

***CONSTITUTION  
AND BYLAWS***

***UNITY BAPTIST CHURCH  
OF PRINCE GEORGE  
COUNTY***

**TABLE OF CONTENTS**

CONSTITUTION ..... 5

PREAMBLE ..... 5

ARTICLE I. NAME AND PURPOSE ..... 5

    Section 1. Name ..... 5

    Section 2. Purpose ..... 5

ARTICLE II. OBJECTIVES ..... 5

ARTICLE III. STATEMENTS OF FAITH ..... 6

    Section 1. The Scriptures ..... 6

    Section 2. God ..... 6

    Section 3. Man ..... 8

    Section 4. Salvation ..... 8

    Section 5. God's Purpose of Grace ..... 9

    Section 6. The Church ..... 9

    Section 7. Baptism and the Lord's Supper ..... 10

    Section 8. The Lord's Day ..... 10

    Section 9. The Kingdom ..... 10

    Section 10. Last Things ..... 11

    Section 11. Evangelism and Missions ..... 11

    Section 12. Education ..... 11

    Section 13. Stewardship ..... 12

    Section 14. Cooperation ..... 12

    Section 15. The Christian and the Social Order ..... 13

    Section 16. Peace and War ..... 13

    Section 17. Religious Liberty ..... 13

    Section 18. The Family ..... 14

    Section 19. Human Sexuality ..... 14

    Section 20. Role of Men and Women ..... 15

    Section 21. Giving ..... 15

ARTICLE IV. CHURCH COVENANT ..... 15

ARTICLE V. POLICY AND RELATIONSHIPS ..... 16

ARTICLE VI. AMENDMENTS ..... 16

BYLAWS ..... 17

ARTICLE I. MEMBERSHIP ..... 17

    Section 1. General ..... 17

    Section 2. Acceptance of New Members ..... 17

        A. Adults ..... 17

        B. Youth ..... 18

    Section 3. Duties ..... 18

    Section 4. Church Roll ..... 18

    Section 5. Dismissal of Members ..... 19

ARTICLE II. PASTORS .....	19
Section 1. Pastor .....	19
Section 2. Staff Pastors .....	20
ARTICLE III. DEACONS.....	20
Section 1. Qualifications and Selection.....	20
Section 2. Ratification and Re-affirmation.....	21
Section 3. Removal and Vacancy .....	21
Section 4. Deacon Emeritus.....	21
ARTICLE IV. CORPORATE BOARD OF DIRECTORS .....	21
Section 1. Composition.....	21
Section 2. Duties.....	22
Section 2. Selection of Directors .....	22
Section 3. Qualifications of Directors .....	22
Section 4. Meetings .....	22
Section 5. Notice.....	22
Section 6. Chairman .....	22
Section 7. Removal and Vacancy .....	22
ARTICLE V. OFFICERS .....	23
Section 1. Secretary .....	23
Section 2. Treasurer.....	24
ARTICLE VI. CHURCH COMMITTEES AND TEAMS .....	24
Section 1. Nominating Committee .....	25
Section 2. Finance Committee.....	25
Section 3. Church Council.....	25
Section 4. Ministry Teams.....	25
ARTICLE VII. CHURCH MEETINGS .....	26
Section 1. Worship Services.....	26
Section 2. Special Services.....	26
Section 3. Lord's Supper.....	26
Section 4. Annual Business Meeting.....	26
Section 5. Special Business Meeting.....	26
Section 6. Quorum.....	26
Section 7. Parliamentary Rules.....	26
Section 8. Moderator .....	27
Section 9. Fiscal Year.....	27
ARTICLE VIII. PROGRAM ORGANIZATION.....	27
ARTICLE IX. NONSTOCK STATUS.....	27
Section 1. Private Inurement .....	27
Section 2. Political Involvement.....	27
ARTICLE X. PROPERTY .....	27
Section 1. Title.....	27
Section 2. Purchases and Sales of Property.....	27
ARTICLE XI. CONFLICT OF INTEREST .....	28

ARTICLE XII. INDEMNIFICATION AND ELIMINATION OF LIABILITY .....	28
ARTICLE XIII. DISSOLUTION .....	28
Section 1. Dissolution.....	28
Section 2. Winding Up. ....	28
ARTICLE XIV. AMENDMENTS .....	29

# CONSTITUTION

## PREAMBLE

For the preservation and security of the principles of our faith, and to the end that this body shall be governed in an orderly manner consistent with the teachings of God's Word, for the enhancing of the ministry of this fellowship, the Petersburg Baptist Association, the Southern Baptist Conservatives of Virginia, and the Southern Baptist Convention, and for the purpose of preserving the liberties, inherent in each individual member of this church and for the freedom of actions of this body with respect to its relations to other churches of like faith, we do declare and establish this constitution.

## ARTICLE I. NAME AND PURPOSE

### Section 1. Name

This church shall be known as Unity Baptist Church of Prince George, Virginia.

### Section 2. Purpose

- (A) This congregation is organized as a church exclusively for charitable, religious, and educational purposes within the meaning of Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 (or corresponding provision of any future United States Revenue Law), including, but not limited to, for such purposes, the establishing and maintaining of religious worship, the building, maintaining and operating of churches, parsonages, schools, chapels, radio stations, television stations, rescue missions, print shops, day-care centers, camps, and nursing homes.
- (B) The church shall also ordain and license men to the gospel ministry; evangelize the unsaved by the proclaiming of the Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ; educate believers in a manner consistent with the requirements of Holy Scripture, both in Sunday and weekday schools of Christian education; and maintain missionary activities in the United States and any foreign country.

## ARTICLE II. OBJECTIVES

- Section 1. To be a dynamic spiritual organism empowered by the Holy Spirit to share Christ with as many people as possible to our church, community, and throughout the world.
- Section 2. To be a worshipping fellowship, experiencing an awareness of God, recognizing His person, and responding in obedience to His lordship.
- Section 3. To experience an increasingly meaningful fellowship with God and fellow believers.

- Section 4. To help people experience a growing knowledge of God and man.
- Section 5. To be a church that shall have a racially non-discriminatory policy and therefore shall not discriminate against members, applicants, students, and others on the basis of race, color, or national or ethnic origin.
- Section 6. To be a church whose purpose is to be Christ-like in our daily living by emphasizing total commitment of life, personality, and possessions to the lordship of Christ.

### ARTICLE III. STATEMENTS OF FAITH

"The Bible itself is the sole and final source of all that we believe. We do believe, however, that the Baptist Faith and Message as adopted by the Southern Baptist Convention of 2000 and the following Statements of Faith represent the teaching of the Bible, and therefore, is binding upon all members. Neither exhausts the extent of our faith. All literature used in the church shall be in complete agreement with the Baptist Faith and Message 2000 edition and the following Statements of Faith. The official translation of the Holy Bible to be used is the New King James Version."

#### **Section 1. The Scriptures**

The Holy Bible was written by men divinely inspired and is God's revelation of Himself to man. It is a perfect treasure of divine instruction. It has God for its author, salvation for its end, and truth, without any mixture of error, for its matter. Therefore, all Scripture is totally true and trustworthy. It reveals the principles by which God judges us, and therefore is, and will remain to the end of the world, the true center of Christian union, and the supreme standard by which all human conduct, creeds, and religious opinions should be tried. All Scripture is a testimony to Christ, who is Himself the focus of divine revelation.

