

# **BYLAWS**

of the

Durham Evangelical Church (Conservative Baptist Church)

Incorporated May 29, 1973

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## **Article I. – Purpose**

The purpose of these Bylaws is to provide a supplemental document to the Constitution that contains issues not so central to the core of the church, so that more flexibility is retained for application to changing needs. Accordingly, they can be more easily amended than the Constitution.

## **Article II. – Amending**

These Bylaws may be amended by a three-quarters vote of the Board or a three-quarters vote of the qualified voting members at a business meeting called for such purpose.

## **Article III. – Definition**

Unless otherwise restricted or defined, the use of "he," "him," his, and "himself" in this document can apply to either gender.

## **Article IV. -- Membership**

A. Categories: There are five categories of membership:

1. Active
2. Associate
3. Non-Resident
4. Shut In
5. Inactive

B. Becoming a Member

1. **Active** Normally a person applies for this category of membership, whether he comes as a new Christian, from another church, or otherwise. (A letter of dismissal from another church, while helpful, does not waive any part of the following procedure.) He shall indicate his desire to join to an Elder or pastor, who will ascertain:

- a. Whether he has accepted Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord
- b. Whether he has been baptized, the mode thereof, and whether as a believer
- c. To what extent he can agree with the church Constitution (including baptism) and how he would propose to deal with differences
- d. How willing he would be to submit to the authority of this church and not to teach or foment divisiveness against its doctrines and practices
- e. The circumstances under which he left his last church, if applicable
- f. What talents, gifts, and interests he will be able to bring to this body

These findings shall be reported to the Board. The candidate shall enroll in the next membership class or undertake a course of study prescribed by the Board. Names of candidates will be published prior to approval by the Board. Upon successful

completion and approval by the Board, the candidate shall be presented to the congregation at a business meeting or service for oral acclamation of the Board's decision to confer membership. At this presentation the candidate will be encouraged, though not required, to give his testimony.

2. **Associate** This category is for university students or individuals on extended assignments to this area who don't want to give up their home church memberships but wish to contribute their talents and gifts to this church while they are here. They shall follow the same joining procedures for active members, unless modified by the Board, and shall be reviewed periodically by the Board for continued qualifications to remain in this category. Associate members shall not have the power to vote and shall not be counted when determining meeting quorum requirements.

3. **Non-Resident** This category is for individuals who were active members when they were in the area but are on extended assignments elsewhere and do not wish to give up their memberships. Examples are missionaries on the mission field, students away at college, and military personnel. People must enter this category from the category of active member, and transfer into this category is automatic, unless the Board takes other action. Transfer back to active member shall be automatic whenever the individual is in the area, unless the Board takes other action. Non-resident members shall keep in contact with the Board at least annually, and the Board shall review members in this category once a year to determine whether they still qualify. A non-resident member who finds himself semi-permanently located away from the area is encouraged to become a member of a local church. Since they cannot attend meetings, non-resident members shall not have the power to vote and shall not be counted when determining meeting quorum requirements.

4. **Shut In** This category is for individuals who by reason of physical infirmity can not attend meetings of the church but who otherwise qualify as active members. It is anticipated that most members in this category become shut in members from the active member category. However, it is possible to apply directly for this category if the applicant is truly shut in, qualifies (except for meeting attendance) as an active member, and lives in the area. If a shut in member moves out of the area, his shut-in status shall continue unless the Board takes contrary action. Such a member is still encouraged to affiliate with a local church. Whenever shut in members can make it to a meeting, they shall automatically become active members. Shut in members shall not have the power to vote and shall not be counted when determining meeting quorum requirements.

5. **Inactive** Any active member who does not adhere to the Member's Covenant (Constitution, Article V) or who does not regularly attend services for a period of one year and does not communicate an adequate reason to the Board shall be automatically moved to the category of inactive member. This does not apply to those who qualify for the non-resident or shut in category. The Board shall make every effort to restore inactive members to active ones. Inactive members shall not have the power to vote, and they shall not be counted when determining meeting quorum requirements.

C. Terminating Membership Membership terminations shall be made official upon majority vote of the Board with notification to the membership no later than the next regular business meeting. Those terminated may request reconsideration by written letter to the Board chairman. The following individuals shall qualify to have their memberships terminated.

1. Any member who requests that his membership be terminated, unless he is under church discipline.
2. A member who takes out anything except an associate membership in another church. (The Board will provide a letter of dismissal to another church upon request.)
3. Anyone in the inactive membership category for more than a year.
4. A member whose church discipline consequences include termination of membership.

## **Article V. – Small Groups**

A. Purpose Durham Evangelical Church (Conservative Baptist) sees the small group ministry as a key means for fulfilling its mission of being a Christ centered church that actively cares for people. All members of the church shall be strongly encouraged to become members of small groups, where a much more personal ministry can go on than in the large congregation on Sunday mornings. These shall meet at various times throughout the week and at various places, usually at homes, for the purpose of building each other up in the faith, becoming more acquainted with Scripture, praying for one another, and sharing practical help.

