

DALE BAPTIST CHURCH CONSTITUTION

Preamble

We, the membership of Dale Baptist Church, in order to fulfill our Lord's command that we be a light on a hill and the salt of the earth, do establish this constitution as the guidelines to carry on the work, business, and will of God in our church, about our community, and throughout the world (Matthew 5: 13, 14; 28:18-20).

Article I - NAME

The name of this body shall be Dale Baptist Church, Inc. This name satisfies the laws of the state of Oklahoma to meet corporation requirements. The church's current address is 300 Second Street, Dale Oklahoma 74851-8231.

Article II - PURPOSE

- To proclaim and share the gospel of Jesus Christ with as many people as possible in our church and throughout the world (Matthew 28:18-20).
- To seek to do the will of God in our community as He empowers us through the working of His Holy Spirit (Matthew 6:33; Acts 1:8).
- To experience meaningful fellowship with God and with fellow believers (Rev. 3:20).
- To help new Christians and fellow Christians grow in Christ-likeness by emphasizing total commitment of life, personality, and possessions of the Lordship of Christ (II Corinthians 5:17; I Peter 1:16).
- To be a church that ministers unselfishly to persons in our community in the name of Christ (Ephesians 4:4-6).

Article III – STATEMENT OF FAITH

The Bible, the inspired Word of God, is the basis of our statement of faith. As a member of the Southern Baptist Convention, and an active congregation in the Pottawatomie-Lincoln Baptist Association, Dale Baptist Church, Inc. accepts and adopts the doctrinal statement of The Baptist Faith and Message, 1963 (amended 2000).

Article IV – CHURCH COVENANT

Having been led by the Spirit of God to accept the Lord Jesus Christ as our Savior, and on the profession of our faith, having been baptized in the name of 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 covenant with one another as one body in Christ.

We resolve, therefore, by the aid of the Holy Spirit to walk together in Christian love. We strive for advancement of this church in knowledge, holiness, and compassion. Our intent is to promote prosperity and spirituality within, and to sustain its worship ordinances of discipline and doctrines. We contribute cheerfully and regularly to the support of the ministry and expenses of the church, the relief of the poor, and the spread of the gospel through all nations.

We also resolve to maintain family and private devotions and to religiously educate our children. It is our mission to seek the salvation of our family and acquaintances, to walk circumspectly in the world, to be just in our dealings, faithful in our engagements, and exemplary in our deportment. We further resolve to avoid all tattling, gossiping, backbiting, and unrighteous anger, and to abstain from the sale of and use of destructive drugs or intoxicating drinks as a beverage. We shall shun pornography and refrain from the snare of gambling. As a body, we aim to be zealous in our efforts to advance the Kingdom of our Savior.

We further resolve 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; but always ready for reconciliation and mindful of the rules of our Savior to secure it without delay.

We moreover resolve 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 covenant and principles of God's Word.

Article V - CHARACTER

Section 1. Policy:

The government of this church is vested in the body of believers who compose it, and is subject to no other ecclesiastical body or authority. However, it recognizes and sustains the voluntarily accepted obligation of mutual cooperation with other Baptist churches of like faith and order.

Section 2. Doctrine:

This church adopts the Bible as its only authority in all matters of faith and practice. Its understanding of Christian truth is in essential accord with the beliefs of other Baptist churches as indicated in our "Statement of Faith"(Article III, Constitution).

Section 3. Denominational Affiliation:

This church shall be affiliated with and shall elect messengers to the annual meetings of the following denominational bodies: (1)The Pottawatomie-Lincoln Baptist Association; (2)The Baptist General Convention of Oklahoma; and (3)The Southern Baptist Convention.

Section 4. Program of Missions:

- a. This church shall support the mission program of the Pottawatomie-Lincoln Baptist Association as provided in the church budget.
- b. This church shall support the Baptist General Convention of Oklahoma and the Southern Baptist Convention through the Cooperative Program as provided in the church budget.

BY-LAWS

Article I – Membership

Section 1. Qualifications:

The membership of this church shall consist of such persons who have confessed Jesus Christ to be their Savior and Lord, and who have received scriptural baptism(immersion)only.

Section 2. Reception of Members:

Persons desiring membership in this church shall be received by the approval of the church in any of the following ways:

- a. By profession of faith in Jesus Christ as Savior and Baptism.
- b. By promise of a letter of recommendation and dismissal from another Baptist church of like faith and order.
- c. By statement of prior conversion experience and baptism in a Baptist church of like faith and order when no letter is obtainable.
- d. By baptism for those coming from denominations other than Baptist who do not adhere to our position on baptism and doctrine.

Section 3. Duties of Members:

Members are expected to be faithful in all duties essential to Christian living: to attend regularly the services of this church, to share in its organized work by giving regularly for its support and causes, to obey the commandments of God and His will for our lives, and to support and adhere to the Constitution and Bylaws of this church.

Section 4. Rights of Church Members:

Each church member is entitled to express his or her opinion on any matter brought before the church for approval and shall be entitled to vote at all church elections, business meetings and on all questions brought before the church provided the member is present.

Section 5. Termination of Membership:

A person's church membership shall be terminated only in the following ways:

- a. Death of a church member.
- b. Upon a request for letter by another Baptist church of like faith and order.
- c. Upon personal request of church member to terminate membership.

- d. If church members join a church of another denomination.
- e. Exclusion by action of the church.

