



Constitution and Bylaws of

Bethel Grace Baptist Church

Bethel Grace Baptist Church

17909 Carpintero Avenue Bellflower, California 90706

CONSTITUTION AND BYLAWS OF BETHEL GRACE BAPTIST CHURCH

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CONSTITUTION AND BYLAWS OF BETHEL GRACE BAPTIST CHURCH

Approved
February 24, 2008

Preamble

We rest our faith fully in the Lord Jesus Christ for our salvation. We believe that the 66 books of the Protestant Bible are God's revealed truth and authority for our lives. We are committed to biblical virtues and absolutes. We support the historic Baptist distinctives. Therefore, we unite ourselves as a family of baptized believers and adopt the following Constitution and Bylaws for our government, worship, and service.

The following convictions have guided the preparation of this Constitution and Bylaws:

1. The Bible is our final authority and governs all issues of our ministry. It provides a few prescriptions, but primarily general administrative principles, for the organization of a local church. We seek to be thoroughly biblical in our approach, but understand there is room for flexibility, creativity, and purposeful change in structures and procedures as we follow the leading of the Holy Spirit.
2. These documents are tools to help us reach our goals. They are not ends in themselves.
3. These documents cannot be written in such a way as to preclude all interpretive questions and problems. Submission to and cooperation with the Holy Spirit is required to resolve problems and maintain unity.
4. The Statement of Faith is written to express our basic beliefs and to distinguish us as a Baptist church. Not all the beliefs stated affect one's view of salvation, but we recognize the changing social and religious environments which cause us to clarify or define in greater detail those beliefs that distinguish us. We therefore recognize this doctrinal statement may need amplification in the future.

Constitution

Article I Name, Purpose, Governance, Affiliation

Section 1. Name

This corporation will be known as “Bethel Grace Baptist Church of Bellflower” (“BGBC”), a California nonprofit religious corporation.

Section 2. Purpose

The purpose of Bethel Grace Baptist Church is to glorify God

- by worshipping God together in spirit and in truth;
- by teaching the whole counsel of God to develop mature disciples;
- by uniting the saints in fellowship and service;
- by seeking the lost of our community and world with the Gospel of Jesus Christ; and
- by preaching of the gospel of salvation by grace through faith in the shed blood of our risen Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ.

Section 3. Governance

The government of this church is vested in its members and is subject to no other ecclesiastical body, recognizing the Holy Scriptures as the sole binding authority in all matters. The government of BGBC will be congregational in form. Consistent with this Constitution and Bylaws, the members of BGBC, by their vote, shall determine matters of church governance and the conduct of church business.

Section 4. Affiliation and Cooperation

BGBC will be affiliated with the Conservative Baptists.¹ We may choose to cooperate and associate with others who share our faith, provided those partnerships advance God's purposes, are consistent with our mission, vision, and values, and do not conflict with biblical revelation and the commitments we make in this Constitution and Bylaws.

Article II Statement of Faith

Section 1. The Bible

We believe the Bible is the verbally inspired, infallible Word of God; the Old and New Testaments are inerrant in the original writings; and they are the final supreme authority in matters of faith and practice. (Matthew 5:18; II Timothy 3:16, 17; II Peter 1:19-21)

Section 2. The Trinity

We believe in One God, eternally existing in Three Persons: God the Father; God the Son, Jesus Christ; and God the Holy Spirit. (Matthew 28:19-20; John 4:24, 10:30, 14:26)

¹ Conservative Baptist Association of Southern California, Rancho Cucamonga, California; and the Conservative Baptist Association of America, Longmont, Colorado.

Section 3. God the Father

We believe in God the Father, creator of heaven and earth, perfect in holiness and love, infinite in wisdom, and measureless in power. We rejoice that He concerns Himself mercifully in the affairs of men, that He hears and answers prayer, and that He saves and keeps all who trust His Son. (Genesis 1:1; Psalms 18:30, 139:1-16, 147:5; Genesis 18:14; Jeremiah 32: 17 & 27; Isaiah 6:3; I John 4:8; Exodus 6:3; Luke 1:37; Revelation 19-6; Matthew 28:19-20; Ephesians 2:4, 5:1; I Peter 1:3-5; I John 5:14-15; John 3:16-18, 5:24)

