

# Constitution Of the Partnership Church of Texarkana, Texas

*Revision 5 Ratified 3-14-07*

## PREAMBLE

To the end that this body may be governed in an orderly manner consistent with the teachings of the New Testament as exemplified by Jesus Christ, our Lord and Savior, we do declare and establish this Constitution. This Constitution and its By-Laws shall constitute the rules, regulations, and procedures for the operation of this Church; to become effective as of the date of adoption by this Church.

### I. NAME

This body is known as Partnership Church of Texarkana, Texas. It is a duly incorporated entity under the laws of the State of Texas; its house of Worship and principle place of business is located at (**Amended 8-15-01**) – FM 2148, and its mailing address is P.O.Box 6603, Texarkana, TX., 75505.

### II. PURPOSE

This Church's purpose shall be to Preach & Teach the Gospel of Jesus Christ & to instruct others in spreading this Gospel; to conduct Worship services; to administer the ordinances of the New Testament; to improve the spiritual life of its Partners through Christian education; to advance the cause of missions at home and abroad.

### III. POLICY

The government of this Church is vested in the Lord God Almighty. It shall be subject to the control of no other religious body. In practice, the government shall be congregational in form.

### IV. DOCTRINE

This Church receives the Holy Scripture as its sole authority in matters of faith and practice. Those teachings, as interpreted for our individual needs are outlined in the following statement of faith. The purpose of this statement is not to supersede Biblical teaching, but rather to define areas of local concern.

**V. STATEMENT OF FAITH**

We believe in God the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. We believe the Holy Bible to be the inspired Word of God. We believe God created the earth, the heavens and all things therein. We believe God created man to be his companion and to share in the glory of creation. We believe that man first sinned against God in the Garden of Eden, fell out of communion with God, was, is, and continues to be without hope of salvation except for the divine intercession of God. We believe in the virgin birth, death & resurrection of Jesus Christ, that He lives today, will return to gather the redeemed, and sits at the right hand of God the Father Almighty to intercede for all believers. We believe God promised us His salvation as revealed in the New Testament Scripture of John 3:16: That whosoever believes in Christ shall not perish, but shall have everlasting life. We believe in baptism as an act of obedience.

COPY

# **BY-LAWS of PARTNERSHIP CHURCH of TEXARKANA, TEXAS**

## **ARTICLE I MEMBERSHIP / PARTNERSHIP**

### **Section 1. Qualifications**

Persons who declare they have accepted Jesus Christ as their personal Lord, according to New Testament teachings and committing to a Partnership in God's Ministry, shall be welcomed into the fellowship of this Church.

### **Section 2. Admission**

- A. By Profession of faith in our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ
- B. By Statement of faith in our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ

### **Section 3. Termination of Partnership (Amended 10-16-05)**

- A. Partners joining with another New Testament Church shall be removed from the rolls.
- B. Partners request to be removed from the rolls.
- C. Death
- D. An inactive member is considered a person that has not participated in a regular worship service for a period of six months. This member shall be eliminated from the Church roll after having been contacted by a deacon and it is found that there is no credible reason for the member to remain inactive. The assigned deacon will notify the congregation after the six-month period has lapsed and contact has been made, in a regular business meeting. The Church Secretary will record the notification and reason for removal.

## **ARTICLE II CHARACTER**

### **Section 1. Duties of Partners**

Partners, thirteen (13) years of age or older, may act & vote in the transactions of the Church during Business Meetings. Absentee voting is not allowed. Committee meetings shall be open; financial records, excluding individual contribution records, shall be obtainable by any member for legitimate reasons.

## **ARTICLE III MEETINGS**

### **Section 1. Worship**

- A. Public Worship services shall be held each Sunday, under the direction of the Pastor.
- B. The Lord's Supper shall be observed at special times as deemed appropriate.
- C. Other Worship services and meetings may be scheduled by the Pastor and/or by the Church.