*Exodus 24:4; Deuteronomy 4:1-2; 17:19; Joshua 8:34; Psalms 19:7-10; 119:11,89,105,140; Isaiah 34:16; 40:8; Jeremiah 15:16; 36:1-32; Matthew 5:17-18; 22:29; Luke 21:33; 24:44-46; John 5:39; 16:13-15; 17:17; Acts 2:16ff.; 17:11; Romans 15:4; 16:25-26; 2 Timothy 3:15-17; Hebrews 1:1-2; 4:12; 1 Peter 1:25; 2 Peter 1:19-21.*

#### **Section 2. God**

There is one and only one living and true God. He is an intelligent, spiritual, and personal Being, the Creator, Redeemer, Preserver, and Ruler of the universe. God is infinite in holiness and all other perfections. God is all powerful and all knowing; and His perfect knowledge extends to all things, past, present, and future, including the future decisions of His free creatures. To Him we owe the highest love, reverence, and obedience. The eternal triune God reveals Himself to us as Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, with distinct personal attributes, but without division of nature, essence, or being.

##### A. God the Father

God as Father reigns with providential care over His universe, His creatures, and the flow of the stream of human history according to the purposes of His grace. He is all powerful, all knowing, all loving, and all wise. God is Father in truth to those who become children of God through faith in Jesus Christ. He is fatherly in His attitude toward all men.

*Genesis 1:1; 2:7; Exodus 3:14; 6:2-3; 15:11ff.; 20:1ff.; Leviticus 22:2; Deuteronomy 6:4; 32:6; 1 Chronicles 29:10; Psalm 19:1-3; Isaiah 43:3,15; 64:8; Jeremiah 10:10; 17:13; Matthew 6:9ff.; 7:11; 23:9; 28:19; Mark 1:9-11; John 4:24; 5:26; 14:6-13; 17:1-8; Acts 1:7; Romans 8:14-15; 1 Corinthians 8:6; Galatians 4:6; Ephesians 4:6; Colossians 1:15; 1 Timothy 1:17; Hebrews 11:6; 12:9; 1 Peter 1:17; 1 John 5:7.*

## B. God the Son

Christ is the eternal Son of God. In His incarnation as Jesus Christ He was conceived of the Holy Spirit and born of the virgin Mary. Jesus perfectly revealed and did the will of God, taking upon Himself human nature with its demands and necessities and identifying Himself completely with mankind yet without sin. He honored the divine law by His personal obedience, and in His substitutionary death on the cross He made provision for the redemption of men from sin. He was raised from the dead with a glorified body and appeared to His disciples as the person who was with them before His crucifixion. He ascended into heaven and is now exalted at the right hand of God where He is the One Mediator, fully God, fully man, in whose Person is effected the reconciliation between God and man. He will return in power and glory to judge the world and to consummate His redemptive mission. He now dwells in all believers as the living and ever present Lord.

*Genesis 18:1ff.; Psalms 2:7ff.; 110:1ff.; Isaiah 7:14; 53; Matthew 1:18-23; 3:17; 8:29; 11:27; 14:33; 16:16,27; 17:5; 27; 28:1-6,19; Mark 1:1; 3:11; Luke 1:35; 4:41; 22:70; 24:46; John 1:1-18,29; 10:30,38; 11:25-27; 12:44-50; 14:7-11; 16:15-16,28; 17:1-5, 21-22; 20:1-20,28; Acts 1:9; 2:22-24; 7:55-56; 9:4-5,20; Romans 1:3-4; 3:23-26; 5:6-21; 8:1-3,34; 10:4; 1 Corinthians 1:30; 2:2; 8:6; 15:1-8,24-28; 2 Corinthians 5:19-21; 8:9; Galatians 4:4-5; Ephesians 1:20; 3:11; 4:7-10; Philippians 2:5-11; Colossians 1:13-22; 2:9; 1 Thessalonians 4:14-18; 1 Timothy 2:5-6; 3:16; Titus 2:13-14; Hebrews 1:1-3; 4:14-15; 7:14-28; 9:12-15,24-28; 12:2; 13:8; 1 Peter 2:21-25; 3:22; 1 John 1:7-9; 3:2; 4:14-15; 5:9; 2 John 7-9; Revelation 1:13-16; 5:9-14; 12:10-11; 13:8; 19:16.*

## C. God the Holy Spirit

The Holy Spirit is the Spirit of God, fully divine. He inspired holy men of old to write the Scriptures. Through illumination He enables men to understand truth. He exalts Christ. He convicts men of sin, of righteousness, and of judgment. He calls men to the Savior, and effects regeneration. At the moment of regeneration He baptizes every believer into the Body of Christ. He cultivates Christian character, comforts believers, and bestows the spiritual gifts by which they serve God through His church. He seals the believer unto the day of final redemption. His presence in the Christian is the guarantee that God will bring

the believer into the fullness of the stature of Christ. He enlightens and empowers the believer and the church in worship, evangelism, and service.

*Genesis 1:2; Judges 14:6; Job 26:13; Psalms 51:11; 139:7ff.; Isaiah 61:1-3; Joel 2:28-32; Matthew 1:18; 3:16; 4:1; 12:28-32; 28:19; Mark 1:10,12; Luke 1:35; 4:1,18-19; 11:13; 12:12; 24:49; John 4:24; 14:16-17,26; 15:26; 16:7-14; Acts 1:8; 2:1-4,38; 4:31; 5:3; 6:3; 7:55; 8:17,39; 10:44; 13:2; 15:28; 16:6; 19:1-6; Romans 8:9-11,14-16,26-27; 1 Corinthians 2:10-14; 3:16; 12:3-11,13; Galatians 4:6; Ephesians 1:13-14; 4:30; 5:18; 1 Thessalonians 5:19; 1 Timothy 3:16; 4:1; 2 Timothy 1:14; 3:16; Hebrews 9:8,14; 2 Peter 1:21; 1 John 4:13; 5:6-7; Revelation 1:10; 22:17.*

### **Section 3. Man**

Man is the special creation of God, made in His own image. He created them male and female as the crowning work of His creation. The gift of gender is thus part of the goodness of God's creation. In the beginning man was innocent of sin and was endowed by his Creator with freedom of choice. By his free choice man sinned against God and brought sin into the human race. Through the temptation of Satan man transgressed the command of God, and fell from his original innocence whereby his posterity inherit a nature and an environment inclined toward sin. Therefore, as soon as they are capable of moral action, they become transgressors and are under condemnation. Only the grace of God can bring man into His holy fellowship and enable man to fulfill the creative purpose of God. The sacredness of human personality is evident in that God created man in His own image, and in that Christ died for man; therefore, every person of every race possesses full dignity and is worthy of respect and Christian love.

*Genesis 1:26-30; 2:5,7,18-22; 3; 9:6; Psalms 1; 8:3-6; 32:1-5; 51:5; Isaiah 6:5; Jeremiah 17:5; Matthew 16:26; Acts 17:26-31; Romans 1:19-32; 3:10-18,23; 5:6,12,19; 6:6; 7:14-25; 8:14-18,29; 1 Corinthians 1:21-31; 15:19,21-22; Ephesians 2:1-22; Colossians 1:21-22; 3:9-11.*

### **Section 4. Salvation**

Salvation involves the redemption of the whole man, and is offered freely to all who accept Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior, who by His own blood obtained eternal redemption for the believer. In its broadest sense salvation includes regeneration, justification, sanctification, and glorification. There is no salvation apart from personal faith in Jesus Christ as Lord.

