CONSTITUTION AND BY-LAWS

WYTHEVILLE BAPTIST CHURCH

PREAMBLE:

For the more certain preservation and security of the principles of our faith and to the end that this body may be governed in an orderly manner consistent with the accepted tenants of a missionary Baptist church, and for the purpose of preserving the liberties inherent in each individual member of this church and the freedom of action of this body with respect to its relation to other churches of the same faith, we do declare and establish this constitution.

CONSTITUTION
ARTICLE I
NAME

This body shall be known as the Wytheville Baptist Church.

ARTICLE II
CENTRAL FOCUS

Boldly affirmed in the bright future God has planned for us, we seek to be inventive and resourceful while encouraging one another on a deeper spiritual journey (See Hebrews 10:24-25)

ARTICLE III
PURPOSES

Help people within the community of Wytheville Baptist Church to experience a closer and deeper relationship with God; reach out in ministry to gather new persons into the community of Wytheville Baptist Church, seek to minister to their needs and provide an environment that enhances spiritual growth.

ARTICLE IV
CHURCH POLITY

The government of this church is vested in the body of believers who compose it. It is subject to the control of no other ecclesiastical body, but it recognizes and sustains the obligations of mutual counsel and cooperation which are common among Baptist churches. Insofar as is practical, this church will cooperate with and support the Western Blue Ridge Baptist Network and the Baptist General Association of Virginia.

ARTICLE V
STATEMENT OF FAITH AND MESSAGE

The articles of faith shall be those expressed by "The Baptist Faith and Message," a statement adopted by the Baptist in Kansas City, Missouri, on May 9, 1963, unless otherwise stated.

ARTICLE VI
CHURCH COVENANT

Being a covenant community begun and established by God, we make the following covenant with each other as members of Wytheville Baptist Church. This covenant details the responsibilities each church member pledges to live to the best of their ability as part of our community of believers.

Having been led as we believe by the Spirit of God to receive the Lord Jesus Christ as our Lord and Savior, 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 spirituality and fruitfulness*; to sustain its worship, ordinances, doctrines, and discipline;*

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 the people of all nations.

We also engage to maintain family and personal devotions; to educate our children in the Christian faith; to seek 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 use our influence to combat the abuse of drugs and alcohol and the spread of pornography and other practices which lead to moral and spiritual decay;

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, and always ready for reconciliation and mindful of the rules of our Savior to secure it without delay.

We moreover engage that when we remove from this place we will as soon as possible unite with some other church where we can carry out the spirit of this Covenant and the principles of God's Word.

BY-LAWS
ARTICLE I
PREVIOUS BY-LAWS

This Constitution and By-Laws automatically supersedes any previous Constitution and By-Laws now in effect in the church.

ARTICLE II
MEMBERSHIP

Section 1. Voting Rights

Only members in good standing may act and vote in transactions of the church. Active members are those who are involved in attending Worship Service and other activities of the church. Members must be present at meetings to vote except when absentee voting has been arranged. Absentee voting

will be permitted for those confined by illness or unavoidably out of town. Absentee ballots should be sent to the moderator or tally team. Any vote requiring a two-thirds majority must be taken by written ballot.

Section 2. Admission to the membership shall be governed in the following manner:

A. Any person professing faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, giving evidence of a change of heart, and having accepted the statement of faith of this church may be received into membership. The person when physically able shall be baptized by immersion as soon as possible in obedience to the Lord's command.
B. Members of other Baptist churches may be received as members with us by presenting letters of transfer from such churches and accepting the statement of faith of this church.
C. Any applicant for membership for whom the ordinance of baptism by immersion has been administered may be received upon a statement of his/her experience of faith in the Lord Jesus Christ prior to baptism, and after accepting the statement of faith of this church.
D. A person requesting membership in this church will first talk with the pastor and/or a deacon. He/she then will be presented to the church during a regular worship service.

Section 3. Transfer and dismissal from the membership shall be governed in the following manner:

A. A letter of transfer and recommendation shall be granted, on application, to any member in good standing to join another Baptist church.
B. A letter of dismissal shall be granted, on application, to any member wishing to join a church of another faith, or at his own disposition.
C. Any member who has been absent for two years and has communicated in no way with the church will be placed on an inactive roll. Such a member may be restored as a member in good standing by his/her return to the church and an expression of renewed interest. If after a reasonable length of time and sufficient encouragement by the membership he/she continues to show no interest he/she will be subject to the discipline of the church.
D. A member guilty of gross or persistent neglect of covenant obligations shall be considered a proper subject for discipline. In such cases it shall be the duty of the pastor and the deacons, or one or more of their number to contact such delinquent a member to ascertain the cause of the delinquency or failure to meet covenant obligations and, if in their opinion the conditions warrant church action, they shall make such reports to the church.