Section 4. Jesus Christ

We believe in Jesus Christ, God's only begotten Son, conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of a virgin, and sinless in His life. We believe He died for our sins as a representative and substitutionary sacrifice, and all who believe in Him are justified by His shed Blood. We believe in His bodily resurrection; His High Priestly intercession for His people; and in His personal, visible, pre-millennial return to this world in power and glory. (Luke 1:26-35; II Corinthians 5:21; Hebrews 4:15; I John 3:5; Romans 5:8-9; Matthew 28:5-6; Hebrews 7:24-26; Matthew 24:29-31; Acts 1:11; Revelation 20:6)

Section 5. The Holy Spirit

We believe in the Holy Spirit who was sent by the Father and Son to convict the world of sin, righteousness, and judgment; to regenerate, sanctify, empower, and seal forever all who believe in Christ; and to be our abiding helper, comforter, teacher, and guide. (John 16:7-11; John 3:3-7; Titus 3:5; Romans 15:16; Acts 1:8; Ephesians 1:13; John 16:13-15)

Section 6. Man

We believe that man was uniquely created by God in the image and likeness of God. God created male and female to complement one another in marriage. God made man and woman to be marital partners as one flesh, thus no homosexual union should be recognized as marriage. At the creation, man was made in the image and likeness of God and pronounced good. However, man disobeyed the single prohibition given by God and thus fell from his innocent condition into sin and death. (Genesis 1:26-27; Genesis 2:18-24; Genesis 2:15-17, 3:1-7)

Section 7. Salvation

We believe that all men are sinners by nature and by choice, and have thereby earned not only physical death but spiritual death, which is separation from God. We believe that all that put their faith and trust in the finished work of Jesus Christ have been born again by the quickening, renewing, cleansing work of the Holy Spirit through the instrumentality of the Word of God and are saved forever. (Romans 3:23; Romans 5:12; John 3:16-19, 5:24-29; Ephesians 2:1-10; I Peter 1:23; James 1:18)

Section 8. Resurrection and Eternity

We believe all believers will be bodily resurrected at the second coming of Christ unto eternal happiness in His presence and love. We believe all who reject Christ as Savior and Lord will be bodily resurrected and forever separated from the presence and love of God, in the lake of fire, the place of endless suffering. (John 5:24-29; Romans 8:38-39; John 11:25-27; I Thessalonians 4:13-18; I Corinthians 15:35-58; Matthew 10:28; I Thessalonians 1:7-9; Revelation 20:4-15)

Section 9. 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 united together for the purpose of worshipping God, edifying and maintaining the fellowship of believers, and proclaiming the Gospel of Christ throughout the whole world. (Matthew 16:16-18, 28:19-20; I Peter 2:5; Ephesians 1: 22-23; Colossians 1:18; Romans 12:4-5; Acts 2:41-47)

Section 10. Ordinances

We believe that the Lord Jesus Christ committed two symbolic ordinances to the local church: baptism and the Lord's Supper (Communion). We believe that Christian baptism is the immersion of a believer in water in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. Water baptism is not essential to salvation, but is an act of obedience to God. We believe that the Lord's Supper was instituted by Christ for the commemoration of His death until He returns. (Matthew 28:19-20; I Corinthians 11:23-26; Mark 14:22-24; Luke 22:19-20; I Peter 3:21)

Section 11. Religious Liberty

We believe that every human being is responsible to God alone in all matters of faith; that all believers are priests before God; that each church is independent and must be free from interference from any ecclesiastical or political authority; that, therefore, Church and State must be kept separate as having different functions, each fulfilling its duties free from dictation or patronage from the other, until the Lord returns and sets up His kingdom on earth. (Romans 14:12; Matthew 16:13-15; Revelation 1:5-6; Acts 4:19-20)

Article III Church Covenant

Having been led by the Holy Spirit to receive the Lord Jesus Christ as Our Savior, having publicly confessed our faith in Him, and having been baptized in the name of the 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, to lead a life worthy of the Lord, fully pleasing to Him.

We purpose, therefore, by the aid of the Holy Spirit, to turn from sin and walk together in Christian Love; to strive for the advancement of this church in knowledge, holiness, and comfort; to promote its prosperity and spirituality; to attend its services regularly; to sustain its worship, ordinances, discipline, and doctrines; to give it a sacred preeminence over all institutions of human origin; to give faithfully of time and talent in its activities; to contribute cheerfully and regularly, as God has prospered us, to the support of the ministry, the expenses of the church, the relief of the poor, and the spread of the gospel throughout all nations.