## **ARTICLE IV BUSINESS**

### **Section 1. Parliamentary Practices**

Except as otherwise specifically provided in this Constitution and By-Laws, all questions of order and procedure with respect to any meeting or action of this Church, its boards or any committee shall be determined in accordance with Robert's Rules of Order current edition.

### **Section 2. Business Meetings**

- A. Regular congregational business meetings shall be held on Wednesday night following the second Sunday of each month.
- B. A member of the congregation or Pastor may call special and emergency congregational meetings, at any time.

### **Section 3. Budget and Finance (Added section 3 A-D, 8-15-01) (Amended 10-16-05)(Amended 3-14-07)**

- A. Each year the group of Elders will prepare a budget to submit before the congregation, for their approval. Each elder will prepare the budget for his area of responsibility.
- B. The church secretary/treasurer and or elder over administration will provide the elders preparing the budget, with the necessary information concerning the past year expenses and income if available, to aid in budget preparation.
- C. The budget will be presented to the congregation in a regular or called business meeting for their approval in the month of December. The budget must be made available at least two weeks prior to being voted on.

- D. It should be understood by all leadership and members of this congregation that budgeted expenditures that receive congregational approval does not mean that funds are available at all times for all approved expenses. Every effort shall be made by each member to communicate upcoming financial needs. If possible, these needs shall be made known and discussed during monthly Elder meetings to ascertain the overall impact to the general fund of upcoming expenses.

Amended (3-14-07)

- E. All non-budgeted expenses will require congregational approval, prior to expenses being incurred. This may be done at a regular or called meeting. In an effort to maintain privacy of giving, this does not apply to benevolence funds that have been donated and directed for in-house benevolence.

**(Added Sec. 4 A-D, 8-15-01) (Amended 10-16-05) (Amended 3-14-07)**

**Section 4.     *Expenditures of Monies***

Each year and updated as often as necessary, each Elder will present a list of persons who are prior approved by them for expending funds in their particular ministry area. The treasurer will use this list to make distribution of funds as required. It will be the responsibility of the elder to maintain control of spending in their particular area of responsibility.

In every case, prior to the expenditure of funds the elder responsible will provide the treasurer with the expense account name or number in which the funds are to be drawn from. This can be done in writing or electronically.

In all cases, the person spending any funds will be responsible for producing a receipt.

- A. The treasurer may pay bills as required.
- B. In an effort to aid the position of the treasurer, and to make operations more efficiently, electronic fund transfers may be setup/made at the discretion of the treasure for any expenditure.

## ARTICLE V QUORUM

### Section 1. *Congregational / Business meetings*

A quorum shall be considered to be those present at regular, special, & emergency meetings.

## ARTICLE VI BOARDS

### Section 1. *Trustees (Amended 8-15-01)*

The Church Trustees shall be twenty-one (21) years of age, elected by the congregation, & consist of four (4) Partners. They shall serve on a rotating basis of three, two and one years.

Should a replacement not be available, the trustee may remain for another term without a lapse in service. Election of trustees will be in October and they will take office in January of the following year.

- A. The Trustees shall direct the legal and financial obligations of the Church.

**Section 2. Elders & Deacons (Amended 8-15-01) (Amended 9-25-02)  
(Amended 10-16-05)**

**THE SELECTION OF ELDERS  
(Amended 10-16-05)**

In an effort to be completely obedient to the teaching of the Scripture and believing that the Bible is the sole authority when it comes to both principle and practice in any true New Testament church, the following guidelines will be used in selecting those who will fill the office of elder in Partnership Church of Texarkana.

**SCRIPTURAL BASIS:**

The following guidelines find their basis in Acts 14 & 20, Titus 1, and I Timothy 3.

**BIBLICAL QUALIFICATIONS:**

The moral and spiritual qualifications for an elder are listed in First Timothy 3:1-11. The following qualifications are not meant to replace these, but simply clarify them.

1. Elders must feel a personal call to the office of an elder.
2. Elders must be gifted by the Spirit with the gift of “leadership”.
3. The office of elder is gender specific, as the words used to describe the office in the original language are always masculine and there is no biblical evidence of a female elder in the New Testament church. Thus elders must be men.