ARTICLE III
MEETINGS AND QUORUM

Section 1. Kinds of Meetings

This church shall hold regular meetings for worship, teachings, training, prayer, and fellowship.

Section 2. Quarterly Business Conference

Quarterly Business Conference shall be held one time a quarter at a time agreed upon by the church and as adopted in the annual church calendar. Notice of such meetings shall be made from the pulpit and/or electronic media on the Sunday before the meeting. Any regular meeting of the church shall be considered a business meeting for the reception of members, the granting of letters of dismissal and the approval of delegates to conferences, councils, conventions, or other meetings where the church should be represented and no previous notice shall be required.

The first regular business meeting following the Western Blue Ridge Baptist Network annual meeting will include a summary of the Annual Church Profile as submitted to the Network.

In the event of inclement weather, a regular business meeting shall be held the next available

Wednesday, providing notice is made from the pulpit and/or electronic media on the Sunday before the meeting.

Section 3. Special Business Meetings

Special business meetings may be called for the purpose of transacting the business of the church. These meetings may be called in one of these ways: 1) Moderator, 2) the Pastor, 3) the Chair of Pastor-Church Relations Team, 4) the Chair of Deacons, or 5) upon receipt of a petition signed by twenty-five (25) members of the church. Notice of such called business meeting shall be announced at least seven (7) days prior to the date for the special business meeting. Such notice may be included in the Beacon or electronic media provided that all other requirements of this section are met. The nature of the business to be transacted shall be specified in the notice. Copies of both business to be transacted and copies of the minutes will be made available.

Section 4.

All meetings for business will be subject to the guidelines of this Constitution and By-Laws. ROBERTS RULES OF ORDER will be the reference.

Section 5. Quorum

Members present and voting shall constitute a quorum for all business sessions of the church, provided requirements regarding notification of such meetings as authorized in this Constitution and By-Laws have been followed.

Section 6. Observance of Ordinances

A. Lord's Supper

The Lord's Supper shall be served to all believers. The Lord's Supper shall be observed in the morning worship regularly (quarterly) and at other times at the discretion of the pastor and deacons.

B. Baptism

Baptism shall be administered as required and according to the mode outlined in Article II Section 2 of the By-Laws.

ARTICLE IV
OFFICERS AND STAFF

Section 1. Officers

A. General Officers

The general officers of the church shall be the pastor, other staff ministers, deacons, moderator, clerk, treasurer, financial secretary, and trustees. Church staff members shall be added as the church directs.

B. Organizational Officers

The organizational officers of the church shall be the Director of Sunday School, the Circle Director, and others as needed.

Section 2. Election of Officers

A. All officers, except those hereinafter provided, shall be elected at a business meeting or at a meeting called for that purpose, at least one month prior to the time they take office. Nominees for these elections shall be those submitted by the Equipping Team or made from the floor at said meeting. Persons elected to office shall begin serving January 1 of each year, unless otherwise

stated. All officers must be active members of the church. Active members are those who are involved in attending Worship Service and other activities of the Church for at least one year.

B. The trustees shall be elected by a counted vote to serve for an indefinite time at the pleasure of the church.

C. The deacons shall consist of a minimum of six (6) members, approximately one-third of whom shall be elected each year to serve for a period of three (3) years beginning with the new church year. They shall not be eligible for re-election for a period of one (1) year unless they are filling an unexpired term. Only those persons who have been active members of Wytheville Baptist Church for one (1) year prior to nomination will be eligible for election. Active members are those who are involved in attending Worship Service and other activities of the Church for at least one year. The Deacon Body shall consist of at least two (2) women when possible.

   An ad-hoc team consisting of two (2) deacons selected by the Deacons and two (2) lay members selected by the Equipping Team will seek qualified candidates for the office of deacon to be presented to the church for election. Church members may suggest themselves or other church members to the Ad Hoc Team.

   This ad hoc team will interview all candidates to determine willingness to serve, to share expectations of deacons, and to further explain the role of Deacons at Wytheville Baptist Church. Nominees previously ordained as deacons shall be so designated on the ballot.

D. Vacancies in any office, except those of staff members, may be filled at any regular business meeting of the church upon nomination by the Equipping Team and election by the church. If a vacancy should occur within the deacons, the ad hoc team noted in the previous paragraph will select a candidate for election to fill the vacancy for the unexpired portion of that term. That person will be eligible for re-election for the succeeding term. The person filling the unexpired term shall be ordained if necessary before serving.