Section 6. Discipline:

Redemption, rather than punishment, should be the guidelines, which governs the attitude of one member toward another. However, should some serious condition exist which would cause a member to become a hindrance to the welfare of the church by reason of immoral or unchristian conduct, persistent breach of covenant vows, or non-support of the church, every reasonable measure will be taken by the pastor, deacons or special committee to resolve the problem as described in Matthew 18:15-17. If the pastor, deacons or special committee find that the welfare of the church will best be served by the exclusion of the member, the church may take such action by two-thirds vote of the members present at a general business meeting and declare the offender no longer a member of the church.

Section 7. Restoration of Membership:

Any person whose membership has been terminated by the vote of the church may be restored to membership upon his or her request, having given evidence of repentance, and by vote of the church.

Section 8. New Member Orientation:

New church members shall be encouraged to enlist in the new member's orientation plan of the church.

Section 9. Non-Resident Membership:

If any person moves to another area or state, every effort should be made to contact the member to encourage him or her to join a Baptist church in his/her area. If he/she does not join another church, his/her name should be placed upon a non-resident inactive file.

Article II – MINISTRIES

The church shall evaluate, plan, organize, and implement such ministries as the church deems necessary.

Article III – CHURCH STAFF AND OFFICERS

Section 1: General

- a. Church officers will have demonstrated the talents, gifts, leadership, organizational skills, and abilities to motivate and encourage others in this fellowship. They will be familiar with the organization and operating procedures of the office to which they are nominated and **seek to excel in their office to the glory of God.** (1 Corinthians 10:31)
- b. The church will have the authority to act in the stead of any/ or all officers when a vacancy exists.

- c. The officers of the church are Pastor, Other Ministerial Staff, Chairman of Deacons, Church Treasurer and Church Clerk.

Section 2: Pastor

- a. The search and selection of a pastor shall begin when the office becomes vacant. A moderator, elected by the church will be responsible for securing a filled pulpit and organizing the prayerful search of a new pastor. The moderator may seek an elected body to become a search committee, or the church may act on the matter in business sessions as a whole. When a potential candidate is secured, that candidate should be voted on during a business session held one week or more after the announcement of his candidacy. An affirming vote of 80% or more must be in place before the moderator can extend the call. Only one candidate shall be considered at a time. Recommendation for the vote may come from the floor or as a reported item from an organized search committee.
- b. The pastor is the spiritual leader charged with the welfare and oversight of the church harboring leadership and organization of the ministries toward the cause of Christ. The pastor shall be an ex-officio member of all church committees and organizations, but he is the moderator for leadership matters except when 80% of the body determines otherwise.

Section 3: Church Staff (at Ministry level)

- a. The church shall call ministerial level staff as needed. A job description of the need shall be in written form and available to the church and prospective candidates for question and review. A special committee comprised of the pastor and at least two other members shall be formed to receive resumes, clarify the role, and may present a recommendation for nomination. The approval must be an 80% affirming vote.
- b. Duties are added or deleted as a collaborative effort among the church staff.

Section 4: Church Staff (not at Ministry level)

- a. Some staff is necessary to carry out the ministries of the church. The pastor and staff will outline and elicit the need to the church. Details such as compensation, description, and policies of the position(s) will be brought before the church for a vote either in the annual vote of positions or in a slated business session.
- b. Such staff may include, but not be limited to Church Clerk, Treasurer, Pianist, Janitor, Sunday School Superintendent, Discipleship Training Director, Trustees, and Teaching Faculty.

Section 5: Deacons

a. Active Deacons

- 1.) Up to three deacons for the first 100 resident members shall be elected annually at the presentation of the church profile. One deacon shall be elected for every 50 resident members thereafter.
- 2.) New church-member deacons (previously ordained) may be placed upon recommendation and approval of the church.
- 3.) After prayerful consideration and an examination of beliefs, a scripturally qualified candidate (Acts 6:1-8 and I Timothy 3:8-13)

may be nominated and elected as deacon and set aside for ordination by the church.

4.) Duties of the Deacon.

a. The primary emphasis of the Deacon's ministry will be meeting spiritual and physical needs of the people in the church and in the community.

b. The Deacons will be a council of love, advice, encouragement, support, and conference with the a Pastor in all matters pertaining to the welfare and work of the church. Deacons must be zealous to guard the unity of the Spirit within the church in the bonds of peace. (Ephesians 4:3)

c. In counsel with the Pastor, and by such methods as the Holy Spirit may direct, the Deacons will assist in the discipline of the church membership. Such must be guided by the principles set forth in Matthew 18: 15-17, I Corinthians 5: 9-13, and I Thessalonians 5:14.

Section 6: Dismissal of Staff Leadership

a. In the event of Biblical, ethical, or moral separation, the following procedure should be used:

1. A careful review of the principles of Matthew 18: 15-17, Galatians 6: 1, and I Timothy 5:19 should be administered.
2. A group of ministerial leaders should meet with the party to restore and resolve the issue.
3. If no resolution is resolved within, a special called business session shall address and defend the decision to call for question the dismissal.
4. In a secret ballot counted by the Church Clerk and one other party (not the party in question), a majority rules decision stands.

b. In the event the leader in question is the pastor, a moderator should be identified to conduct meetings and the voting procedures.

Section 7: Benefits to Personnel

	Days off	Vacation Time	Revivals	Conferences
Pastor	Days negotiated; leaves a contact	2 weeks; church provides supply	Upon approval	Upon approval
Youth/ Music	Days negotiated; leaves a contact	2 weeks; church provides supply	Upon approval	Upon approval
Pianist	Service outside Sunday and Wednesday by arrangement...	2 weeks; church provides supply	Upon approval	Upon approval
Non-Ministry staff	Not applicable	None	Not applicable	Upon approval