A. Regeneration, or the new birth, is a work of God's grace whereby believers become new creatures in Christ Jesus. It is a change of heart wrought by the Holy Spirit through conviction of sin, to which the sinner responds in repentance toward God and faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. Repentance and faith are inseparable experiences of grace.

Repentance is a genuine turning from sin toward God. Faith is the acceptance of Jesus Christ and commitment of the entire personality to Him as Lord and Savior.



B. Justification is God's gracious and full acquittal upon principles of His righteousness of all sinners who repent and believe in Christ. Justification brings the believer unto a relationship of peace and favor with God.

C. Sanctification is the experience, beginning in regeneration, by which the believer is set apart to God's purposes, and is enabled to progress toward moral and spiritual maturity through the presence and power of the Holy Spirit dwelling in him. Growth in grace should continue throughout the regenerate person's life.

D. Glorification is the culmination of salvation and is the final blessed and abiding state of the redeemed.

*Genesis 3:15; Exodus 3:14-17; 6:2-8; Matthew 1:21; 4:17; 16:21-26; 27:22-28:6; Luke 1:68-69; 2:28-32; John 1:11-14,29; 3:3-21,36; 5:24; 10:9,28-29; 15:1-16; 17:17; Acts 2:21; 4:12; 15:11; 16:30-31; 17:30-31; 20:32; Romans 1:16-18; 2:4; 3:23-25; 4:3ff.; 5:8-10; 6:1-23; 8:1-18,29-39; 10:9-10,13; 13:11-14; 1 Corinthians 1:18,30; 6:19-20; 15:10; 2 Corinthians 5:17-20; Galatians 2:20; 3:13; 5:22-25; 6:15; Ephesians 1:7; 2:8-22; 4:11-16; Philippians 2:12-13; Colossians 1:9-22; 3:1ff.; 1 Thessalonians 5:23-24; 2 Timothy 1:12; Titus 2:11-14; Hebrews 2:1-3; 5:8-9; 9:24-28; 11:1-12:8,14; James 2:14-26; 1 Peter 1:2-23; 1 John 1:6-2:11; Revelation 3:20; 21:1-22:5.*

## **Section 5. God's Purpose of Grace**

Election is the gracious purpose of God, according to which He regenerates, justifies, sanctifies, and glorifies sinners. It is consistent with the free agency of man, and comprehends all the means in connection with the end. It is the glorious display of God's sovereign goodness, and is infinitely wise, holy, and unchangeable. It excludes boasting and promotes humility.

All true believers endure to the end. Those whom 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. Believers may fall into sin through neglect and temptation, whereby they grieve the Spirit, impair their graces and comforts, and bring reproach on the cause of Christ and temporal judgments on themselves; yet they shall be kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation.

*Genesis 12:1-3; Exodus 19:5-8; 1 Samuel 8:4-7,19-22; Isaiah 5:1-7; Jeremiah 31:31ff.; Matthew 16:18-19; 21:28-45; 24:22,31; 25:34; Luke 1:68-79; 2:29-32; 19:41-44; 24:44-48; John 1:12-14; 3:16; 5:24; 6:44-45,65; 10:27-29; 15:16; 17:6,12,17-18; Acts 20:32; Romans 5:9-10; 8:28-39; 10:12-15; 11:5-7,26-36; 1 Corinthians 1:1-2; 15:24-28; Ephesians 1:4-23; 2:1-10; 3:1-11; Colossians 1:12-14; 2 Thessalonians 2:13-14; 2 Timothy 1:12; 2:10,19; Hebrews 11:39-12:2; James 1:12; 1 Peter 1:2-5,13; 2:4-10; 1 John 1:7-9; 2:19; 3:2.*

## **Section 6. The Church**

A New Testament church of the Lord Jesus Christ is an autonomous local congregation of baptized believers, associated by covenant in the faith and fellowship of the gospel; observing the two ordinances of Christ, governed by His laws, exercising the gifts, rights, and privileges

invested in them by His Word, and seeking to extend the gospel to the ends of the earth. Each congregation operates under the Lordship of Christ through democratic processes. In such a congregation each member is responsible and accountable to Christ as Lord. Its scriptural officers are pastors and deacons. While both men and women are gifted for service in the church, the office of pastor is limited to men as qualified by Scripture.

The New Testament speaks also of the church as the Body of Christ which includes all of the redeemed of all the ages, believers from every tribe, and tongue, and people, and nation.

*Matthew 16:15-19; 18:15-20; Acts 2:41-42,47; 5:11-14; 6:3-6; 13:1-3; 14:23,27; 15:1-30; 16:5; 20:28; Romans 1:7; 1 Corinthians 1:2; 3:16; 5:4-5; 7:17; 9:13-14; 12; Ephesians 1:22-23; 2:19-22; 3:8-11,21; 5:22-32; Philippians 1:1; Colossians 1:18; 1 Timothy 2:9-14; 3:1-15; 4:14; Hebrews 11:39-40; 1 Peter 5:1-4; Revelation 2-3; 21:2-3.*

### **Section 7. Baptism and the Lord's Supper**

Christian baptism is the immersion of a believer in water in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. It is an act of obedience symbolizing the believer's faith in a crucified, buried, and risen Savior, the believer's death to sin, the burial of the old life, and the resurrection to walk in newness of life in Christ Jesus. It is a testimony to his faith in the final resurrection of the dead. Being a church ordinance, it is prerequisite to the privileges of church membership and to the Lord's Supper.

The Lord's Supper is a symbolic act of obedience whereby members of the church, through partaking of the bread and the fruit of the vine, memorialize the death of the Redeemer and anticipate His second coming.

*Matthew 3:13-17; 26:26-30; 28:19-20; Mark 1:9-11; 14:22-26; Luke 3:21-22; 22:19-20; John 3:23; Acts 2:41-42; 8:35-39; 16:30-33; 20:7; Romans 6:3-5; 1 Corinthians 10:16,21; 11:23-29; Colossians 2:12.*

### **Section 8. The Lord's Day**

The first day of the week is the Lord's Day. It is a Christian institution for regular observance. It commemorates the resurrection of Christ from the dead and should include exercises of worship and spiritual devotion, both public and private. Activities on the Lord's Day should be commensurate with the Christian's conscience under the Lordship of Jesus Christ.

*Exodus 20:8-11; Matthew 12:1-12; 28:1ff.; Mark 2:27-28; 16:1-7; Luke 24:1-3,33-36; John 4:21-24; 20:1,19-28; Acts 20:7; Romans 14:5-10; 1 Corinthians 16:1-2; Colossians 2:16; 3:16; Revelation 1:10.*

### **Section 9. The Kingdom**

The Kingdom of God includes both His general sovereignty over the universe and His particular kingship over men who willfully acknowledge Him as King. Particularly the Kingdom is the

realm of salvation into which men enter by trustful, childlike commitment to Jesus Christ. Christians ought to pray and to labor that the Kingdom may come and God's will be done on earth. The full consummation of the Kingdom awaits the return of Jesus Christ and the end of this age.