We also purpose to maintain family and private devotions; to train our children according to the Word of God; to seek the salvation of our kindred and acquaintances; to walk circumspectly in the world; to be just in our dealings, faithful in our engagements, and exemplary in our conduct; to avoid all gossip, backbiting, and unrighteous anger; to abstain from all forms of activity which dishonor our Lord Jesus Christ, or which defile the mind or body, or which cause a fellow believer to stumble, or which hinder the winning of a soul to Christ; to be zealous in our efforts to advance the cause of Christ, our Savior; and to give Him preeminence in all things.

We further purpose to encourage one another in the blessed hope of our Lord's return; to watch over one another in brotherly love; to remember each other in prayer; to aid each other in sickness and distress; to give and receive admonition with meekness and affection; to be slow to take offense, but always ready for reconciliation, and, mindful of the rules of our Savior, to seek it without delay.

We moreover purpose that when we remove from this place we will as soon as possible unite with some other church of like faith and practice where we can carry out the spirit of this covenant and the principles of God's Word.

Bylaws

Article I Membership

Section 1. Eligibility for Membership

Membership is open to all who have (a) professed faith in Jesus Christ as their personal Savior, (b) publicly declared this faith through believer's baptism by immersion, (c) expressed their intention to live according to the will of God as revealed in the Bible, (d) expressed their agreement with BGBC's Statement of Faith and Church Covenant, (e) completed a new membership class, and (f) met with duly authorized church representatives regarding their desire and qualifications for church membership.

Section 2. Admission to the Membership

The Elders will establish procedures which ensure that those who desire to unite with BGBC are informed of our beliefs, practices, and ministries. The Elders will recommend potential members for approval by the membership at a business meeting. A majority vote of members present and voting is required. Those received into membership will be officially welcomed at a subsequent Sunday service.

Section 3. Change in Status of Membership

Membership in BGBC may be terminated in any of the following ways:

- a. Request of a letter. A member of BGBC in good standing seeking membership in another church of like faith and practice may have that church request a letter of recommendation from BGBC. Upon the issuance of such a letter, membership in BGBC will end.
- b. Personal request. A member in good standing may request in writing that his name be removed from the roll.
- c. Inaction. When a member either does not attend church services or support the ministry as a contributor of record for six months, he becomes inactive and forfeits the privileges of membership. Prior to considering termination the Elders will attempt to make contact with the individual by phone or through his address of record and may waive his inactive status at a subsequent Elders' meeting. Alternatively, the Board of Elders may grant, upon request, Non-Resident status to any member temporarily unable to regularly attend services but who otherwise maintains regular contact with the church. Non-Resident members will not have voting privileges.
- d. Discipline. Sadly, some believers are overtaken by sin (Gal. 6:1) and forsake their obedient life-style. Action to restore such members will be initiated by the Elders in accordance with a biblical process (Matthew. 18:15-17; Galatians 6:1-5; II Thessalonians 3:14-15). When repentance is absent and/or there is refusal to make confession and enter a restoration process, the Elders may recommend termination of membership.
- e. Death.

Any person whose membership at BGBC was voluntarily or involuntarily terminated may seek reinstatement by request to the Elders who shall determine whether to recommend the reinstatement. If so, the procedures set forth in Section 2 "Admission to Membership" shall apply.

Except in the case of death or inaction, the Elders will present action for changes in membership status to the church. A majority vote of members present and voting affirms the action except in the case of discipline, which requires a two-thirds vote of members present and voting. A disciplined member will be advised in advance of the action and the vote will be taken by secret ballot.

Section 4. Responsibilities of Members

Each member is expected to seek continued growth in the grace and knowledge of the Lord Jesus Christ and the Bible; to be faithful and systematic in the generous investment of time, gifts, abilities, and resources; to preserve the unity of the Spirit within the church in both its doctrine and practice; and to submit voluntarily to the leadership of the church. If, after consultation with the Elders, any member is unable to harmonize with the beliefs and practices of BGBC, he agrees to quietly remove himself and refrain from cultivating conflict and disruption.

Article II Organization, General Duties, and Authority

Section 1. Members of the Church

Under Christ, the Head of the church, governing authority ultimately resides in the members of the church and is exercised in church business meetings. By this Constitution and Bylaws they exercise their right of final determination and also delegate authority for the orderly administration of their affairs. The members will discover and approve Elders. The authority of the church membership will rest in the Elders, once elected, except for: changing this Constitution and Bylaws, calling and dismissing the Senior Pastor and all other elected leaders as specified in these documents, approving and removing of members, acquiring and disposing of church real property, incurring indebtedness in the corporate name, approving the annual budget, and deciding any other matter the Elders bring to the church for a vote or which is specified in these Bylaws.

