



January 4, 2024

Dear ALBC family,

After several months of diligent work, the Bylaws Committee presents a completely revised and overhauled Constitution and Bylaws for your approval. You may ask, “Why a new one?” Because the last revision was completed in 1997—more than 25 years ago—and our church and culture have changed drastically. First, our church does not function as it did in 1997 nor is it structured the same. Thus, we needed to update our legal documents to reflect who we are and what we do. Second, our culture is *very* different. As a result, we needed to add language to add greater clarity to our beliefs to provide better protection from government encroachment and/or legal attacks. As one of the committee members stated, “We are updating this document not just for us...but for our children and grandchildren.”

Who was involved in writing the new Constitution and Bylaws?

The Bylaws Committee is composed of 7 people. The laypeople include Larry Knight (chairman of deacons), Ted Schwitzgebel (deacon), Heather Bobbey, and Della Steele. The pastors include Jeff Isenhour (co-pastor), Andrew Clark (co-pastor), and Chris Dickerson (teaching pastor & committee chairman).

What was the process?

The Bylaws Committee was formed in the summer of 2022. After reviewing the 1997 version, it was clear that a complete rewrite was necessary. We collected documents from other churches to use as a guide. Along the way, we also tapped into a resource known as the Alliance Defending Freedom (<https://adflegal.org>) to clarify legal aspects of the document concerning our Christian values. Then at the conclusion, ADF reviewed the document once more and made additional recommendations. After more than a year of work, the Bylaws Committee is ready to recommend the newest version to the church.

What happens next?

According to our current legal documents, the church must gather in a formal business meeting with at least 100 active members in attendance to act on the adoption of the proposed Constitution and Bylaws. At that meeting, a vote of at least two-thirds (2/3) of members must affirm the new documents. *Thus, a called business meeting is scheduled for **Sunday, February 25, 2024, at 6:00 p.m.*** This time will include worship, celebration, a focus on new ministries, as well as the formal church business meeting. We will have a time of discussion before moving to approve the proposed Constitution and Bylaws.

Listening Sessions

We realize rewriting the Constitution and Bylaws is a significant event in the life of a church. While the Committee believes the new document reflects the essence of who we *have been*, who we *are*, and who we *hope to be*, we want to help answer any questions you may have. Therefore, members of the Bylaw Committee will be available for 6 listening sessions in February to help answer your questions. These sessions will be held in the *Commons Room* before each service as well as an evening session.

Sunday, February 4	9:00-9:30 a.m.	10:30-11:00 a.m.	4:00-5:00 p.m.
Sunday, February 18	9:00-9:30 a.m.	10:30-11:00 a.m.	4:00-5:00 p.m.

Thank you for prayerfully reading and considering the Bylaws Committee’s recommendation concerning updating our Constitution and Bylaws. If you have questions, please see any of the Bylaws Committee.

Sincerely,

Chris Dickerson, Bylaws Committee chairman



Constitution and Bylaws 2024

Proposed for Update: February 25, 2024

The Constitution and Bylaws of Arran Lake Baptist Church

PREFACE

There are many good reasons that a New Testament church should have a Covenant, Confession of Faith, Constitution, and Bylaws. Together they can greatly assist us in efforts to biblically organize and conduct the ministries entrusted to us by Jesus Christ, the Head of the Church. However, we readily acknowledge that these documents, despite their usefulness and precision, will avail nothing apart from the presence and power of the Holy Spirit of God in a church and in accordance with the inerrant and infallible Word of God. With this keen awareness of our absolute dependence upon our great God, we set forth these articles.

PREAMBLE

For the purpose of preserving and making secure the principles of our faith and to the end that this body is governed in an orderly manner, consistent with the accepted tenets of the churches affiliated with the Baptist State Convention of North Carolina and the Southern Baptist Convention and for the purposes of preserving the liberties inherent to each individual member of the church and to set forth the relationship of this body to other bodies of the same faith, we do declare and establish this constitution and bylaws.

CONSTITUTION

ARTICLE I: NAME, LOCATION, AND PURPOSE

A. NAME

This body of believers shall be known as: Arran Lake Baptist Church or B3 Church.

B. LOCATION

Arran Lake Baptist Church is located in the County of Cumberland, North Carolina at 1130 Bingham Drive, Fayetteville, North Carolina 28304.

C. PURPOSE

1. The foundation of this church is the Lord Jesus Christ (1 Cor. 3:11), and its code of guidance in all its affairs is the Bible. This church does here affirm its faith that the Holy Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments are the Word of Almighty God (Mark 13:31).
2. The object of this church shall be to worship God in community according to the teaching of His Word, to practice the precepts and examples of the Church of our Lord Jesus Christ as set forth in the New Testament, to sustain its ordinances and doctrines, and to preach and propagate among all peoples the Gospel of Salvation which is by personal faith on Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord.
3. The ministry of this church is driven by the vision of God's glory as revealed in Jesus Christ. Our priorities are threefold: worship, education, and evangelism. We aim to worship in faith and truth (John 4:23), strengthen the vision through nurture and education (1 Cor. 14:26; 2 Pet. 3:18), and fulfill the Great Commission by making disciples through evangelism, missions, and loving deeds (Matt. 5:16; 28:18-20; 1 Pet. 2:9; 3:15).

ARTICLE II: DEFINITION

This church is a free autonomous, independent body, congregational in nature with authority to determine for itself in the manner set forth in this constitution and/or bylaws.