Having met the Biblical qualifications it will be required that a man also meet certain other qualifications before becoming and Elder as follows.

- A. A man must be a member of Partnership Church and having been a member for a minimum of two years.
- B. A man must be an active member in at least one of the ministry areas of Partnership Church.
- C. A man must be a regular attendee of the monthly business meetings of Partnership Church.

## **DUTIES:**

A study of the New Testament will show that the office of elder is the position whereby the vision of ministry is made a reality. Those who hold this office are responsible for managing of the ministry of the local church. Under the direction of the pastor, elders are to work to maintain the flow and the integrity of the church. With this in mind, the duties of the elders of Partnership Church of Texarkana include, but are not limited to...

1. Being personally involved in every aspect of the ministry of the church. This includes faithful attendance to any and all church worship services, faithful financial support of the ministries of the church, and a willingness to sacrificially lead the congregation into the ministry given it by the Lord.
2. Being responsible for the assigned area of ministry he is given. This assignment will be made by the pastor and will be carried out with all diligence by the elder. This does not mean the elder must do all the work involved but it does mean that he is responsible for the work being accomplished in an expedient and professional manner.

## **SELECTION PROCESS:**

1. First and foremost, a man must receive the calling of God to be an elder of Partnership Church of Texarkana.
2. The man must present himself, in written form, at the appropriate time, stating his belief as to being called to the office of an elder. These written statements will be given to the church secretary who will tally the names for the record and then hand the list to the pastor.
3. A personal conference will be set between each man and the pastor and during this time, a discussion as to qualifications and expectations will take place.
4. After the examination process is complete, the pastor will appoint those men whom he feels are qualified and best suited for the office of elder.
5. The list of appointees will then be brought before the church as a whole for approval.
6. After the church has accepted the list of appointees, an ordination service, led by the pastor, will be held to publicly set aside those accepted to the office of elder.

## **NUMBER OF ELDERS:**

There will be seven (7) elders at the present time in Partnership Church of Texarkana. This number may be expanded as the need arises by a recommendation of the Elders to the church at any regularly scheduled business meeting.

Elders shall serve on a rotation basis of three (3), two (2), and one (1) year terms. No lapse in service will be necessary before the church can return an elder who rotates off the active body back to active service.

## **SCHEDULE OF SELECTION PROCESS:**

1. The selection process for elders shall begin on the night of the regularly scheduled business meeting in October each year. At this time, the men who feel called of God to fill any existing vacancies in the active body of elders will present themselves in writing to the church secretary.
2. The examination process will then begin and the list of appointees will be presented to the church no later than the last Wednesday in October each year, at which time the church will vote to accept the appointees.
3. An ordination service will then be scheduled at the earliest convenience, but no later than the end of December, so that all newly elected elders are ready to begin service on January 1 of the coming year.
4. All newly elected elders will begin working with the existing body of elders on the budget process as soon as the church accepts them.
5. Should a vacancy occur prior to the end of any term, that vacancy shall be filled using the above schedule as a model but proceeding with all haste and diligence. The person selected will then fulfill the remainder of the unexpired term.

## **SHOULD A PROBLEM OCCUR:**

In case a problem should occur in which an elected elder finds himself unable or unwilling to perform the expected duties of an elder of Partnership Church of Texarkana the following procedure shall be followed.

1. After having missed or neglected the duties of elder for a period of one month, excluding neglect for understandable reasons, the elder shall be contacted by the body of elders and the Pastor to ascertain the intentions of the elder in question. The standard of expectation and qualification used when the elder was appointed will be basis for this contact. The purpose of the contact will be reconciliation, seeking to reunite the elder with the call of God and the church upon his life.
2. Should the situation fail to correct itself after the initial contact, or should the elder wish to be removed from active service, appropriate action will be recommended by the body of elders to the congregation as a whole at the next regularly scheduled business meeting.
3. The process for filling an unexpired term will then be followed, as stated in the section entitled, "Schedule of Selection Process."