*Genesis 1:1; Isaiah 9:6-7; Jeremiah 23:5-6; Matthew 3:2; 4:8-10,23; 12:25-28; 13:1-52; 25:31-46; 26:29; Mark 1:14-15; 9:1; Luke 4:43; 8:1; 9:2; 12:31-32; 17:20-21; 23:42; John 3:3; 18:36; Acts 1:6-7; 17:22-31; Romans 5:17; 8:19; 1 Corinthians 15:24-28; Colossians 1:13; Hebrews 11:10,16; 12:28; 1 Peter 2:4-10; 4:13; Revelation 1:6,9; 5:10; 11:15; 21-22.*

## **Section 10. Last Things**

God, in His own time and in His own way, will bring the world to its appropriate end. According to His promise, Jesus Christ will return personally and visibly in glory to the earth; the dead will be raised; and Christ will judge all men in righteousness. The unrighteous will be consigned to Hell, the place of everlasting punishment. The righteous in their resurrected and glorified bodies will receive their reward and will dwell forever in Heaven with the Lord.

*Isaiah 2:4; 11:9; Matthew 16:27; 18:8-9; 19:28; 24:27,30,36,44; 25:31-46; 26:64; Mark 8:38; 9:43-48; Luke 12:40,48; 16:19-26; 17:22-37; 21:27-28; John 14:1-3; Acts 1:11; 17:31; Romans 14:10; 1 Corinthians 4:5; 15:24-28,35-58; 2 Corinthians 5:10; Philippians 3:20-21; Colossians 1:5; 3:4; 1 Thessalonians 4:14-18; 5:1ff.; 2 Thessalonians 1:7ff.; 2; 1 Timothy 6:14; 2 Timothy 4:1,8; Titus 2:13; Hebrews 9:27-28; James 5:8; 2 Peter 3:7ff.; 1 John 2:28; 3:2; Jude 14; Revelation 1:18; 3:11; 20:1-22:13.*

## **Section 11. Evangelism and Missions**

It is the duty and privilege of every follower of Christ and of every church of the Lord Jesus Christ to endeavor to make disciples of all nations. The new birth of man's spirit by God's Holy Spirit means the birth of love for others. Missionary effort on the part of all rests thus upon a spiritual necessity of the regenerate life, and is expressly and repeatedly commanded in the teachings of Christ. The Lord Jesus Christ has commanded the preaching of the gospel to all nations. It is the duty of every child of God to seek constantly to win the lost to Christ by verbal witness undergirded by a Christian lifestyle, and by other methods in harmony with the gospel of Christ.

*Genesis 12:1-3; Exodus 19:5-6; Isaiah 6:1-8; Matthew 9:37-38; 10:5-15; 13:18-30, 37-43; 16:19; 22:9-10; 24:14; 28:18-20; Luke 10:1-18; 24:46-53; John 14:11-12; 15:7-8,16; 17:15; 20:21; Acts 1:8; 2; 8:26-40; 10:42-48; 13:2-3; Romans 10:13-15; Ephesians 3:1-11; 1 Thessalonians 1:8; 2 Timothy 4:5; Hebrews 2:1-3; 11:39-12:2; 1 Peter 2:4-10; Revelation 22:17.*

## **Section 12. Education**

Christianity is the faith of enlightenment and intelligence. In Jesus Christ abide all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge. All sound learning is, therefore, a part of our Christian heritage. The

new birth opens all human faculties and creates a thirst for knowledge. Moreover, the cause of education in the Kingdom of Christ is co-ordinate with the causes of missions and general benevolence, and should receive along with these the liberal support of the churches. An adequate system of Christian education is necessary to a complete spiritual program for Christ's people.

In Christian education there should be a proper balance between academic freedom and academic responsibility. Freedom in any orderly relationship of human life is always limited and never absolute. The freedom of a teacher in a Christian school, college, or seminary is limited by the pre-eminence of Jesus Christ, by the authoritative nature of the Scriptures, and by the distinct purpose for which the school exists.

*Deuteronomy 4:1,5,9,14; 6:1-10; 31:12-13; Nehemiah 8:1-8; Job 28:28; Psalms 19:7ff.; 119:11; Proverbs 3:13ff.; 4:1-10; 8:1-7,11; 15:14; Ecclesiastes 7:19; Matthew 5:2; 7:24ff.; 28:19-20; Luke 2:40; 1 Corinthians 1:18-31; Ephesians 4:11-16; Philippians 4:8; Colossians 2:3,8-9; 1 Timothy 1:3-7; 2 Timothy 2:15; 3:14-17; Hebrews 5:12-6:3; James 1:5; 3:17.*

### **Section 13. Stewardship**

God is the source of all blessings, temporal and spiritual; all that we have and are we owe to Him. Christians have a spiritual debtorship to the whole world, a holy trusteeship in the gospel, and a binding stewardship in their possessions. They are therefore under obligation to serve Him with their time, talents, and material possessions; and should recognize all these as entrusted to them to use for the glory of God and for helping others. According to the Scriptures, Christians should contribute of their means cheerfully, regularly, systematically, proportionately, and liberally for the advancement of the Redeemer's cause on earth.

*Genesis 14:20; Leviticus 27:30-32; Deuteronomy 8:18; Malachi 3:8-12; Matthew 6:1-4,19-21; 19:21; 23:23; 25:14-29; Luke 12:16-21,42; 16:1-13; Acts 2:44-47; 5:1-11; 17:24-25; 20:35; Romans 6:6-22; 12:1-2; 1 Corinthians 4:1-2; 6:19-20; 12; 16:1-4; 2 Corinthians 8-9; 12:15; Philippians 4:10-19; 1 Peter 1:18-19.*

### **Section 14. Cooperation**

Christ's people should, as occasion requires, organize such associations and conventions as may best secure cooperation for the great objects of the Kingdom of God. Such organizations have no authority over one another or over the churches. They are voluntary and advisory bodies designed to elicit, combine, and direct the energies of our people in the most effective manner. Members of New Testament churches should cooperate with one another in carrying forward the missionary, educational, and benevolent ministries for the extension of Christ's Kingdom. Christian unity in the New Testament sense is spiritual harmony and voluntary cooperation for common ends by various groups of Christ's people. Cooperation is desirable between the various Christian denominations, when the end to be attained is itself justified, and when such cooperation involves no violation of conscience or compromise of loyalty to Christ and His Word as revealed in the New Testament.

*Exodus 17:12; 18:17ff.; Judges 7:21; Ezra 1:3-4; 2:68-69; 5:14-15; Nehemiah 4; 8:1-5; Matthew 10:5-15; 20:1-16; 22:1-10; 28:19-20; Mark 2:3; Luke 10:1ff.; Acts 1:13-14; 2:1ff.; 4:31-37; 13:2-3; 15:1-35; 1 Corinthians 1:10-17; 3:5-15; 12; 2 Corinthians 8-9; Galatians 1:6-10; Ephesians 4:1-16; Philippians 1:15-18.*

## **Section 15. The Christian and the Social Order**

All Christians are under obligation to seek to make the will of Christ supreme in our own lives and in human society. Means and methods used for the improvement of society and the establishment of righteousness among men can be truly and permanently helpful only when they are rooted in the regeneration of the individual by the saving grace of God in Jesus Christ. In the spirit of Christ, Christians should oppose racism, every form of greed, selfishness, and vice, and all forms of sexual immorality, including adultery, homosexuality, and pornography. We should work to provide for the orphaned, the needy, the abused, the aged, the helpless, and the sick. We should speak on behalf of the unborn and contend for the sanctity of all human life from conception to natural death. Every Christian should seek to bring industry, government, and society as a whole under the sway of the principles of righteousness, truth, and brotherly love. In order to promote these ends Christians should be ready to work with all men of good will in any good cause, always being careful to act in the spirit of love without compromising their loyalty to Christ and His truth.