Section 3. Staff Personnel

A. Election

The pastor shall be called at a Called Business Conference on a Sunday Morning:

1. A notice of election shall have been given the preceding Sunday.
2. A letter shall have been mailed to the membership giving the qualifications, personal data of the candidate and his/her family and the date of the election.
3. The prospective pastor has been involved in a meeting with the congregation.
4. A general discussion regarding the candidate has been held preceding the election under the direction of the ad hoc Pastor Search Team.
5. An affirmative vote of 3/4 of the members present and voting approves the calling of a pastor.
6. The election shall be by ballot.

B. Tenure

1. The pastor shall serve for an indefinite period of time, until his/her resignation or church termination
2. In the event of a pastoral resignation, the pastor shall give the church a minimum of two (2) weeks and not more than thirty (30) days' notice of resignation in writing before termination.
3. All modifications to the approved Church-Pastor Covenant during the tenure of the senior pastor must be documented in the form of written addendums, dated, initialed by both senior pastor and church's representative, attached to the original approved Church-Pastor Covenant, and placed in the senior pastor's personnel file.

C. Termination

1. The pastor may be terminated by the congregation at a special called business meeting upon a joint recommendation by the Pastor-Church Relations Team and deacons, or upon a motion from the church floor.
2. It shall be the duty of the moderator to call a special meeting of the church and preside at the meeting. Notice of such a meeting shall be given by mail to each member. If at said meeting, a two-thirds majority of the members present and voting by ballot, vote for a change of pastor, it shall be the duty of the clerk to so notify him and request his resignation to become effective immediately with three (3) months' salary and benefits provided as defined within the Pastor-Church Covenant (not including church-related expenses). The pastor shall not be expected to fill the pulpit or perform pastoral ministries during this time. Failure of the pastor to comply with the request shall constitute grounds for the Pastor-Church Relations Team and the deacons to declare the office vacant.

D. The method of election and termination for full-time staff members other than the pastor shall be the same as that of the pastor.

E. Other staff employees shall be elected to serve at the pleasure of the church upon the recommendation of the Personnel Team. Termination of such employees requires two weeks' notice from either party.

ARTICLE V
DUTIES OF OFFICERS

Section 1. Pastor

The pastor shall conduct the public services of worship, and the general development of the church work shall be under his/her supervision. He/she shall be a member of all leadership and organizational teams except the Pastor-Church Relations Team, in addition to the number of members hereinafter required on each team. In the event of a planned pastoral absence, the pastor shall arrange to have the pulpit filled.

Minister of Education Section removed

Section 2. Deacons

It shall be the duty of the deacons to cooperate with the pastor in the work of the church. They are charged especially with the spiritual advancement of the church and the Pastoral care of the church members; this charge will include leading with hospital and nursing home visitation and with visitor follow-up. They shall distribute the elements of the Lord's Supper. They shall present to the church all cases of discipline where church action is necessary. In the event of an unplanned pastoral absence or during a pastoral vacancy, the deacons shall be responsible for filling the pulpit.

Section 3. Trustees

Three Trustees elected by the church, subject to confirmation of the court, shall hold in trust all property belonging to the church, and take all necessary measures for its protection. They shall at all times carry out the will of the church.

Section 4. Moderator

The church shall elect a moderator and vice-moderator annually upon the recommendation of the Equipping Team. The vice-moderator is to serve in the absence of a moderator. The moderator shall appoint all special teams, when not otherwise specified.

Section 5. Clerk

The clerk shall obtain and keep a faithful record of all the business meetings of the church. He/she shall keep a correct list of all members of the church and their addresses. He/she shall report to the church at the time of approval of the Network letter the number baptized, the number received by letter or experience, number dismissed by letter, withdrawals, and by death, and shall post an up-to-date church roll at that time. The clerk, along with a substitute, will be nominated and elected annually by the church.

Section 6. Treasurer

The treasurer shall take charge of the records of all funds of the church, and pay all bills authorized by the Stewardship Team or church membership. He/she shall present a monthly and quarterly statement of expenses at the Quarterly Business Conference of the Church. He/she shall also present a yearly statement of all receipts and expenditures to the church at the close of the church fiscal year. He/she shall be under the supervision of the Stewardship Team, and shall be a member of that team. His/her books shall be audited yearly by a Public Accountant, or an audit committee.