B. Oversight The Board shall appoint a ministerial staff member to be in charge of small groups. He shall encourage members to join them, see that they are led by qualified individuals, decide when a new small group needs to be formed and when one needs to split or fold. He shall be in charge of recommending what material they are to study, and shall be aware of where to steer individuals when they express a desire to join one. He shall keep the Board informed of small group statistics and his vision for where small groups should go in the future. He shall also appoint, depose, and provide continuing training for small group leaders.

C. Leaders Small group leaders shall be appointed as the need arises from among active church members who possess the qualifications for the office of Deacon. The Small group leader should serve the members of his group by encouraging their spiritual walk. They shall be appointed by the ministerial staff member in charge of small groups; with input from relevant small group Coaches. A Small Group Coach will be an active small group leader, selected by the Adult Minister and Coaches. He shall support several small group leaders. New small Group Leaders shall come from within the small group structure as feasible. Small group leaders and their assistants shall be provided with continuing training for more effectively carrying out their charge.

## **Article VI. -- Deacons**

- A. Purpose The deacons shall assist the Board in carrying out leadership responsibilities in the church and shall minister according to the gifts God has given them.
- B. Duties The Deacons shall be available to serve. Each ministry team shall be led by a Deacon, if not by an Elder or ministerial staff member. All Deacons are members of the Leadership Council and are therefore requested to attend its meetings and provide wise advice and leadership in many issues.
- C. Qualifications Deacons shall be men and women of spiritual maturity and leadership ability, and have hearts for ministering, as described in Acts 6:1-7 and I Timothy 3:8-13.
- D. Number The Board shall set the number of Deacons, according to the tasks and ministries needed in the church.
- E. Election Deacons shall be nominated by the Board and ratified at a business meeting by a majority of qualified voting members. The Board may appoint additional individuals as Deacons if the need arises before the annual meeting. To continue beyond an annual meeting, such individuals must be ratified at the annual meeting by a majority of qualified voting members.
- F. Term The normal term of office for a Deacon shall be one year. The Board shall have the power to modify this provision in exceptional circumstances.
- G. Termination A Deacon can be removed from office at any time by any of the following procedures:
  - 1. A majority vote of the Board at one of its meetings.
  - 2. A majority vote of the qualified voting members at a business meeting called for such purpose. The candidate for removal shall be allowed to speak at this business meeting.

## **Article VII. – Leadership Council**

- A. Purpose The purpose of the Leadership Council is to advise and assist the Board in managing the spiritual and temporal affairs of the church. Its members shall also serve as major conduits for information to be conveyed to the church membership. In so far as the Board requests, the Leadership Council shall also serve as a nominating committee for church officers.
- B. Composition The Leadership Council shall be composed of all the Elders, all the Deacons, and as many others as the Board may decide.
- C. Chairmanship The Board shall appoint an Elder to chair the Leadership Council.

- D. Meetings The Leadership Council shall set regular meetings for itself. The Senior Pastor, the Board, the chairman of the Leadership Council, or any three of its members, may call special meetings.
- E. Nominations Unless the Board directs otherwise, the Leadership Council shall bring a list of nomination suggestions for all open church offices to the Board before the church's chief regular business meeting of the year (the "annual meeting"). From this list the Board shall make a list of nominations to be presented to the membership at the annual meeting for ratification. The Board must approve each nomination.

#### **Article VIII. – Financial Officers**

- A. As provided for in the Constitution, the Board shall nominate, a person to fill the office of **Treasurer**. His duties are described in the Constitution, some of which may be delegated to one of the following officers, who shall report to him. He shall prepare and present to the Board written reports on the church's financial condition at least quarterly.
- B. The Board shall nominate, and the membership shall ratify, a person to fill the office of **Financial Secretary**. He shall collect tithes and offerings, count them, deposit them, keep a confidential record of them, and provide a receipt to any who ask. He shall report to the Treasurer.
- C. While not an officer of the church, an independent **auditor** shall be contracted annually by the Board to audit the church's financial books, to examine the records of the Treasurer and Financial Secretary, and to certify in a written report that these records are correct. If errors are found, the report shall indicate them. This report shall be filed no later than 60 days after the end of the fiscal year.

#### **Article IX. – Ministry Teams**

- A. Purpose The Board shall determine categories of ongoing tasks and ministries that teams of church members can effectively carry out, and these will be established as Ministry Teams. The Ministry Teams shall directly carry out these tasks and ministries or shall assume the responsibility of delegating them to others. The Board shall determine the number and functions of Ministry Teams.
- B. Leadership Each Ministry Team shall be led by an Elder, Deacon, or ministerial staff member appointed by the Board. This leader shall report the progress of his Ministry Team regularly to the Board.
- C. Composition The leader of each Ministry Team with the support of the Leadership Council shall recruit active church members and others to serve on the team. The Board must approve any Ministry Team member who is not an active church member. A Ministry Team may consult with outside individuals, groups, and commercial interests in conducting

its business.

