membership of the church. These shall recommend the missionary projects for support of the church and draft an annual missionary budget to be submitted to the advisory committee for its action at least three weeks before the annual meeting of the church.

Paragraph B: It shall be the policy of this church to support only missions engaged principally in evangelization. They shall be known to be in hearty agreement with our Confession of Faith both in doctrine and practice.

SECTION 3. NOMINATING COMMITTEE: The advisory committee shall place in nomination members of the church which it deems qualified to fill the offices that become vacant at that time. The names of such nominees shall be approved by the deacons and posted three weeks before the annual meeting in a conspicuous place in the church building. It is understood that these nominations do not prohibit nominations from the floor, or place in an unfavorable light members making such nominations. After opening the floor for nominations, one week prior to the annual meeting, the ballot shall be closed.

SECTION 4. AUDITING COMMITTEE: An auditing committee elected at the annual meeting consisting of two members shall carefully examine records, receipts, and vouchers of the treasurer for the past year and report their findings to the church at the next regular business meeting.

SECTION 5. OTHER COMMITTEES: Other committees may be elected as deemed necessary, when recommended by the advisory committee and approved by the church body.

ARTICLE IX, FINANCES:

SECTION 1. The church proper shall be supported by the tithes and free will offerings of its people and shall not engage in the merchandising of products or goods for its support.

SECTION 2. OBLIGATIONS: No financial obligation shall be placed upon the church except by corporate act at a regularly called business meeting. (See exceptions under Article VII, Section 3, Paragraph C.)

ARTICLE X, AUXILIARY ORGANIZATIONS:

SECTION 1. SUNDAY SCHOOL: The Sunday School shall be considered as the church studying the Bible, its superintendent and assistant shall be elected by the church at its annual business meeting, and it shall be under the supervision and control of the church. All teachers and other Sunday School personnel shall be members of the church in good standing. They are to be appointed by Sunday School Superintendent, Assistant Superintendent, and Pastor. All literature for Sunday School and Church organizations, must be purchased from some fundamental publishing house as approved by the advisory committee.

SECTION 2. OTHER ORGANIZATIONS: There shall be other organizations as the most efficient prosecution of our object shall demand. These organizations shall be self-governing, but always amenable to the church through her regularly elected officers.

SECTION 3. OFFICERS: All officers of auxiliary organizations shall be members in good standing of

the church.

SECTION 4. CHRISTIAN SCHOOL:

Paragraph A: The Christian school shall be considered the church performing its responsibilities of teaching on Monday through Friday. Its principal staff shall be considered a part of the pastoral staff of the Martinsville Baptist Tabernacle. Its board shall be comprised of three members elected from the advisory committee, in addition to the church treasurer, school principal, and pastor. Their term of office shall extend from July 1 to June 30 of the following year. Those elected by the advisory committee shall be recommended to the church body for consideration as school board members. The church body shall vote to accept or reject each such recommendation. Those elected from within the advisory committee shall be only those who have served one full year on said committee.

Paragraph B: The school board shall be responsible to set financial and administrative policy and present appropriate recommendations to the church body. The school board shall have the authority to set salaries and issue letters of commitment before the official school budget is adopted by the church body. The school board shall also have the authority to set rates of tuition and fees.

Paragraph C: The school board shall present a budget for the school ministry to the church body annually for its consideration and adoption.

ARTICLE XI, BUSINESS MEETINGS:

SECTION 1. ANNUAL MEETINGS: There shall be an annual meeting of the church for the election of

officers, hearing reports, and transacting any other church business during the month of January. Notice of this meeting shall be given publicly for two Sundays preceding the date of the meeting.

SECTION 2. OTHER BUSINESS MEETINGS:

Routine business may be transacted at any regular business meeting of the church, or a special business meeting may be called by the pastor, officers, or any group of members providing, such meeting is announced publicly the preceding Sunday. The regular business meetings of the church will be held quarterly.

SECTION 3. QUORUM: The representation of at least fifteen percent of the "Active" members of the church shall constitute a quorum.

SECTION 4. A member must be at least eighteen years old, before they are eligible to vote.

ARTICLE XII, AMENDMENTS: This constitution may be amended by a two-thirds vote of the members present and voting at any annual business meeting, or a specially called business meeting, provided public notice of the proposed change has been made in the church on the two preceding Sundays.

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