ARTICLE III: MODE OF GOVERNMENT

The government of this church shall be congregational in nature and shall be vested in the membership.

The fiscal year shall be from January 1 through December 31 of each year.

ARTICLE IV: CONFESSIONS OF FAITH AND COVENANT

The Confession of Faith does not exhaust the extent of our faith. The Bible itself is the sole and final source of all that we believe. We do believe, however, that this Confession of Faith accurately represents the teaching of the Bible and, therefore, is binding upon all members.

All literature used in the church shall be in complete agreement with this Confession of Faith, as well as The Baptist Faith and Message 2000, and The Chicago Statement on Biblical Inerrancy.

A. CONFESSIONS OF FAITH

1. **The Scripture**

We believe that the Bible is the Word of God, fully inspired and without error in the original manuscripts, written under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, and that it has supreme authority in all matters of faith, life, and godliness (Mark 13:31; John 8:31, 32; 20:31; Acts 20:32; 1 Tim. 3:16; 2 Pet. 1:3, 20, 21).

2. **God**

We believe there is one true God, eternally existing in three Persons: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, each of whom possesses equally all the attributes of Deity and characteristics of personality. He is the Creator and Sustainer of all things (Gen. 1:1; Ps. 18:35; 90:2; Matt. 28:19; 2 Cor. 13:14).

3. **The Person and Work of Christ**

We believe in Jesus Christ, God's only begotten Son, conceived by the Holy Spirit. We believe in His virgin birth, sinless life, miracles, and teachings. We believe in His substitutionary atoning death, bodily resurrection, ascension into heaven, perpetual intercession for His people, and personal visible return to earth (Matt. 1:18-25; 20:28, Luke 1:26-38; John 1:1; 20:28, 30-31; Acts 1:11; Rom. 5:6-8; 6:9-10; 9:5; 8:32; 2 Cor. 5:21; Eph. 1:4; 1 Tim. 3:16; Heb. 7:25; 9:28; 1 Pet. 2:21-23).

4. **The Ministry of the Holy Spirit**

We believe the Holy Spirit has come into the world to reveal and glorify Christ and apply the saving work of Christ to people. He convicts sinners of their need for Christ, baptizes them into the Body of Christ, imparts new life to them, imparts spiritual gifts to them, indwells them, and seals them until the day of redemption.

Believers are called to live in the power of the indwelling Spirit and in so doing, their faith will be manifested in works pleasing to God (Matt. 3:11; Mark 1:8; John 16:5-14; Acts 1:8; Gal. 5:22; Eph. 1:13; 5:8-21; 1 Thess. 1:5; 1 Cor. 3:16; 12:1-7, 13; 2 Cor. 1:22; 3:6).

5. **Salvation**

We believe salvation is the gift of eternal life received only through a personal trust in Jesus Christ, who was God's substitute for sin. This gift is given by the unmerited favor of God's grace without regard to any human works or goodness. All those who believe in Jesus are eternally secure in Him (John 3:16; 10:28-30; 2 Cor. 5:21; Eph. 2:8-9; 1 Pet. 1:3-5).

6. **Man**

We believe men and women were created in the image of God but fell into sin through disobedience to a divine command bringing all mankind under

condemnation. Human nature is totally corrupt and unable to please God for a right standing before Him (Gen. 1:27; Gen. 3; Isa 53:6; Rom. 3:9-18, 23; 5:12).

7. The Church

We believe in the universal church; a living spiritual body of which Christ is the head and all regenerated persons are members. We believe in the local church, consisting of a company of believers in Jesus Christ, baptized on a credible profession of faith, and associated for worship, work, and fellowship. We believe God has laid upon the members of the church the primary task of making disciples by proclaiming the gospel of Jesus Christ to a lost world (Acts 1:8; 2:42; Eph. 2:19-22; 5:19-21; Heb. 10:23-25).

8. Satan

We believe in the reality of Satan, a created being, who fell through pride. As the god of this world, he corrupts the minds of humanity with lies. His judgment will be completely executed at the revelation of Jesus Christ, and he will ultimately be cast into the lake of fire (Matt. 13:19; John 8:44; 12:31; 2 Cor. 4:4; Eph. 2:2; Rev. 20:10).

9. Biblical Marriage

We believe the term “marriage” has only one meaning: the uniting of one man and one woman in a single, exclusive union, as delineated in Scripture (Gen. 2:18-25). We believe that marriage between one man and one woman, for life, uniquely reflects Christ’s relationship with His Church (Eph. 5:21-33). We believe that God intends sexual intimacy to occur only between a man and a woman who are married to each other (1 Cor. 6:18; 7:2-5; Heb. 13:4). We believe that God has commanded that no intimate sexual activity be engaged in outside of a marriage between a man and a woman. Accordingly, the church can only recognize or participate in marriages that are consistent with our religious beliefs.

10. Civil Government

We believe God has ordained and created all authority consisting of three basic institutions: the home, the church, and the state. Every person is subject to these authorities, but all (including the authorities themselves) are answerable to God and governed by His Word. God has given each institution specific biblical responsibilities and balanced those responsibilities with the understanding that no institution has the right to infringe upon the other. The home, the church, and the state are equal and sovereign in their respective biblically assigned spheres of responsibility under God. When any of these authorities contradict the Scriptures, the church must obey Scripture rather than man’s authority (Acts 5:29; Rom. 13:1-7; Eph. 5:22-24; Heb. 13:17; 1 Pet. 2:13-14).