*Exodus 20:3-17; Leviticus 6:2-5; Deuteronomy 10:12; 27:17; Psalm 101:5; Micah 6:8; Zechariah 8:16; Matthew 5:13-16,43-48; 22:36-40; 25:35; Mark 1:29-34; 2:3ff.; 10:21; Luke 4:18-21; 10:27-37; 20:25; John 15:12; 17:15; Romans 12-14; 1 Corinthians 5:9-10; 6:1-7; 7:20-24; 10:23-11:1; Galatians 3:26-28; Ephesians 6:5-9; Colossians 3:12-17; 1 Thessalonians 3:12; Philemon; James 1:27; 2:8.*

## **Section 16. Peace and War**

It is the duty of Christians to seek peace with all men on principles of righteousness. In accordance with the spirit and teachings of Christ they should do all in their power to put an end to war.

The true remedy for the war spirit is the gospel of our Lord. The supreme need of the world is the acceptance of His teachings in all the affairs of men and nations, and the practical application of His law of love. Christian people throughout the world should pray for the reign of the Prince of Peace.

*Isaiah 2:4; Matthew 5:9, 38-48; 6:33; 26:52; Luke 22:36, 38; Romans 12:18-19; 13:1-7; 14:19; Hebrews 12:14; James 4:1-2.*

## **Section 17. Religious Liberty**

God alone is Lord of the conscience, and He has left it free from the doctrines and commandments of men which are contrary to His Word or not contained in it. Church and state should be separate. The state owes to every church protection and full freedom in the pursuit of

its spiritual ends. In providing for such freedom no ecclesiastical group or denomination should be favored by the state more than others. Civil government being ordained of God, it is the duty of Christians to render loyal obedience thereto in all things not contrary to the revealed will of God. The church should not resort to the civil power to carry on its work. The gospel of Christ contemplates spiritual means alone for the pursuit of its ends. The state has no right to impose penalties for religious opinions of any kind. The state has no right to impose taxes for the support of any form of religion. A free church in a free state is the Christian ideal, and this implies the right of free and unhindered access to God on the part of all men, and the right to form and propagate opinions in the sphere of religion without interference by the civil power.

*Genesis 1:27; 2:7; Matthew 6:6-7,24; 16:26; 22:21; John 8:36; Acts 4:19-20; Romans 6:1-2; 13:1-7; Galatians 5:1,13; Philippians 3:20; 1 Timothy 2:1-2; James 4:12; 1 Peter 2:12-17; 3:11-17; 4:12-19.*

## **Section 18. The Family**

God has ordained the family as the foundational institution of human society. It is composed of persons related to one another by marriage, blood, or adoption.

Marriage is the uniting of one man and one woman in covenant commitment for a lifetime. It is God's unique gift to reveal the union between Christ and His church and to provide for the man and the woman in marriage the framework for intimate companionship, the channel of sexual expression according to biblical standards, and the means for procreation of the human race.

The husband and wife are of equal worth before God, since both are created in God's image. The marriage relationship models the way God relates to His people. A husband is to love his wife as Christ loved the church. He has the God-given responsibility to provide for, to protect, and to lead his family. A wife is to submit herself graciously to the servant leadership of her husband even as the church willingly submits to the headship of Christ. She, being in the image of God as is her husband and thus equal to him, has the God-given responsibility to respect her husband and to serve as his helper in managing the household and nurturing the next generation.

Children, from the moment of conception, are a blessing and heritage from the Lord. Parents are to demonstrate to their children God's pattern for marriage. Parents are to teach their children spiritual and moral values and to lead them, through consistent lifestyle example and loving discipline, to make choices based on biblical truth. Children are to honor and obey their parents.

*Genesis 1:26-28; 2:15-25; 3:1-20; Exodus 20:12; Deuteronomy 6:4-9; Joshua 24:15; 1 Samuel 1:26-28; Psalms 51:5; 78:1-8; 127; 128; 139:13-16; Proverbs 1:8; 5:15-20; 6:20-22; 12:4; 13:24; 14:1; 17:6; 18:22; 22:6,15; 23:13-14; 24:3; 29:15,17; 31:10-31; Ecclesiastes 4:9-12; 9:9; Malachi 2:14-16; Matthew 5:31-32; 18:2-5; 19:3-9; Mark 10:6-12; Romans 1:18-32; 1 Corinthians 7:1-16; Ephesians 5:21-33; 6:1-4; Colossians 3:18-21; 1 Timothy 5:8,14; 2 Timothy 1:3-5; Titus 2:3-5; Hebrews 13:4; 1 Peter 3:1-7.*

## **Section 19. Human Sexuality**

As to human sexuality, we believe that God has commanded that no intimate sexual activity be engaged in outside of a marriage between a man and a woman. We believe that any form of homosexuality, lesbianism, bisexuality, bestiality, incest, fornication, adultery and pornography are sinful perversions of God's gift of sex. We believe that God creates human beings as male and female and that any attempt to distort that creation through any surgical or non-surgical gender reassignment (including but not limited to transgender, bi-gender, and pan-gender) is contrary to Scripture. Any employee engaged in any of the aforementioned activities shall be terminated from employment. (Gen.2:24, Gen.19:5, 13; Gen.26:8-9; Lev.18:1-30; Rom.1:26-29; 1 Cor.5:1, 6-9; 1 Thess.4:1-8; Heb.13:4.)

## **Section 20. Role of Men and Women**

We believe that men and women are spiritually equal in position before God but that God has ordained distinct and separate spiritual functions for men and women in the home and the church. The husband is to be the leader of the home and men are to be the leaders (pastors and deacons) of the church. Accordingly, only men are eligible for licensure and ordination by the church. (Gal.3:28; Col.3:18; 1 Tim.2:8-15; 3:4-5, 12.)

## **Section 21. Giving**

We believe that every Christian, as a steward of that portion of God's wealth entrusted to them, is obligated to support their local church financially. We believe that God has established the tithe as the basis for giving, but every Christian should also give other offerings sacrificially and cheerfully to the support of the church, the relief of those in need, and the spread of the Gospel.

## **ARTICLE IV. CHURCH COVENANT**

Having been led by the Spirit of God to receive Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord by faith, and having publicly confessed Him by baptism in the name of God the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, we freely and joyfully enter into covenant with one another as one body in Christ.

We pledge, therefore, by the aid of God's Spirit, to live together in Christian love; to work for the advancement of God's Kingdom through this church in knowledge, holiness and mutual care; to support its ministry by a faithful stewardship of money, time, and talents; and to sustain its worship, ordinances, doctrines, and disciplines.

We further pledge to support the Pastor and the elected leadership of this church to carry out the task of reaching the lost and discipling the saved. Should the day come when we can no longer be supportive of our leadership, then we will remove ourselves from the church and seek a church where we are in agreement with their leadership.