Section 2. Senior Pastor

The Senior Pastor will be the leader, teacher, shepherd, and guide of the church. He will perform all of the biblical duties of the pastoral office. He will be granted authority, under God, to provide leadership and direction to the church by precept, persuasion, and example. The Senior Pastor shall accept the Statement of Faith, be in accord with the Church Covenant, and satisfy the requirements set forth in 1 Timothy 3:1-7 and Titus 1:5-9. He will be an ordained minister in agreement with the Conservative Baptist Association of America. The Senior Pastor shall be a member of the church and an Elder and shall perform the duties of an Elder as prescribed in Section 4 of this Article.

Section 3. Other Ministerial Staff

All other Ministerial Staff will serve at the pleasure of the Senior Pastor and Elders, who will establish their titles, qualifications, and duties and define them in a ministry description. They will assist the Senior Pastor through the ministries assigned to them. They will be under the day-to-day supervision of the Senior Pastor, who shall have the authority to impose discipline, not including termination, and under the general supervision of the Elders.

Section 4. Board of Elders

The Elders will work with the Ministerial Staff, commissions, and committees to shepherd the spiritual and temporal affairs of the church. Together under God they will develop necessary policies, strategies, and ministries to implement the vision and mission of BGBC consistent with the Purpose of BGBC as set forth in Article I, Section 2 of this Constitution.

The Elders are the Board of Directors of the corporation.² They will elect from their members, excepting the Senior Pastor, a Chairman, Vice-Chairman, Secretary, and Treasurer. Officers serve one year terms, but may be replaced at any time by a two-thirds vote of the Elders. A quorum for business sessions of the Elders requires at least 60% of the Elders.

- a. Chairman - The Chairman is the chief executive officer of the corporation for legal purposes. He leads the meetings of the Elders, sets the agenda, and cooperates with the staff to lead the development and implementation of BGBC's mission, vision, and strategic plans. The Chairman or his Elder designee shall preside at all business meetings of the church. The Chairman cannot also serve as either Secretary or Treasurer while he serves as Chairman.
- b. Vice-Chairman - The Vice-Chairman will assist the Chairman in performing his overall leadership responsibilities and fulfill the Chairman's responsibilities in his absence. He will oversee the membership process.
- c. Secretary - The Secretary will record the minutes of each meeting of the Elders.
- d. Treasurer - The Treasurer serves as the chief financial officer of the corporation. He is responsible to oversee the processes for receiving, recording, and disbursing of all church funds and for keeping the records of all church accounts; assist in the preparation of the annual church budget; ensure conformity to budgetary requirements and generally accepted accounting and reporting practices; regularly report the financial condition of BGBC to the Elders; advise the Elders on financial matters; and serve in partnership with any paid or volunteer staff assigned to assist him in his duties.

The Elders shall select from among their members one Elder to oversee the Deacon and Deaconess Commission and represent the Elder Board.

Section 5. Church Clerk

The Church Clerk will maintain current membership rosters, record minutes, and keep records of all church business meetings.

Section 6. Commissions

The commissions function as extensions of the Elders to shepherd the various ministries of BGBC.

- a. The Deacons and Deaconesses, acting as one commission, will assist the Elders in providing pastoral care to the congregation, including visitation and meeting spiritual, physical, and material needs of the church family.
- b. Christian Education Commission – The Christian Education Commission will encourage and support the educational ministries for children, youth, and adults. The Christian Education Commission will assist the ministry staff in defining the vision and strategy of developing disciple-makers.
- c. Local Evangelism Commission – The Local Evangelism Commission will motivate biblical concern and develop relevant strategies to lead the congregation in a Great Commission life style that impacts the local community to reach people with the Gospel of Jesus Christ.
- d. Missions Commission – The Missions Commission will motivate biblical concern and develop relevant strategies to lead the congregation in a Great Commission lifestyle that includes seeking and sending qualified individuals into the local and world harvest of diverse people groups. The Commission will implement and support the mission and vision of BGBC to reach the world with the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

² Under the California Corporations Code, a minimum of 2 individuals is needed to hold the required offices in a nonprofit religious corporation.

- e. Worship Commission – The Worship Commission will encourage and motivate the music and worship ministries. It will seek to foster worship in all aspects of the church ministry, cultivate an environment conducive to worship, and assist and support the music and worship staff in their leadership responsibilities.
- f. Facilities Commission – The Facilities Commission will administer, operate, and maintain the church facilities, equipment, and grounds.