11. The Lord’s Return

We believe in the imminent second coming of Christ for His Church, the eternal state of punishment for the unsaved called hell, and the eternal state of blessing for the saved called heaven (John 2:25; 3:16; Acts 1:9-11; Rom. 6:23; Phil. 3:20; 1 Thess. 4:13-18; Rev. 20:15).

B. COVENANT

Membership in this church is based on a covenant relationship with God and fellow believers, wherein members commit to supporting and upholding the principles and mission of the church as outlined in this Constitution.

ARTICLE V: PRACTICES OF FAITH

A. STATEMENT ON HUMAN SEXUALITY, MARRIAGE, AND FAMILY

While the Bible is our final authority on human interactions and sin, we believe every person must be afforded compassion, love, kindness, respect, and dignity. Hateful and harassing behavior or attitudes directed toward any individual are to be repudiated and are not in accord with Scripture or the doctrines of this church. Genuine love manifests itself by graciously urging people to acknowledge and repent of their sins and to receive the redemption and restoration that God offers to all who confess and forsake their sin, seeking His mercy and forgiveness through Jesus Christ (Prov. 28:13; Mark 12:28-31; Luke 6:31; Acts 3:19-21; Rom. 10:9-10; 12:9; 1 Cor. 6:9-11).

1. **Human Sexuality**

We believe each human being is created in the image of God as either male or female, sex that is encoded genetically and manifested physiologically prior to birth. These two distinct, complementary sexes together reflect the image and nature of God. Rejection of one's biological sex is a rejection of the image of God within that person. Any effort to violate the creative order of God by attempting to modify or transform human sexuality is sin (Gen. 1:26-27; 2:18, 24-25).

2. **Marriage and Sex**

We believe God has commanded that no intimate sexual activity be engaged in outside of marriage between a man and a woman. Sexual immorality is sinful and an offense to God. Persons engaged in such sin should be called to turn from their sin and seek forgiveness through repentance and faith in Christ. Any member that engages in an unrepentant expression of marriage or sexuality that is contrary to the Bible's teaching shall be subject to church discipline (Lev. 18:22-23; Matt. 15:18-20; Rom. 1:26-27; 1 Cor. 6:9-10,18; 7:2-5; Gal. 5:19-21; Col. 3:5-6; 1 Tim. 1:10; Heb. 13:4).

3. **Divorce and Remarriage**

We believe God has ordained marriage and defined it as the covenant relationship between a man, a woman, and Himself. Marriage was designed by God as an arena in which His covenantal love—ultimately demonstrated in Christ's sacrificial love for the church—might be put on visible display. Therefore, God hates divorce and intends for marriage to last until the death of one's spouse (Gen. 1:27-28; Prov. 2:17; Mal. 2:11-17; Matt. 19:4-9; Rom. 7:1-3; Eph. 5:22-33).

Sin often harms God's good design for marriage and causes difficulty within the relationship. Because of God's great mercy shown to believers, God's command to

love one another, and the model of God Himself freely loving and forgiving His adulteress bride, reconciliation and forgiveness should always be pursued (Prov. 12:17; Hos. 3:1; 11:8-9; 14:4; Matt. 5:43-44; 18:23-35; Eph. 4:32-5:2).

Scripture provides limited grounds for divorce: abandonment and adultery. In the case of abandonment by an unbelieving spouse, the believing spouse is permitted to remarry. Other sufficient grounds may warrant separation. These include but are not limited to, physical, verbal, mental, and sexual abuse. Divorce and remarriage for any other reason are equivalent to committing adultery (Matt. 5:32; 19:9; 1 Cor. 7:12-16).

4. Gender Roles and Family Relationships

We believe men and women possess equal value and dignity as image bearers of God and are equal partners in the grace of life. Nevertheless, they possess distinct roles and functions in the home and the church. Both husband and wife should first submit to the Lord (Gen. 1:27; Eph. 5:21; 1 Pet. 3:7).

The husband is to be the spiritual leader of the home and the head of his wife. As the head, he is to lead through sacrificial love and service to his wife and his home. He bears the ultimate responsibility and accountability before God for the spiritual and physical health, well-being, and direction of the home (Matt. 20:25; John 13:12-16; 1 Cor. 11:3; Eph. 5:23, 25; Col. 3:19).

The wife is to submit herself to the headship of her husband just as the church submits to Christ. The role of a wife is to lovingly support and help her husband fulfill his role as head of the home. She is to manage and care for the daily affairs and needs of the home (Gen. 2:18-20; Prov. 31:10-27; Eph. 5:24; Col. 3:18; 1 Tim. 2:12-15; 5:4; Titus 2:4-5; 1 Pet. 3:1-7).

Both father and mother bear the responsibility for the spiritual instruction of their children with the goal they would be made “wise for salvation through faith in Christ,” and fulfill their role as parents to disciple them to become mature followers of Jesus (Deut. 6:4-9; Prov. 1:8; 4:1-2, 10-11; 6:20; 10:1; 13:24; 22:15; 23:13-14; Eph. 6:4; 2 Tim. 3:15).

B. BIBLICAL GUIDING PRINCIPLES FOR CHURCH POLICIES

The operational policies of the church, including employment, use of church facilities, weddings & funerals, etc. must be consistent with the religious beliefs, mission, and witness of the church.