We also pledge to maintain family and private worship; to rear our children in the spirit and nurture of the Lord; to seek the salvation of all members of our own families and of our acquaintances; and to strive for maturity in ourselves and in our fellow Christians.

We further pledge to follow Christian principles of morality in our daily living; to be ethical in our dealings and faithful in our commitments; to promote the unity of fellowship by proper attitudes and careful speech, and to be zealous in our efforts toward the advancement of the Kingdom of God here and throughout the world.

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.

#### ARTICLE V. POLICY AND RELATIONSHIPS

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 is common among Baptist churches. This church will cooperate with, and support the Petersburg Baptist Association and the Southern Baptist Conservatives of Virginia in their affiliations with the Southern Baptist Convention.

#### ARTICLE VI. AMENDMENTS

This Constitution may be amended by a two-thirds (2/3) majority vote of those members present at a regular or special meeting of the church membership, and after at least one week's notice of such proposed change has been given to the church membership, in writing, designating the Articles and Sections affected thereby, and stating the proposed changes to be made. This notice requirement shall be deemed to be fulfilled by providing the changes to members at a regular worship service at least a week before the meeting of the church membership.

**APPROVED, PASSED AND ADOPTED** by Unity Baptist Church of Prince George, Virginia this \_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_, 2017.

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Secretary



## BYLAWS

### ARTICLE I. MEMBERSHIP

#### **Section 1. General**

This is an autonomous, sovereign and democratic Baptist church under the lordship of Jesus Christ. The membership retains unto itself the exclusive right of self-government in all phases of the spiritual and temporal life of this church. The membership reserves the exclusive right to determine who shall be members of this church and the conditions of such membership.

#### **Section 2. Acceptance of New Members**

##### A. Adults

Any person may offer themselves as candidates for membership in this church. All such candidates shall be presented to the church at any regular worship service for acceptance into the watchcare fellowship of the church.

Any person or persons under watchcare, upon completion of the new member's class, may be presented for membership in any of the following ways:

1. By profession of faith and for baptism according to the policies of this church. This church considers immersion to be the proper form of New Testament Baptism. However, since this church considers baptism to be a symbolic act which is not necessary for salvation, the church reserves the right to admit members by other means which shall be determined by the pastor, should love require it in any situation of physical disability.
2. By promise of a letter of a New Testament Church.
3. By restoration upon a statement of prior conversion experience and baptism in a New Testament Church when no letter is obtainable.

It shall be a requirement that all adult candidates complete a new member orientation class before they are received into the church. The new member class will consist of an introduction and review of Christian and Baptist Doctrine and the Unity Baptist Constitution and By-Laws. The requirement of the new member's class can be waived at the Pastors discretion.

The candidate will then be presented to the congregation and asked to confirm their desire to unite with Unity Baptist body of believers, its Covenants, By-Laws and purpose as it so now exist.

The candidate will then be received into membership by a vote of the Church Council.

All persons received into the membership of this church whether by baptism or otherwise, shall receive a copy of the church constitution and by-laws, so that they may know what is expected of them, and what the church represents. Further, all members shall sign the Church Covenant.

#### B. Youth

Youth under the age of 18 that desire to unite with Unity Baptist Church may do so by any of the means stated in this article.

Youth will retain all rights of membership with the exception of voting privileges until the New Members class can be completed and they are sixteen years old. At such time the voting privilege will be extended to them.

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

### **Section 3. Duties**

Members are expected to be faithful in all the duties essential to the Christian life, and also to attend regularly the services of the church, to give faithfully for its support and its causes, to encourage the practice of scriptural teachings concerning the tithe, and to share in the church's work.

### **Section 4. Church Roll**

The Church Secretary shall maintain a Roll of all church members.

Members who change their place of residence should notify the church office. If the member moves too far away to continue attending this church, they are encouraged to transfer their membership to a Baptist Church nearer their place of residence.

If any of the following should arise, the member shall be removed from the Church Membership Roll of the Church without any action from the congregation.

1. A member is continuously absent, no longer attending services, and is not active in any form of participation with the body of believers at Unity for a period of one year.
2. The Pastors and Deacons make a determination through visitation (Pastor, Deacon Family Care Ministry) that the member no longer desires fellowship with the body at Unity.
3. A member requests that their membership be transferred by church letter.

Special circumstances, should love require it, may be determined by the Pastor and Deacons.

### **Section 5. Dismissal of Members**

Any member of this church who persistently ignores covenant obligations and membership duties or whose personal life and conduct reflects unfavorably upon the Christian character of the church, is subject to disciplinary action or dismissal from the church.

Such action taken by the Church and shall be based upon recommendation of the deacons and recognized by a simple majority vote of the Church. However, such action will be taken only after faithful efforts have been made to bring the member to repentance.

## **ARTICLE II. PASTORS**

All persons serving in one of the following leadership positions within the church must be a member of the church in good standing.

### **Section 1. Pastor**

The Pastor is expected to be an administrator, a teacher, a counselor, a visitor, a preacher of the Gospel, a shepherd, and an enabler. He is expected to follow the admonition of Paul to Timothy found in I Timothy 3:1-7.

Furthermore, he is the leader of pastoral ministries. As such he works with the deacons and church staff to: (a) lead the church in performing its tasks, (b) lead the church to engage in a fellowship of worship, witness, education, ministry and application; (c) proclaim the Gospel to believers and unbelievers; and (d) care for the church's members and other persons in the community.

- (1) A Pastor shall be chosen and called by the church whenever a vacancy occurs. His selection shall take place at a meeting called for that purpose, of which at least one week's notice has been given the congregation.
- (2) A pulpit committee (authorized by the board, members nominated by the nominating committee and approved by the church membership – simple majority) shall be used only in the selection of the Senior Pastor. Its recommendations will constitute a nomination. Any member has the privilege of making recommendations to the pulpit committee. The committee shall bring to the consideration of the church only one name at a time. Election shall be by secret ballot, an affirmative vote of three-fourths of those voting being necessary for a choice. The pastor, thus elected, shall serve until the relationship is terminated by his request or by the church's request.
- (3) In the event that the Pastor should resign, he shall give the church at least four (4) weeks' notice.

- (4) The church may terminate its relationship with the Pastor by a three-fourths (3/4) majority vote of the church members present at a business meeting called for that purpose. He shall be given at least four (4) weeks in which to move if living in church-owned property.
- (5) He will be allowed to accept two (2) revivals outside of the church each year. If he desires to conduct more than two revivals, he is to seek the advice and guidance of the deacons.
- (6) The Pastor's vacation will be negotiated with the Board of Directors.
- (7) He will be encouraged to attend denominational, associations, state, and convention-wide meetings and workshops.
- (8) The Pastor shall be paid either once or twice a month, per his choice, at a time agreed upon by him and the Church Treasurer.
- (9) In the event of illness, the Pastor will be paid his full salary for the first three (3) months. If it becomes obvious that the pastor's illness will exceed that time, the Board of Directors shall make recommendations to the church in this matter.

## **Section 2. Staff Pastors**

Additional staff pastors may be called by the Church to fulfill the ministries of the Church. Such additional staff positions and ministry descriptions as necessary for such positions shall be approved by the Board of Directors .