## **Article X. – Ministerial Staff**

- A. **Purpose** Ministerial staff, such as the Church Administrator, Children's Minister, Youth Minister, Worship Minister, Adult Minister, Assistant Pastor, and Associate Pastor, are men and women called by God and this church to oversee and provide leadership for specific aspects of the church's mission, as determined and directed by the Board. Such a ministerial staff position may be a fully paid position, a partially paid position, or a volunteer position, as determined by the Board.
- B. **Recruitment** It shall be the responsibility of the Board to recruit and examine candidates for ministerial staff positions, whether vacant or newly created. In doing so, the Board will solicit congregational input regarding potential candidates.
- C. **Qualifications** Each ministerial staff member shall meet the requirements for being a Deacon and shall be working toward greater spiritual maturity. Within six months of the commencement of his duties, he must become an active member of the church. He must be able to equip others and provide leadership, both by instruction and example.
- D. **Convictions** Each ministry staff member must be in complete agreement with Articles I, III, IV, and V of the Constitution, and be in basic agreement with all remaining Articles of the Constitution. He shall notify the Board when he can no longer subscribe to any provision of Articles I, III, IV, or V of the Constitution.
- E. **Number** The Board shall set the function and the number of ministerial staff members, according to the ministries needed in the church.
- F. **Appointment** Ministerial staff members shall be nominated by the Board and ratified at a business meeting by a majority of qualified voting members. No more than one candidate at a time for each open position shall be presented to the congregation for consideration. Only after a candidate is no longer under consideration will another candidate be considered.
- G. **Salaries** The Board shall set the salary and determine any adjustment to the salary of each ministerial staff member. The salary and adjustments shall be proposed by the Board to the church membership at least annually. The membership shall ratify them before they go into effect.
- H. **Reporting** Each ministerial staff member shall report directly to the Senior Pastor. If the Board elects, he shall also report to the Board.
- I. **Term** The term of a ministerial staff member shall be indefinite, unless otherwise prescribed by the Board. He shall continue until he resigns or is removed from office. Any salary must

be proposed by the Board and ratified by majority vote of the membership annually.

J. Termination A ministerial staff member's tenure shall end when any one of the following happens:

1. The acceptance by the Board of his resignation.
2. A four-fifths vote of the Board at one of its meetings.
3. A two-thirds vote of the qualified voting members at a business meeting called for such purpose, following the presentation to the membership of a termination recommendation from a majority of the Board. The ministerial staff member shall be allowed to speak at this business meeting.
4. In the absence of such a recommendation from the Board, a three-quarters vote of the qualified voting members at a business meeting called for such purpose. The ministerial staff member shall be allowed to speak at this business meeting.

The ministerial staff member or the Board shall give notice of thirty days. This can be waived if mutually agreed upon. The Board shall determine an appropriate severance package, if any.

## **Article XI. – Business Procedures**

- A. Several weeks before an annual meeting, the church membership shall be invited to submit names to the Leadership Council for people to fill needed positions.
- B. At least once a year, usually several weeks prior to an annual business meeting, an assessment of leadership needs will be made by the Board in consultation with the ministry teams and Leadership Council. The Leadership Council will evaluate needs, identify qualified individuals to fill the needs, and draw up a suggested slate. The Board will examine this slate and adjustments will be made to meet the Board's approval. The approved slate will be presented to the congregation for ratification.
- C. In no case shall the number of nominations exceed the number of open positions on the approved board slate.
- D. Voting for candidates to fill open positions shall be by written ballot.
- E. Except for the office of Elder, the membership's ratification of the slate shall be by majority vote of the qualified voting members at a business meeting.
- F. The approved slate, along with continuing officers, shall be posted at the church on the two Sundays immediately prior to the business meeting at which it will be considered.
- G. If a vacancy occurs before the term of office has expired for any position, the Board, at its



discretion, may fill it. It may also leave it unfilled.

- H. At least once a year, usually several weeks prior to an annual business meeting, an assessment of financial needs will be made by the Treasurer in consultation with the Board, the ministry teams, and the Leadership Council. The Treasurer will draw up a proposed budget for the next fiscal year. The Board will examine this budget and adjustments will be made to meet the Board's approval. The approved budget will be presented to the congregation for ratification.
- I. The membership's ratification of the budget shall be by majority vote of the qualified voting members at a business meeting
- J. The fiscal year shall begin on July 1 and end on June 30.
- K. The chief regular business meeting of the year (the "annual meeting") shall be held before June 1.
- L. At the annual meeting each year, the Senior Pastor, Board, Treasurer, and each ministry team shall, at the direction of the Board, present to the church an oral report of activities during the previous year. The report shall consist of a statement of what was accomplished along with an honest evaluation that freely acknowledges successes and failures. The report shall include a projection of the vision and planning for the future.

## **Article XII. – Affiliations**

- A. This church shall be affiliated with the Conservative Baptist Association on the state, regional and national levels. Membership will be maintained as long as their policies and doctrinal statements are in accord with the policies, Constitution, and Bylaws of this church. When possible, this church shall make it a practice to send messengers to the annual meetings of the Conservative Baptist Association levels of which it is a part.
- B. The decision to affiliate with any other organization or to sever a relationship with any organization shall be by a three-quarters vote of the qualified voting members at a church business meeting called for such a purpose.