C. THE FINAL AUTHORITY OF THE PRACTICES OF OUR FAITH

Arran Lake Baptist Church believes the Bible is the inspired and infallible Word of God that speaks with the ultimate final authority concerning truth, morality, and the proper conduct of mankind. It is the sole and final source of all that we believe.

The Lead Pastor shall decide the interpretation of the Scriptures to establish the practices and policies of Arran Lake Baptist Church.

ARTICLE VI: ADOPTION AND AMENDMENTS

A. ADOPTION

This Constitution shall be considered adopted and immediately effective when a properly called business gathering is attended by at least 100 members, of which two-thirds ($\frac{2}{3}$) shall vote in favor of it. However, it is required that the proposed Constitution must be presented to the church at least thirty (30) days prior to the scheduled vote.

B. AMENDMENTS

Proposed amendments to the Constitution can be submitted by church members to the Bylaws Committee. Following careful deliberation by the Constitution and Bylaws Committee, these amendments may be introduced during a specially convened Family Meeting. Each proposed amendment should be communicated to the membership in written form, at a minimum of thirty (30) days prior to the meeting. For an amendment to the Constitution to be approved, it must receive a vote of at least a two-thirds ($\frac{2}{3}$) majority from a quorum of 100 church members who are physically present and participating in the vote, and not by proxy.

C. VERSIONS

Adopted: _____ [insert date once adopted]
Amended: _____

D. VALIDATION

The adoption by the church of this Constitution shall repeal all previously adopted rules in conflict here with, provided however, that no actions taken by the church prior to this date shall be invalidated by the adoption of this Constitution.

BYLAWS

ARTICLE I: MEMBERSHIP

A. NATURE OF MEMBERSHIP

Recognizing that believers worldwide are members of the universal church, God's Word affirms that the Gospel is shared through membership within a local, individual church (Eph. 3:10). Understanding membership is a formal relationship between an individual and a local church as defined in the New Testament and modeled by the early church, the church takes specific responsibility for each member, and likewise, each member takes responsibility for the church. Membership defines who belongs to Arran Lake and identifies for whom the pastors will give an account (Heb. 13:17).

B. QUALIFICATIONS FOR MEMBERSHIP

The membership of this church shall consist of persons who, based upon the recommendation of the pastors, give testimony of regeneration, have been baptized by immersion, wholeheartedly believe the Scriptures, are willing to submit to the church's doctrinal positions as described in our Confession and Practices of Faith, agree to the practices of church discipline, and desire to fulfill the responsibilities of church membership.

C. RESPONSIBILITIES & PRIVILEGES OF MEMBERSHIP

In keeping with the responsibilities outlined in the church covenant, church members are called by Christ to pursue a life of personal holiness and Christian love, mutually care for and edify other members, maintain the purity and unity of the church, regularly attend church services and meetings, submit themselves to the pastors of the church, and actively support the church through practical service, giving, prayer, and personal discipleship.

Additionally, church members are privileged to receive love and care from the congregation and pastoral care from the church leadership. Active members will also vote on pastor recommendations in the following matters: Lead Pastor and deacons; new members; the annual budget of the church; acquisition or disposal of real property and associated indebtedness; disposition of all or substantially all of the church's assets; amendments to the Constitution and Bylaws; merger or dissolution of the church; situations of church discipline; and any other major event or decision as designated by the pastors.

Upon receiving reasonable notice, a church member is entitled to review or obtain copies of the minutes from church meetings and/or the financial statements of the church. Any expenses associated with reproducing these documents may be charged to the member making the request. However, it's important to note that members are not permitted, under any circumstances, to access records related to individual contributions to the

church or to personal benevolence assistance received by any individual.

D. MEMBERSHIP PROCESS

Membership can be obtained:

1. **By salvation with baptism:** A new convert who gives testimony of regeneration and is baptized by immersion.
2. **By baptism:** A person who has professed faith in Christ but has not yet been baptized by immersion can become a member upon baptism.
3. **By transfer of letter:** A member in good standing of another Baptist church can join by transferring their membership from the other church.
4. **By statement of faith:** A believer who has been baptized by immersion but is not a member of another Baptist church.

The process for becoming a member includes the following steps:

1. Make a declaration of intent to join the church,
2. Attend the membership information class, and
3. Complete the membership application and sign the church covenant.

E. TRANSFER OF MEMBERSHIP

Letters of transfer out may be granted to members in good standing who desire to transfer to churches of like faith and order. When letters are granted, membership in this church shall cease.

F. TERMINATION OF MEMBERSHIP

The membership roll will be maintained by the church staff under the leadership of the Lead Pastor. Members shall be removed from the church roll for the following reasons:

1. Death.
2. Lapse of contact with the church for one year, regardless of the membership category except in cases of military service or illness either by the member or a family member for whom they are caregivers.
3. By personal request of the member who is not under the corrective discipline of the church.
4. Transfer of membership to another church of like faith and order under the following conditions:
 - a. The church member is in good standing and is not under the corrective discipline of the church (See Bylaws Section V: Discipline of Church Members).
 - b. The church member is not seeking a letter to transfer to a church which, based upon the judgment of the Pastoral Team, is not loyal to the faith that was once “delivered to the saints” (Jude 3).
5. Notification the member has joined another church of different faith and order.
6. Church discipline (See Bylaws Section VI. G).