Section 7. Financial Secretary

The financial secretary shall keep an accurate record of the names of all contributors and the amounts paid. He/she shall send out semi-annual financial reports to all who have given. It will be his/her duty to provide all contributors with their church envelopes. Members added to the church shall be given church envelopes as soon as practicable after their admission by the fellowship. The Financial Secretary shall be nominated by the Equipping Team and elected annually by the church.

Section 8. Staff Employees

Church staff members will perform duties outlined in a job description adopted by the church.

Section 9. Director of Sunday School

The Director of Sunday School shall have general oversight of the entire school, and shall administer its affairs subject to the approval of the local church. He/she shall acquaint himself/herself to the best methods of religious education and endeavor to adopt them in this school. It shall be his/her duty to counsel weekly or monthly with his/her teachers and officers through officers' and teachers' meetings, in the work of the school, giving advice and receiving suggestions from his/her co-workers. He/she shall see that a full and accurate report is made of the work of the Sunday school in the regular business meeting of the church.

Section 10. Director of Woman's Circle

The Director of Woman's Circle shall seek to enlist all the women and girls of the church in a program of missions, training, giving, and activity. She shall see that a full and accurate report is given at the regular business meetings of the church.

ARTICLE VI
ORGANIZATIONAL TEAMS

Section l. General

Organizational Teams for serving the church are outlined and described in the remainder of this Article. Team members shall be recommended by the Equipping Team and elected by the church unless otherwise indicated in the descriptions that follow in this Article. Unless otherwise specified in the team descriptions, the elected team members shall serve on a three-year rotating system, with one of the team members rotating off each year and not being eligible to be re-elected to the same team for a period of one year. Each team will consist of three (3) elected team members unless otherwise indicated in the team descriptions that follow in this Article. Additional volunteers may also serve with the teams. Team members must be active participants of the church. Active participants are those who are involved in

attending Worship Service and other activities of the Church for at least one year. Each team shall meet shortly after their election and set up their organization for chairperson, and individual responsibilities.

Section 2: Teams Requiring Members Only

Participants on the following teams of the church: Constitutions Team, Equipping Team, Pastor-Church Relations Team, Personnel Team, Stewardship Team, Tellers Team, and Security Team.

Section 3. Team Definitions

A. Baptism Team

They shall prepare facility and provide assistance to the pastor in conducting Baptismal Services.

B. Communion Team

They shall set up, provide assistance to the pastor, and clean up after all Communion Services.

C. Constitution Team

They shall prepare and recommend the Constitution and By-Laws to the church, along with any revisions to the Constitution and By-Laws.

D. Equipping Team

They shall select, enlist, and nominate persons to fill church offices and serve on church organizational teams. The Equipping Team shall consist of three members plus the Sunday School Director and the Chairperson of Deacons.

E. Fellowship Team

They shall work in concert with other church teams, and staff to facilitate and promote a sense of community within the church family through Christian Fellowship. The team will provide church-wide fellowship activities which enhance the life of the church and build stronger bonds within the congregation. They will also provide Christian love and support to families who have recently lost a loved one. The team will reach out with emotional support and also provide church support during funerals held at Wytheville Baptist Church.

F. Flower Team

They shall provide flower arrangements and/or decorations that will enhance weekly congregational worship and special events.

G. Media-Library

They shall maintain a media center and gather and preserve historical records. They shall also plan and decorate bulletin boards and library windows with current activities.

H. Outreach Team

They will lead the church to fulfill its mission responsibility by providing opportunities for members of the congregation to meet the needs of others outside our church fellowship through community ministries and world missions with emphasis especially on those who need to come to Jesus Christ.

I. Pastor-Church Relations Team

They will work to promote communication and a healthy relationship between the pastor and the people of the church. In event of the installation of a new pastor, the Pastor-Church Relations Team will be composed of three members of the ad hoc Pastor Search Team who

worked to call the pastor to the church. Each year for the first three years of the new pastor's tenure, one team member will rotate off the team, being replaced by a church member nominated by the Equipping Team and elected by the church.

J. Preschool/Children/Youth Ministry Team

They shall seek to meet the physical, emotional and spiritual needs of preschoolers, children, and youth. Preschool is from birth through five years of age, children are first through fifth graders, and youth is those in sixth through twelfth grades. This team will provide vision, direction, planning, and implementation of these three areas of ministry. As these ministry areas grow, this ministry team will split into three separate teams, one for each area of ministry. They will work in conjunction with the ministerial staff to provide a spiritually challenging study, activities and events to encourage all ages of young people in their spiritual growth and relationship with Christ.

K. Personnel Team

They shall be an advocate for the church staff and protect the church's investment of time and money. They will work to promote communication and a healthy relationship between the church staff and the people of the church. They shall be responsible to find new staff members for empty or additional staff positions as needed.