Section 7. Nominating Committee

The Elders will ensure that a Nominating Committee is properly formed to present to the membership individuals whom the Nominating Committee has approved to serve in all elected offices. The members and Elders can make recommendations to the Nominating Committee.

Section 8. Other Ministries

As ministry needs dictate, the Elders may establish other ministries including commissions, committees, task forces, or teams to assist the Elders in implementing the mission of the church. This provision does not preclude the appointment of committees by other ministries to facilitate their purposes.

Section 9. Other Organized Groups

Any organized club or group including, and by way of example Ladies Ministry and AWANA, which desires to identify with BGBC in name or function must submit organizational plans to the Elders for approval. It must specify how it will advance the purpose of the church and to whom it will be accountable. It will be responsible to operate with the approval of the Elders and according to this Constitution and Bylaws and policies of this church.

Article III Selection and Tenure

Section 1. Senior Pastor

A vacancy in the office of Senior Pastor will initiate the formation of a Pastoral Search Team (PST) by the Elders. The PST will be comprised of 5 members, 2 selected by the Elders and 3 selected by the membership. The PST will seek a qualified candidate, secure approval of the Elders, and then present the candidate to the congregation. The church will be given adequate opportunity to assess the preaching and teaching gifts of any candidate. A written recommendation will be provided to the church followed by opportunities for the congregation to meet the candidate and his family. A vote will not be taken for at least two weeks following the written recommendation. A minimum three-fourths (75%) of the votes cast by secret ballot at a business meeting is required to extend a call.

The Senior Pastor serves for an indefinite period of time. The Senior Pastor will serve as an Elder by virtue of his call, for a term concurrent with his tenure as Senior Pastor. Except as otherwise provided herein, the Senior Pastor's services may be terminated by either the Senior Pastor or the church with a minimum of 30 days written notice. If there is question about the congregation's support of the Senior Pastor, upon approval of two-thirds of the Elders (excluding the Senior Pastor), or based upon a petition signed by at least 20% of voting members, the Elders will request a vote of confidence from the membership. At least two weeks written notice of a business meeting for this purpose must be given. A simple majority of the votes cast by secret ballot will sustain the Senior Pastor. If the majority votes to remove the Senior Pastor, notice of termination will be provided to him. If the Elders confirm sinful behavior on the part of the Senior Pastor that is disqualifying according to 1 Timothy 3:1-7; 5:19-20, and Titus 1:5-9, they may act to immediately remove the Senior Pastor from all privileges, responsibilities, and duties,

pending a vote of the membership to affirm their action. If he chooses, the Senior Pastor will be given opportunity to address the charges before the vote is taken.

Section 2. Other Ministerial Staff

The hiring of all other Ministerial Staff shall be recommended by the Board of Elders, after which the membership will vote its approval in the same manner as for the Senior Pastor. Short term positions, such as interns and interim employees, are exempt from the vote by the membership. All Other Ministerial Staff serve for indefinite terms which may be terminated by either the staff member or the Board of Elders with 30 days written notice. The decision to terminate the services of any other Ministerial Staff, whether for or without cause, shall reside with the Board of Elders. If the Elders confirm sinful behavior on the part of any other Ministerial Staff that is disqualifying according to 1 Timothy 3:1-7; 5:19-20, and Titus 1:5-9, it is sufficient cause for immediate termination. All other Ministerial Staff may be invited by the Elders to participate in their meetings and ministry in a non-voting capacity.

Section 3. Elders

Male members of BGBC who meet the character and leadership qualifications stated in 1 Timothy 3:1-7 and Titus 1:5-9 and fully support the doctrine and practice of BGBC and who have been active and regularly participating members of BGBC, demonstrating Christian leadership abilities in one or more church ministries, commissions, or committees, for at least one year are eligible to serve as elected Elders. The Nominating Committee shall prepare a list of qualified nominees resulting from its own deliberations and the recommendations of candidates by church members. All candidates shall be approved by the Elders. Terms of service are three years with approximately one-third being elected each year. Two consecutive terms may be served, with the church's approval required for each term. Upon completion of two full elective terms, one year off is required before eligibility for re-election to the Elders. A minimum three-fourths (75%) of the votes cast by secret ballot at a business meeting is required to elect an Elder. A mid-year vacancy occurring in any elective Elder position may be left vacant or filled by appointment of the Elders until the next annual election. Time served as an appointed member does not count toward term limits.