G. DISCIPLINE AND RESTORATION OF MEMBERSHIP

1. Purpose

The goal of all discipline is to restore a holy walk under the lordship of Jesus Christ and obedience to His Word. The purpose of any disciplinary action is for the repentance and restoration of the offending member and to maintain the purity of the church.

2. Procedure

Every disciple should submit to Jesus Christ and His Word. Members of the church are expected to conduct their lives in accordance with biblical standards as they grow to become more like Christ. When a member continually violates the direct commands of Scripture without repentance, he shall be dealt with according to the principles of discipline and restoration found in such passages as Matt. 7:1-5; 18:15-17; 1 Cor. 5:1-13 Gal. 6:2; and 2 Thess. 3:6-15.

Members in the early churches were subject to discipline for reasons such as:

- a. Unwillingness to become reconciled to an offended believer (Matt. 18:15-17).
- b. Divisiveness in the church (Rom. 16:17-18; Titus 3:1-10).
- c. Sexual immorality, habitual covetousness, idolatry, reviling, drunkenness, or swindling (1 Cor. 5:1-13).
- d. Continually unrepentant sinful conduct (Gal. 6:1; 1 John 1:6-7).

Mutual submission to one another in the reverence of Christ is part of that discipline. Along with mutual submission, God has called the church to submission and obedience to the Pastoral Team He has placed over His church (Eph. 5:21; 1 Pet. 5:5; Heb. 13:17).

When a member violates commands or prohibitions of Scripture in his life or teaching in such a way that his life and/or erroneous teaching continues to hinder the unity or peace of the church or its testimony, the Pastoral Team and this church body will take every reasonable measure to resolve the problem in accord with Matthew 18.

This will include the following four steps:

1. Once the offended member has examined their own heart and taken it to the Lord, and once the offending member has looked at what might be behind his erring, he is then to "go and reprove him in private" (literally "between you and him alone," Matt. 18:15). Therefore, the offending member should be approached privately, first.

Hopefully, this step is all that will be required. Jesus says, "If he listens to you, you have won your brother." But if he is unrepentant, the offended member must move to step two.

2. Jesus says, "But if he does not listen to you, take one or two more with you, that by the mouth of two or three witnesses, every fact may be

confirmed” (Matt. 18:16). Therefore, if the offending member does not listen to the one, then one or two more witnesses should approach the offending member.

Logically, it is not a requirement that they be witnesses to the sin, but rather, they are there to bear witness to the fact of this member’s unwillingness to repent. The focus of discipline is no longer the symptom (immorality, drunkenness, stealing, etc.), but now the focus shifts to the root sin (rebellion, a lack of repentance).

3. Jesus clarifies, “And if he refuses to listen to them [the two or three witnesses], tell it to the church” (Matt. 18:17). Therefore, the sinning believer's name is shared with the congregation by a representative of the Pastoral Team at a family meeting. Enough details are shared to communicate the seriousness of the situation. If the efforts of the entire church are unable to secure the brother's repentance within an appointed time, then we shall move to the fourth and final step.

The purpose of this step is to enlist the prayer of the body as well as their involvement, as the Lord leads, in calling the individual to repentance.

4. Jesus tells us, “And if he refuses to listen even to the church, let him be to you as a Gentile and a tax-gatherer” (Matt. 18:17). Therefore, if there is no repentance, then, in a similar manner to step three, the sinning believer's name is shared with the congregation by a representative of the Pastoral Team. The heart of the action taken in step four (2 Thess. 3:6, 14, 15) will be communicated to the congregation at a family meeting. After the family meeting, the member's name will be removed from the church roll. This entire process should be well documented and kept with all church records.

3. Restoration of the Member

The right to exclude a sinning member or the withdrawal of fellowship from the member is in harmony with the teaching of the Word of God and is balanced by the call to restore such a person who has given satisfactory evidence of repentance (2 Cor. 2:6-8). When a person gives such evidence and his lifestyle is judged to be in accordance with the membership covenant, the Pastoral Team shall recommend to this church that the person be restored to full fellowship.

ARTICLE II: CHURCH OFFICERS

All who serve as officers of ALBC shall be active members of this church.

A. ELDERS

1. General Description

The New Testament teaches that the church is to be led by a plurality of qualified,

godly men. Elders shall oversee, lead, shepherd, and care for the spiritual condition of the church, as set forth in Scripture (1 Tim. 5:17; Titus 1:9; 1 Pet. 5:1-2). At ALBC, our Elders are also identified by the term Pastor.

2. Qualification

According to Scripture, the qualifications of an elder include being a man above reproach, the husband of one wife, self-controlled, sensible, respectable, hospitable, able to teach, not an excessive drinker, not a bully but gentle, not quarrelsome, not greedy, who manages his own household competently, whose children are under control with all dignity, loving what is good, sensible, righteous, holy, holding to the faithful message as taught, and able to encourage with sound teaching and to refute those who contradict it (1 Tim. 3:2-7; Tit. 1:6-9).

- i. “Man” – An elder must be an ordained male to serve as an elder or minister at ALBC.
- ii. “Husband of one wife” – This phrase requires clarification in two areas. First, an elder does not have to be married with children to be qualified as an elder (1 Cor. 7:8-9, 32-35). Second, an elder who is divorced and/or remarried will not be precluded from the office of elder. Depending on the situation, the focus of this phrase is his current sexual and marital faithfulness to his current wife (1 Tim. 3:2; Titus 1:6).
- iii. “Excessive drinker” – While a case for complete abstinence from alcohol has been debated by biblical scholars, ALBC has chosen only to allow men who completely abstain from all forms of alcohol to be qualified for the office of elder. We believe this honors the importance of being blameless, above reproach, and not offending our weaker brother (Lev. 8:2; 1 Tim. 3:2; Titus 1:6; 1 Cor. 8:12).