## **THE SELECTION OF DEACONS (Amended 10-16-05)**

In an effort to be completely obedient to the teaching of the Scripture and believing that the Bible is the sole authority when it comes to both principle and practice in any true New Testament church, the following guidelines will be used in selecting those persons who will fill the office of deacon in Partnership Church of Texarkana.

### **SCRIPTURAL BASIS:**

The following guidelines find their basis in Acts 6:1-6 and First Timothy 3:12-13.

### **BIBLICAL QUALIFICATIONS:**

The moral and spiritual qualifications for a deacon are listed in First Timothy 3:12-13. The following set of qualifications are not intended to replace these but rather to clarify them.

1. Deacons are to be of “honest report” = those who have a reputation for being trustworthy and faithful to the Lord and His church.
2. Deacons are to be “full of the Holy Ghost” = those who are controlled by the Spirit of God and exemplify that control with steadfast, Christlike character.
3. Deacons are to be “full of wisdom” = those who are able to see into situations and use the Word of God to provide solutions and answers.
4. According to the Bible, the office of deacon is not gender specific. Both men and women served in this position as evidenced in Romans 16:1, where Phoebe is referred to as a “deaconess”.
5. Deacons must be gifted by the Spirit with the gift of “help or service” in order to successfully perform the duties assigned them.

Having met the Biblical qualifications it will be required that a man also meet certain membership qualifications as follows.

- A. A person must be a member of Partnership Church and having been a member for a minimum of one year.

## **VI. DUTIES**

In Acts, the deacons were first selected to care for the fellowship and well-being of the church. Their responsibility was to care for the needs of the people making up the congregation, in order to free the apostles to be able to do their work. With this in mind, the duties of the deacons of Partnership Church of Texarkana include, but are not limited to...

1. Being involved in every aspect of the ministry of Partnership Church of Texarkana. This includes faithful attendance to any and all church worship services, faithful financial support of the ministries of the church, and a willingness to be of service to any and all the membership of the church.
2. Caring for the families assigned to them under the Deacon Family Ministry Plan. This includes visitation when those families are sick or in crises, recognizing and dealing with any prolonged absence from church services, and handling all disputes and disagreements so as to further the ministry of the church.
3. Work along side the pastor in maintaining a good family relationship between all members of the church.

### **SELECTION PROCESS:**

1. The congregation, as a whole, will nominate those whom they feel meet the qualifications for the office of a deacon. The church secretary will tally the list of nominations and that list will then be handed to the pastor for a personal conference with each nominee as to qualifications and expectations.
2. After the examination process is complete, the list of eligible and willing nominees will be presented to the church for a vote in order to fill the necessary vacancies.
3. After the church has selected those whom they desire to fill this office, an ordination service, led by the pastor, will be held to publicly set aside those selected to the office of deacon.

### **NUMBER OF DEACONS: (Amended 3-14-07)**

The number of deacons will be decided by the current body of deacons with input from the Pastor

Deacons shall serve on a rotation basis of three (3), two (2), and one (1) year terms. No lapse in service will be necessary before the church can return a deacon who rotates off the active body to active service.

## **SCHEDULE OF SELECTION PROCESS:**

1. The selection process for deacons shall begin on the night of the regularly scheduled business meeting in October each year. At this time the congregation will nominate those persons they feel should be elected to fill the vacancies in the active deacon body.
2. The list of eligible and willing nominees will be presented to the church at the regularly scheduled business meeting in November, at which time the church will elect those necessary to fill the vacancies.
3. An ordination service will then be scheduled at the earliest convenience, but no later than the end of December, so that all newly elected deacons are ready to begin service on January 1 of the coming year.
4. Should a vacancy occur prior to the end of any term, that vacancy shall be filled using the above schedule as a model but proceeding with all haste and diligence. The person selected will then fulfill the remainder of the unexpired term.