L. Property Team

They shall be responsible for the maintenance and upkeep of all property belonging to the church.

M. Stewardship Team

They will plan and promote stewardship education in all areas of church life and will develop and oversee the annual church budget. In addition to the three elected members, the Treasurer and the Financial Secretary will serve as advisors to the Team. The Stewardship Team will also oversee the functions of the Tellers Team.

N. Tellers Team

This team shall consist of six members. Tellers Team members will work together in teams of two at all times to count, accurately record, and give a proper accounting of all incoming monies of the church before making bank deposits.

O. Ushers/Greeters Team

Ushers/Greeters shall greet everyone who attends a service and ensure they have seating and feel welcome and comfortable. They shall also serve as Greeters for Sunday School, ensuring that visitors are shown to a class. The Ushers/Greeters Team shall consist of four members. These Team Leaders shall enlist and schedule other volunteer members to form four groups of four people each, with one group serving the Sunday morning worship service on a monthly rotational basis and providing the Sunday School Greeter.

P. Vacation Bible School Team

They shall plan and carryout the summer VBS for the church. They will recruit volunteers as needed and will evaluate the program after its completion.

Q. Security Team

They shall identify possible security threats and recommend solutions to security issues to maintain a safe facility for all attendees of Wytheville Baptist Church. Because special

experience or training may be necessary for this team to be effective, rotation of members will not be required.

R. Worship Team

The purpose of this team is to support the Senior Pastor and the Minister of Music and Worship in carrying out the planned Worship Services. They will be responsible to see the sanctuary and other areas as needed are set up with the needed equipment prior to each Worship Service. They will also be responsible after each service to oversee that the sanctuary is then ready for the next Worship service.

ARTICLE VII
PROGRAM ORGANIZATIONS

Section 1. General

All organizations of the church shall be under church control, all officers being elected by the church and reporting regularly to the church.

Section 2. Sunday School

There shall be a Sunday School divided into divisions and classes for all ages and conducted under the direction of the Sunday School Director for the study of God's Word. The tasks of the Sunday School shall be to teach the biblical revelation; reach persons for Christ and church membership; perform the functions of the church within its constituency; provide and interpret information regarding the work of the church and denomination.

Section 3. Women's Circles

There shall be a Women's Circles with such officers and organizations as needed. The tasks of the Women's Circles shall be to teach missions; engage in mission action, support world missions through praying and giving; provide and interpret information regarding the work of the church and the denomination.

ARTICLE VIII
CHURCH FINANCES

Section 1. The Budget

A unified budget adopted annually by the church will serve as a guideline for all local and world-wide expenses. The budget will be submitted by the Stewardship Team at least thirty (30) days prior to the date it goes into effect.

Section 2. Accounting Procedures

A. General Account

All regular or special offerings will be deposited to the general account of the Wytheville Baptist Church and dispersed according to the guidelines of the church budget or designation of the offering.

B. Designated Accounts

All designated gifts or trusts will be recorded as a separate line item and used according to the wishes of the donor.

C. Benevolence Fund

Benevolence Fund will be monies collected on the First Sunday of the month after the Worship Service and will be managed by a team comprised of the Pastor, Secretary, and Treasurer.

D. The Treasurer will be bonded.

ARTICLE IX
GENERAL MATTERS

Section 1. License

When a member announces to the church that he/she feels the call to the ministry, the church by majority vote may license him/her as an acknowledgment of his/her call to the ministry and encouragement to make preparation for it. The clerk of the church may furnish the member with a copy of the minutes or a certificate of license as his/her credential. It is understood that the performance of civil duties by the member shall be governed by state law.

Section 2. Ordination

In the event this church has been requested to ordain a member who has felt the call to God to the ministry, the following procedure shall be followed: The church will express its approval by a vote of three-fourths of the members present at any regularly arranged business meeting of the church. Then the church shall invite the Network Committee on Ordination to examine the candidate concerning his/her fitness for the ministry. In the event the Network has no such committee, this church shall invite representatives of neighboring Baptist churches to examine the candidate and report to the church. If the report of the committee is favorable, the church shall proceed with the ordination.

ARTICLE X

This Constitution and By-Laws may be amended or altered by a two-thirds vote of the members present at a regular Business Conference; providing that such amendments, alteration, appeals, be submitted in writing and the proposed changes presented to the Church at one Business Conference and voted on at the next regular scheduled Business Conference. Notice of the proposed change will also be printed in the THE BEACON, electronic media and announced during Worship Services of the church. Copies of both business to be transacted and copies of the minutes will be made available.