3. Responsibilities

The Elders/Pastors are responsible for leading ALBC to function as a Bible-believing church. The Elders will lead the congregation and its organizations to perform their tasks. Responsibilities include:

- a. Teaching the doctrine of the faith once delivered to the saints.
- b. Leading the church in the accomplishment of its mission.
- c. Equipping the saints for the work of the ministry.
- d. Proclaiming the gospel to believers and unbelievers.
- e. Overseeing the care of church members and other persons in the community as needs arise.
- f. Interpreting and undergirding the work of the church and the denomination.
- g. Performing other duties that usually pertain to that office.
(Eph. 4:11-13; 1 Tim. 3:2; Titus 1:9; 1 Pet. 5:1-3; Jude 3)

4. Selection

- a. Whenever a vacancy occurs, the Lead Pastor shall be called by the church to serve until the relationship is dissolved at the request of either the Lead Pastor or the church.

- b. The call of the Lead Pastor shall take place at a meeting especially set for that purpose of which at least two weeks' notice has been given to the membership. The election shall be upon the recommendation of the "Pastor Search Committee" and approved by the church to seek out and nominate as Lead Pastor a minister of the gospel whose Christian character and qualifications fit him for the office.
- c. The committee shall bring only one name at a time for consideration of the church and no nominations shall be made except by the committee; however, any member has the privilege of presenting names to the committee. Election shall be by an affirmative secret ballot vote of at least 80% of those present and voting necessary for an extension of a call. Should the minister recommended by the committee fail to receive an 80% vote, the committee shall be instructed to seek another minister and the meeting at which the vote was taken shall be adjourned without debate.
- d. When circumstances allow, it can be a positive situation to have a succession plan in place. In this case, the Lead Pastor works with the church to identify a successor. The church must still affirm this decision in a special meeting. Election shall be by secret ballot, an affirmative vote of at least 80% of present voting ALBC members being necessary for a call.

5. Removal

- a. The relationship between the Lead Pastor and the church may be terminated upon the request of either party. In either case, at least thirty (30) days' notice shall be given of termination of the relationship, unless otherwise mutually agreed upon, with both the pastor and church seeking to follow the will of God through the leadership of the Holy Spirit.
- b. In case dismissal is requested by the church, a two (2) week notice must be given to hold a meeting called for that purpose. The chairman of the deacons shall moderate this meeting. At least a two-thirds (2/3) majority vote by secret ballot by members present shall be required.
- c. Except in instances of gross misconduct by the Lead Pastor disqualifying him from office (e.g., sexual immorality, acts contrary to this church's statement of faith and practices, or other actions that make a pastor unfit to serve), ALBC will compensate him with not less than one-twelfth (1/12) of his annual salary. The decision-making process will adhere to the biblical guidelines for church discipline outlined in Bylaws Article I. G. The termination shall be immediate, and the compensation shall be rendered in not more than thirty (30) days.

B. DEACONS

1. General Description

Deacons are the servant-ministers of the church. Their purpose is to relieve the pastor of the multitude of practical duties of caring for the flock. No specific, ongoing deacon roles are mentioned in Scripture, probably because service needs change, and so the role of the deacons must remain flexible. Deacons are to give their primary attention toward caring for the congregation's physical welfare.

2. Qualifications

Any man who is an active, faithful member of ALBC and meets the qualifications of Scripture shall be eligible for the office of Deacon.

According to Scripture, the qualifications of a deacon include men of good reputation, full of the Spirit and wisdom, worthy of respect, not hypocritical, not drinking a lot of wine, not greedy for money, holding the mystery of the faith with a clear conscience, proven faithful, husband of one wife, managing their children and their own households competently (Acts 6:3; 1 Tim. 3:8-13).

- i. “Man” – At ALBC, the office of deacon is limited to men.
- ii. “Husband of one wife” – Like the office of Elder/Pastor, the qualification of deacon focuses on the man’s current sexual and marital faithfulness to his current wife.
- iii. “Proven faithful” – He shall have been an active member of the church for a period of at least two (2) years at the time of his election.

Each Deacon must be supportive of the Lead Pastor, staff, doctrinal statement, and ministry philosophy of ALBC. Failure to be supportive may result in removal from the office of deacon.

3. Responsibilities

The responsibilities of the deacon are churchwide, serving areas of need, ministry, disciple-making, etc. It is his duty to be a positive encouragement in all matters concerning the welfare of the church, but it is understood that he does not have authority over the church, except when that authority has been delegated by the church.

The Deacon Ministry will be the primary pool of spiritually qualified individuals whom the pastor will use to assist in meeting the ministry needs of the church as they arise.

Examples of specific services would be the collectors of funds, the distributors of relief, and agents of mercy. They help the poor, the jobless, the sick, the widowed, the homeless, the shut-in, and the disabled. They comfort, protect, and encourage people, and help to meet their needs. Although they do in many ways meet the spiritual needs of those whom they serve, their primary service is related to physical needs.

4. Nomination

The Deacon Ministry shall consist of qualified men elected by the church at a called family meeting. The Deacons so elected shall take office upon approval of the church.