## **ARTICLE III. DEACONS**

### **Section 1. Qualifications and Selection**

The guidelines for a Deacon are as follows:

- (1) The Deacon shall be of good reputation, full of the Holy Spirit, and of wisdom. He shall serve with the pastor and staff in performing pastoral ministries. He shall also proclaim the gospel to believers and unbelievers; care for church members and other persons in the community; lead the church to engage in a fellowship of worship, witness, education, ministry, and application; and lead the church in performing her missions. Each man will demonstrate a Christian maturity through his dedication to God, his attendance and service, and regular giving to the church. The Deacon will be responsible for assisting with the ordinances. They shall be responsible for transporting offerings from church services to the bank.
- (2) To live for and by the Scriptures of First Timothy, the third chapter and Acts, the sixth chapter, verses 1-4.

- (3) Before taking the office of Deacon, each man will be required to receive training from the Pastor and Deacons. This includes both study and practical application of the responsibilities of a Deacon. This will give each man an understanding and knowledge of what God would expect of him.
- (4) **Yokefellow.** The Yokefellow candidate shall be empowered by the Holy Spirit to serve under the direction of the Pastor and the Deacons. These Yokefellow candidates will receive training for a period of one year in an established Yokefellow program. An additional year of training may be used if needed. The Deacons and the Pastor will recommend Yokefellow candidates. All new members who were Deacons in sister Baptist churches must be a member for one year before being eligible for the Yokefellow Program. It is a requirement that all Deacon candidates first serve one year as a Yokefellow.

## **Section 2. Ratification and Re-affirmation**

At the Annual Business Meeting each November, the Membership shall ratify new deacons and re-affirm deacons. A simply majority is required for election.

The Deacons shall elect a Chairman, Vice-Chairman, and Secretary each October. The Chairman, Vice-Chairman and Secretary shall serve on a rotation basis, rotating from Secretary to Chairman

## **Section 3. Removal and Vacancy**

Any Deacon, whether active or ordained, may be dismissed from the Deacon Body by a three-fourths (3/4) majority vote of the members present and voting at a regular or special business meeting. The vacancy shall be filled by the process outlined in Section 2 of this Article.

## **Section 4. Deacon Emeritus**

Deacon Emeritus is a special recognition given for life long, unselfish dedication in the service of our Lord. The active deacons are aware of each deacon's status of service and shall select those members who will be candidates for Deacon Emeritus as they are led by the Holy Spirit. Final approval shall be by the church. The Deacon Emeritus serves as an ex-officio member of all deacons' meetings and activities. He will have the right to serve actively in any of the other capacities of a deacon as long as he is alive.

# ARTICLE IV. CORPORATE BOARD OF DIRECTORS

## **Section 1. Composition**

The Corporate Board of Directors (“Board”) shall be composed of no less than three (3) and no more than (5) Directors. The Board shall determine the number of Directors.

## **Section 2. Duties**

The Corporate Board of Directors shall be charged with the oversight of all corporate affairs of the church.

## **Section 2. Selection of Directors**

- A. The Pastor shall serve as a Director during his term as pastor.
- B. The Chairman of the Deacons shall serve as a Director during his term as Chairman of the Deacons.
- C. Additional Directors shall be nominated by the nominating committee, ratified by the current Board, and be elected by a simple majority vote of the Church at the annual meeting each year. Such additional Directors shall serve a term of three years, and may be elected to two consecutive terms.

## **Section 3. Qualifications of Directors**

- A. Directors shall be members of the Church in good standing for no less than three years before their selection as a Director.
- B. No Director shall be related to another Director by blood or by marriage.

## **Section 4. Meetings**

The Board shall meet at least once per year (no later than October 31<sup>st</sup>), but more as deemed necessary by the Board. Meetings shall be open to all active, adult members. However, the Board shall reserve the right to enter into closed session to discuss personnel and other confidential matters, such as legal disputes.

## **Section 5. Notice**

Notice shall be deemed proper if each member is notified within seven (7) of any regular meeting and within forty-eight (48) hours of any special meeting. Notice shall be provided by U.S. mail or electronic mail to the last address on file with the Church.

## **Section 6. Chairman**

The Pastor shall be Chairman of the Corporate Board of Directors and president of the Corporation.

## **Section 7. Removal and Vacancy**

Any Director may be dismissed from the Board by a three-fourths (3/4) majority vote of the members present and voting at a regular or special business meeting. The vacancy shall be filled by the process outlined in Section 2 of this Article with the vote held at the next available business meeting. A Director who fulfills an unexpired term shall be eligible to serve for two additional, consecutive terms.

If any Director or Officer is dismissed from their underlying leadership position that is a prerequisite to service as a Director or Officer, that person is also automatically dismissed from the role of Corporate Director or Officer.

## ARTICLE V. OFFICERS

In addition to Directors, the Corporation shall have officers who report to the Board of Directors, including a secretary and treasurer.

### **Section 1. Secretary**

#### A. Qualifications

The Secretary shall be a member in good standing for at least three years.  
The Secretary may also serve as a member of the Board of Directors, if so chosen.

#### B. Selection

The Secretary shall be nominated by the Nominating Committee, approved by the Board, and elected by a majority vote of the Membership.

#### C. Duties

The Secretary shall be the custodian of all corporate documents, record the minutes of all Board, Council, and Church meetings, maintain the Membership roll of the Church, and sign all official correspondence and documents.

#### D. Term

The Secretary shall be elected to a term of one year, and may be elected to an unlimited number of terms.

#### E. Removal

The Secretary may be removed from office by a majority vote of the Church Membership after such recommendation has been made by a majority vote of the Board.

#### F. Vacancy

Any vacancy in the Office shall be completed in the manner prescribed in Paragraph B of this Section.

## **Section 2. Treasurer**

### **A. Qualifications**

The Treasurer shall be a member in good standing for at least three years.  
The Treasurer may also serve as a member of the Board of Directors, if so chosen.

### **B. Selection**

The Treasurer shall be nominated by the Nominating Committee, approved by the Board, and elected by a majority vote of the Membership.

### **C. Duties**

The Treasurer shall maintain the financial records of the Church, provide the Board and Church with an Annual report of receipts and disbursements, provide receipts to all donors, and complete other duties as necessary to assure that the Church's financial operation is marked with efficiency and integrity.

### **D. Term**

The Treasurer shall be elected to a term of one year, and may serve an unlimited number of terms.

### **E. Removal**

The Treasurer may be removed from office by a majority vote of the Church Membership after such recommendation has been made by a majority vote of the Board.

### **F. Vacancy**

Any vacancy in the Office shall be completed in the manner prescribed in Paragraph B of this Section.

## **ARTICLE VI. CHURCH COMMITTEES AND TEAMS**

### **Committee Guidelines**

Whenever possible, all committee persons shall only serve on a committee for a total of three consecutive years. At the end of the third year, one third of the committee will step down from active service for a period of one year. To start this rotation within the committee, it will be the Nominating Committee's responsibility to decide who will serve one year, two years, and then the three year term. Should there not be enough people having an interest in a committee to use this method, it will not be used until such time that there are adequate numbers of people to use this method.



It is understood that the Pastor is an ex-officio member of all the committees named, and his leadership is to be recognized in them.

### **Section 1. Nominating Committee**

The Deacons shall recommend to the Church at the annual business meeting candidates for the nominating committee to serve during the next fiscal year. The candidates shall be approved by a majority vote of the Church at the annual business meeting.