## **SHOULD A PROBLEM OCCUR:**

In case a problem should occur in which an elected deacon finds himself unable or unwilling to perform the expected duties of a deacon of Partnership Church of Texarkana the following procedure shall be followed.

1. After having missed or neglected the duties of deacon for a period of one month, excluding neglect caused by understandable reasons, the deacon shall be contacted by the body of deacons and the Pastor to ascertain the intentions of the deacon in question. The standard of expectation and qualification used when the deacon was selected will be the basis for this time of contact. The purpose of this first contact will be reconciliation, seeking to reunite the deacon with the call of God and the church upon his life.
2. Should the situation fail to correct itself after this initial contact, or should the deacon wish to be removed from active service, appropriate action will be recommended by the body of deacons to the congregation as a whole at the next regularly scheduled business meeting.
3. The process for filling an unexpired term will then be followed, as stated in the section entitled, "Schedule of Selection Process."

## ARTICLE VII

## OFFICERS

### **Section 1.**     *Pastor*

- A. The Pastor shall be chosen & called by the Church, by a seventy-five percent (75%) vote, whenever a vacancy in the office occurs. Salary and benefits are to be acted on as separate items at the same meeting.
- B. Dissolution can be accomplished by the Pastor's resignation or by a seventy-five percent (75%) vote in a congregational meeting.
- C. The Pastor shall receive two (2) weeks paid vacation and two (2) weeks seminar or revival meeting leave, each calendar year, with the Pastor responsible for the supply during the absence.
- D. In the absence of a Pastor, the congregation shall elect a temporary moderator.

### **Section 2.**     *Treasurer (Amended 2-11-04)*

- A. The Treasurer shall be elected annually by the Church and serve for a two (2) year term, January 1 of year one (1) to December 31 of year. The Treasurer shall observe the following:
  - 1. Oversee the count of all receivables by two (2) duly appointed Trustees, Elders, or Deacons
  - 2. Manage, record, balance, and report all receivables, purchases, payables, and other obligations of the Church to the congregation on a monthly basis (detailing disbursements, amounts paid, and items purchased/paid, total funds collected, and balances remaining in a manner consistent with accepted accounting practices)
  - 3. A complete audit of all books and records shall be made once per year. The Pastor, in connection with the Elder of Administration shall appoint auditors, and they shall be people well versed in accounting practices.

### **Section 3.**     **(Added 8-15-01) (Amended 2-11-04)**

- A. All officers will serve for the terms specified in these by-laws. Should a replacement not be available, the officer may remain for another term without a lapse in service.

**Section 4. Secretary / Clerk**

- A. The Secretary shall be elected annually by the Church and serve for one (1) year,  
January 1 through December 31.
  - 1. The Secretary shall keep accurate records of all business actions of the Church in the congregational meetings.
  - 2. The Secretary shall keep accurate partnership records.
  - 3. The Secretary shall file all annual reports and post all notices.

**ARTICLE VIII YEARS**

**Section 1. Church Year / Fiscal Year**

- A. The Church and Fiscal year shall run concurrently from January 1 through December 31.

**ARTICLE IX COMMITTEES**

**Section 1. Policy**

- A. Committees shall operate on the Church year basis as mandated by the congregation.
- B. The Pastor is an Ex-officio member of each committee and should be informed of all meeting times, places and purposes.
- C. Committees will act in consultation with each member and gain approval of the congregation prior to taking any action.

**ARTICLE X            RATIFICATION**

The provisions of this Constitution and By-Laws shall become effective on the date of approval and then become the standard of operations superseding all other rules and regulations. Upon acceptance, by a seventy-five percent (75%) majority of the Church, the document will be signed and dated by all Church Trustees.

**ARTICLE XI            AMENDMENTS**

This Constitution and By-Laws may be amended at any regularly scheduled congregational meeting. The proposed amendments must be presented, in writing, at one congregational meeting and voted upon at the next. These amendments, to be considered as adopted must receive seventy-five percent (75%) acceptance.

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Trustee

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