No later than the first Sunday of September, the Deacons will prepare a list of all male members of ALBC meeting the following qualifications:

- a. Proven faithful as a Christian.
- b. Been a member of ALBC for at least 2 years.

- c. Meets the qualifications of a deacon.
- d. Not currently serving on the Deacon Ministry Team.

Church members should submit their nominations of qualified men to the responsible pastor.

5. Election

The deacon election will be held during the annual family meeting.

Each deacon will serve for a 3-year term and then rotate off for 1 year before being eligible to serve another 3-year term.

From among the deacons, they shall select their own chairman. The chairman will serve for a three-year term. After one term, the chairman may be elected for a second term. However, after serving two terms, a new chairman must be elected. A person who has served as chairman for two terms cannot serve again as chairman until at least 1 term has elapsed.

6. Ordination

Those elected who have not been ordained as deacons will be presented to the members for ordination as soon as reasonably possible. However, they may begin their service as deacons immediately.

7. Removal

If a deacon needs to be removed, the deacon ministry and pastoral team will handle the removal process internally.

ARTICLE III: CHURCH STAFF

All employees of Arran Lake Baptist Church must adhere to ALBC's Confessions of Faith and Covenant (see Constitution Article IV).

A. LEAD PASTOR

1. General Description

The Lead Pastor is responsible for providing administrative and spiritual leadership for ALBC and for using his skills in the proclamation of God's Word and in pastoral care.

2. Appointment

The specific qualifications and actions are listed above under Article VII. A. Elders.

B. PASTORAL STAFF

1. General Description

The Pastoral Staff serves along with the Lead Pastor to fulfill the mission and vision of the church. Because the nature of ministry is constantly changing, the specific

details of the number and types of Pastoral Staff are listed in the current Personnel Manual.

2. **Appointment**

The Pastoral Staff is appointed by the Lead Pastor along with consultation of the Personnel Committee.

C. SUPPORT STAFF

1. **General Description**

The church is served by a variety of Support Staff. These positions usually include administrative roles, finance offices, and directors of specific ministries.

2. **Appointment**

The Support Staff is appointed by the Lead Pastor along with the consultation of the Personnel Committee.

D. OTHER POSITIONS

1. **CEO and Corporate Officers**

The corporate officers of this church shall be a President/CEO (who shall be the Lead Pastor), a Vice-President (who shall be the Chairman of the Deacon Ministry), a Secretary (who shall be the Church Administrative Assistant), a Treasurer (who shall be the Church Treasurer), Board of Directors (who shall be the Trustees of the church) and such other officers as shall be required for the work of the church in any of its departments or organizations. All of these shall be elected by the church as herein provided and shall be members in good standing.

2. **Trustees**

The church shall have three (3) members duly elected to serve as Trustees who shall also constitute the corporate board of directors for the church.

Their term of office shall be for three (3) years with one-third (1/3) of the number elected each year. Vacancies may be filled at any time with the one elected filling out the unexpired term of the one whose vacancy is being filled. Having served as a Trustee during a previous term will not disqualify a member for re-election.

The Trustees shall, as provided by law and the action of the church, represent the church in all matters of legal responsibility regarding the purchase, improvement, and disposal of real church property. They shall execute all legal papers relating to the church and to the community as the church may direct. They shall have no power to buy, sell, mortgage, lease, or transfer any property of the church without a specific vote of the church authorizing such action; neither shall they have any control over the use of the church property except by vote of the church.

3. The Clerk

The Clerk shall be elected annually. It shall be his/her duty to attend or be represented at all church business meetings, to keep an accurate record of all business transactions, to prepare the annual associational letter, and to notify all officers, members of committees, and messengers of their election or appointment. He/she shall issue letters of transfer as authorized by the church and preserve all papers, valuable letters, and records that belong to the church.

4. Corporate Secretary

It shall be the duty of the Corporate Secretary to see that an accurate roll of the church membership is kept with the date and methods of admission, termination and transfer, change in name, correct mailing addresses, and other pertinent information about each member.

5. Treasurer

The Treasurer shall be elected annually and shall also be the Corporate Treasurer of the church. It shall be the duty of the treasurer to receive, keep in a bank and supervise disbursements by check upon proper authority all money or things of value that are given to the church, and keep at all times an itemized account of all receipts and disbursements; rendering regular accounts to the church to be preserved by the Church Clerk. The Treasurer's books shall be audited as arranged by the church and all books, records, and accounts kept by him/her shall be considered the property of the church. The Treasurer shall, upon invitation, meet with the Deacons or Trustees and shall be a member of the Budget and Finance Committee.

ARTICLE IV: CHURCH MEETINGS

A. WORSHIP SERVICES

Worship services shall regularly be held on the Lord's Day for the public worship of Almighty God and may be held throughout the week as the church determines. These services shall include prayer, praise, preaching, instruction, and evangelism. The Lead Pastor shall be responsible for leading or delegating the leading of all ALBC worship services.

B. FAMILY MEETINGS

1. Purpose

A family meeting is a gathering of the members of the church to address the needs of the church, such as calling the Lead Pastor, approving the budget, reporting on issues of church discipline, etc.

2. Quorum

The quorum shall consist of those ALBC members who attend the family meeting, provided it is a regular family meeting or one that has been properly called.

3. Presiding Officer

The presiding officer shall be the Lead Pastor or his designee.