The Nominating Committee will be composed of five members. Each member will serve for three years on a rotating basis.

The Nominating Committee will present the list of nominees to the Church at the Annual Business Meeting, pursuant to these Bylaws.

### **Section 2. Finance Committee**

The Finance Committee shall consist of five members. The Pastor and Treasurer shall be ex-officio members. The Committee shall be responsible for planning and carrying out the financial programs of the church in accordance with the principles of a unified budget.

Each department head shall furnish to the Finance committee, upon request, an itemized estimate of the anticipated needs of their department for the coming year.

No obligation to pay an indebtedness will be recognized unless it has been authorized by vote of the church in a Business Meeting, either through approval of the annual budget, or, if conditions require, by approval of specific expenditures.

The Finance Committee will perform an annual review of the financial condition of the church and report the results of the review to the church at the annual business meeting.

The Finance Committee will obtain an independent financial audit by a certified public accounting firm no less than every three years.

### **Section 3. Church Council**

The Church Council shall consist of the leaders of Ministry Teams, as established under Section 4 of this Article. The purpose of the Church Council is to organize and deliver the ministry programs of Unity Baptist. The leader of each Ministry Team shall be nominated by the Nominating Committee and approved by the Church at the Annual Business Meeting.

### **Section 4. Ministry Teams**

The Pastor and Church Council shall organize such additional teams as necessary to fulfill the mission of the Church.

## ARTICLE VII. CHURCH MEETINGS

### **Section 1. Worship Services**

The church shall meet regularly each Sunday morning and Wednesday night, or as decided by the pastor and deacons, for preaching, instruction, Bible study, evangelism, prayer, and for the worship of Almighty God. These meetings will be open for the entire membership of the church and for all people, and shall be conducted under the direction of the Pastor.

### **Section 2. Special Services**

Revival services and any other church meeting which will be beneficial to the promotion of the objectives of this church may also be scheduled.

### **Section 3. Lord's Supper**

The Lord's Supper shall be observed regularly at the discretion of the pastor.

### **Section 4. Annual Business Meeting**

An Annual Business Meeting shall be held each November. An agenda of proposed motions will be announced the Sunday prior to the meeting and all business conducted will be limited to the announced agenda.

### **Section 5. Special Business Meeting**

A specially called business meeting may be held to consider special matters of a significant nature. The church will be notified of such a meeting of time, place, location, and subject on the Lord's day before the date of the proposed meeting. No other business may be conducted.

The Pastor, Deacons, trustees, or a standing committee may request a special business meeting to be called. This will be handled as any specially called business meeting.

### **Section 6. Quorum**

The quorum consists of those who attend the business meeting, provided it is a stated meeting or one that has been properly called.

### **Section 7. Parliamentary Rules**

Robert's Rules of order shall be recognized as the authority for parliamentary rules of procedure for all business meetings of the church, with the exception, where they would conflict with Church Constitution and By-Laws.

### **Section 8. Moderator**

The moderator for all Church business meetings to be held in each new fiscal year shall be recommended to the Church by the Pastor and the Deacons. The Church at the Annual Business Meeting shall approve by majority vote the Moderator to serve during the next fiscal year. In the absence of the moderator the Deacon Chairman shall preside with the right to pass the gavel, in the absence of both, any Deacon shall call the meeting to order and an acting moderator shall be elected.

### **Section 9. Fiscal Year**

The Church's fiscal year shall be the same as the calendar year.

## ARTICLE VIII. PROGRAM ORGANIZATION

The Pastor and Board shall organize such departments, programs, and ministries as necessary to fulfill the mission of the Church.

## ARTICLE IX. NONSTOCK STATUS

### **Section 1. Private Inurement**

No part of the net earnings of the church shall inure to the benefit of, or be distributable to, its members, trustees, officers, or other private persons, except that the church shall be authorized and empowered to pay reasonable compensation for the services rendered and to make payments and distribution in furtherance of the purposes set forth in Article 1, Section 2 hereof.

### **Section 2. Political Involvement**

No substantial part of the activities of the church shall be the carrying on of propaganda or otherwise attempting to influence legislation. The church shall not participate in, or intervene in (including publishing or distribution of statements) any political campaign on behalf of any candidate for public office.

## ARTICLE X. PROPERTY

### **Section 1. Title**

All property of the Church shall be deeded to the Church and held in its name.

### **Section 2. Purchases and Sales of Property.**

The purchase, sale, or encumbering of real property shall be recommended by the Board of Directors and approved by a simple majority of the members present and voting at a duly called meeting.

#### ARTICLE XI. CONFLICT OF INTEREST

No Director, Officer, staff member, committee member, or other such person in a position of Leadership shall be disqualified, by reason of his or her office, from dealing or contracting with the Church, either as vendor, purchaser, or otherwise.

No lawful transaction or contract of the Church shall be void or voidable on the grounds that any Such person or entity in which such person has any financial interest or membership, is in any way interested in the transaction or contract, provided that: (1) the person's interest in the transaction was disclosed or known to the Board or the appropriate committee thereof prior to the transaction or contract being approved, and (2) the Board or committee thereof authorized, approved or ratified the transaction or contract without counting in the vote any such interested person; and (3) the transaction or contract was fair to the Church.

No accounting of profit/loss from the transaction or contract shall be required of a Director, Officer, staff member, committee member, or other such person in a position of leadership when approval is granted under the conditions of this Article.

#### ARTICLE XII. INDEMNIFICATION AND ELIMINATION OF LIABILITY

To the full extent allowed by the Virginia Nonstock Corporation Act in force on the date of these Bylaws, the Church shall indemnify against liability and advance reasonable expenses to any individual who was, is, or is threatened to be named a defendant or respondent in any threatened, pending, or completed action, suit, or proceeding, whether civil, criminal, administrative, or investigative, and whether formal or informal, because he is or was a Director or Officer, or while a Director or Officer, is or was serving at the Church's request as a Director, Officer, partner, trustee, employee, or agent of another corporation, partnership, joint venture, trust, employee benefit plan, or other enterprise. As authorized by the Virginia Nonstock Corporation Act, the provisions of this Article are in addition to and not in limitation of the specific powers of a church to indemnify agents set forth therein.

#### ARTICLE XIII. DISSOLUTION

##### **Section 1. Dissolution**

Any resolution for dissolution must approved by at least a three-fourths vote of the congregation at a duly called meeting for that purpose.

##### **Section 2. Winding Up.**

Upon the dissolution of the Church, none of its funds or assets shall be distributed to any officer, director, or any other individual. The Board shall, after paying or making provision for the payment of all of the liabilities of the Church, dispose of all of the funds and assets of the Church by conveying the same to another Church or denominational entity of like faith and practice,

provided that at the time, the Church or denominational entity meets the requirements for an exempt organization under section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 (or the corresponding provisions of any future United States Internal Revenue Law). Any such funds or assets not so disposed of shall be disposed of by the Circuit Court of the county or city in which the principal office of the corporation is then located, to such organization as said Court shall determine, which is organized and operated exclusively for religious purposes.

ARTICLE XIV. AMENDMENTS

Amendments to these Bylaws may be made at any regular or special meeting of the active voting members of the Church. To be adopted, Amendments shall require a majority vote of all members present and voting.

**APPROVED, PASSED AND ADOPTED** by Unity Baptist Church this \_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_, 2017.

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Clerk