4. Notice

Two weeks' notice shall be given in order to have a called meeting.

5. Decorum

Robert's Rules of Order is the authority for parliamentary rules for all family meetings of ALBC.

C. ANNUAL FAMILY MEETING CELEBRATION

The church will meet in an all-family conference on the last Sunday evening of September. The purpose of this meeting is to celebrate the previous year, approve the upcoming church budget and nominating committee recommendations, and look to the future of the church.

ARTICLE V: ORDINANCES

We believe that there are two ordinances of the Church given by our Lord that we are to obey which are Baptism and the Lord's Supper.

A. BAPTISM

Baptism is commanded to all believers and is the first act of obedience. Baptism is a symbolic act signifying the believer's death, burial, and resurrection "in Christ" (Rom. 6:3-4; Acts 18:8; 1 Pet. 3:21). The book of Acts teaches the practice of water baptism by immersion for believers. ALBC does not believe in baptismal regeneration, nor do we hold that baptism is necessary for salvation. We practice baptism at any time when believers are gathered to celebrate the obedience of new believers.

B. THE LORD'S SUPPER

The Lord's Supper was instituted by Jesus on the night of His arrest. This symbolic act calls our attention to what Jesus did for us on the cross. The celebration is one in which we look back to the finished work of Christ for our salvation and forward to the return of Christ (1 Cor. 11:26). The Bible gives us no set times on when to observe the Lord's Supper. We observe it several times during the year in order to make it a special ordinance for believers.

ARTICLE VI: ORDINATION

When a male member of the church requests ordination into the ministry, the following procedure shall be followed:

The Pastoral Team shall be authorized to appoint an advisory council to examine the candidate as to his fitness for ordination. Representatives from neighboring churches may be invited to

serve along with representatives within our own fellowship to examine the candidate. No public announcement shall be made of an ordination ceremony until the recommendation of the examining council has been made. Following ordination, the church will present the newly ordained minister an appropriate certificate of ordination.

ARTICLE VII: TAX EXEMPT PROVISIONS AND PROPERTY

A. TAX-EXEMPT PROVISIONS

1. Designated Contributions

From time to time this church, in the exercise of its religious, educational, and charitable purposes, may establish various funds to accomplish specific goals. Contributors may suggest uses for their contributions, but all suggestions shall be deemed advisory rather than mandatory in nature. Funds established by a vote of the church will be used only for designated purposes.

2. 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 distributions in furtherance of the purposes set forth in Article I. C. hereof.

3. Political Involvement

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

4. Dissolution

Upon dissolution of the church, the Trustees shall, after paying or making provision for payment of all liabilities of the church, dispose of all assets of the church to such organization or organizations organized and operated exclusively for religious purposes as shall at the time qualify as an exempt organization or organizations under Section 501 (c) (3) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 (or the corresponding provision of any future United States Internal Revenue Law) as the Trustees shall determine. Assets may be distributed only to organizations that agree with the church's Confession and Practices of Faith and Covenant.

5. Limitation of Activities

Notwithstanding any other provision of this Constitution and Bylaws, the church shall not, except to an insubstantial degree, engage in any activities or exercise any powers that are not in furtherance of the purposes stated in Article I. C., hereof.

B. PROPERTY

1. Definition and Scope

The church property shall be understood to include all land, buildings, portable furniture and equipment, bonds, requests, money on deposit in the bank, or church money in possession of church representatives, though it is not deposited in the bank of investing, etc. It shall likewise include all physical assets acquired by the church in the future.

2. Authority

The authority to acquire, control, retain, sell, lease, or mortgage property shall rest solely in the hands of this church. Extensive improvements, transfer, lease, or sale of church property shall be in violation of this Constitution and Bylaws except when authorized by at least a two-thirds (2/3) vote of the members present and voting at a meeting of the church called for such action. The said action shall be after due publicity in the form of Sunday announcements for two (2) consecutive Sundays and, if wisdom directs, by the mailing of letters to members whose addresses are known.

ARTICLE VIII: ASSOCIATIONS

A New Testament church cannot “join” anything outside of itself but only affiliate with others on the grounds of Christian fellowship. Therefore, this church declares itself to be in fellowship only with those of “like precious faith” or with any church or individual who will be in agreement with our Confession and Practices of Faith and Covenant as contained in Articles IV and V.

ARTICLE IX: ADOPTION AND AMENDMENTS

A. ADOPTION

These Bylaws shall be considered adopted and in immediate effect if and when at least two-thirds ($\frac{2}{3}$) of the members present and voting in a regular business meeting of the church shall vote in favor of it, provided, however, that the proposed Bylaws shall have been presented to the church no less than thirty (30) days prior to the time the vote is taken.

B. AMENDMENTS

Recommendations for amendments to the Bylaws may be brought to the Bylaws Committee by the covenant membership. After prayerful consideration by the Bylaws Committee, amendments to the Bylaws may be presented at a special called Family Meeting provided each proposed amendment has been presented to the membership in writing at least thirty (30) days prior to the meeting. Amendments to the Bylaws shall require at least a two-thirds (2/3) majority vote of church members present and voting, and not by proxy.

C. VERSIONS

Adopted: _____ [insert date once adopted]

Amended: _____

D. VALIDATION

The adoption by the church of these Bylaws shall repeal all previously adopted rules in conflict here with, provided however, that no actions taken by the church prior to this date shall be invalidated by the adoption of these Bylaws.