The Elder Board will be 4 to 12 men, provided qualified men are available to serve. If there is question about the congregation's support of an Elder, upon approval of two-thirds of the Elders, or based upon a petition signed by at least 20% of voting members, the Elders will request a vote of confidence from the membership. At least two weeks written notice of a business meeting for this purpose must be given. A simple majority of the votes cast by secret ballot will sustain the Elder. If the majority votes to remove the Elder, notice of termination will be provided to him. If the Elders confirm sinful behavior on the part of an Elder that is disqualifying according to 1 Timothy 3:1-7; 5:19-20, and Titus 1:5-9, they may act to immediately remove the Elder from all privileges, responsibilities, and duties, pending a vote of the membership to affirm their action. If he chooses, the Elder will be given opportunity to address the charges before the vote is taken.

Section 4. Deacons and Deaconesses Commission

Members of BGBC who meet the character and leadership qualifications stated in 1 Timothy 3:8-13 may serve as Deacons or Deaconesses. The process of selection and terms of service are the same as for Elders. At least one Deacon and one Deaconess should be elected for each 75 attendees (or part thereof) of the congregation (based on average morning worship attendance for January 1 to December 31 preceding the election). They shall select a Chairman from the Deacons and the Elder representative.

Section 5. Church Clerk

The Church Clerk will be elected at the annual business meeting for a one year term.

Section 6. Other Commissions

Except for Deacons, Deaconesses, and the Church Clerk, the Elders shall establish the Leadership Structure of Commissions, and appoint, approve, or establish the criteria for persons to serve on a Commission. Consistent with this Constitution and Bylaws, the Elders will establish the tenure, qualifications, duties, authority, accountability relationship, and establish such other requirements deemed necessary for the proper functioning of a Commission.

Section 7. Nominating Committee

The Nominating Committee will be comprised of one Elder, one Deacon, one Deaconess, one pastor, and two members elected by the membership. The Elders will appoint their member and one pastor and the Deacons and Deaconesses will appoint their members. All members will serve for one year.

Section 8. Other Ministries

The Elders shall establish the leadership structure of Other Ministries. The Elders may appoint their leaders and approve their members; establish their qualifications, duties, authority, and accountability relationships; and determine their tenure.

Section 9. Other Organized Groups

The qualifications and selection of officers of all other groups will be appropriate to the individual ministry and in accordance with the policies established by the Elders.

Section 10. Employees

Salaried and hourly employees, except as otherwise provided in these Bylaws, will be hired and dismissed by the Elders.

Article IV Meetings

Section 1. Worship Services

Regular services for worship and instruction will be held each Sunday and at such times as will best facilitate the mission and ministry of the church and needs of the community. The schedule will be set by the Elders and include monthly celebration of the Lord's Supper and believer's baptism as necessary.

Section 2. Church Business Meetings

Regular meetings will be held quarterly in April, July, October, and January or at appropriate times determined by the Elders. The April meeting will be the Annual Business Meeting and include the presentation of annual reports. Announcement of any special meeting will also include the stated purpose or purposes of the meeting and the agenda will be limited to that purpose or those purposes. Specific dates for all regular and special meetings will be announced at least two weeks in advance by at least two of the following methods: printing in the weekly worship folder, announcement from the pulpit at a regular Sunday service, or notification to the active voting members.

A special meeting in March will include the annual election of officers (terms of service begin April 1) and approval of the budget. The slate of nominated officers and the proposed budget will be presented to the congregation, by posting on the church bulletin board, at least two weeks in advance of the vote.

Except as otherwise specified in this Constitution and Bylaws: a quorum is required to conduct business and will consist of a minimum of 25% of the active voting members; only those active members 18 years old and above are eligible to vote; a simple majority of members present and voting will decide any action; all votes on elected positions and any other matters at the discretion of the Elders will be by secret ballot.

A Special Business Meeting will be called by written request to the Elders by 5 percent of the active voting members of the church or by a majority vote of the members at any prior business meeting. The Elders may set a more convenient time for the meeting than the time requested.

Article V Miscellany

Section 1. Fiscal Year

The fiscal year of the church is April 1 through March 31.

Section 2. Rules of Order

The Bible is our final authority and the biblical principles of unity, cooperation, and doing all things to the glory of Jesus Christ are the guiding concern. If procedural assistance is required, the latest edition of *Robert's Rules of Order* will be consulted.

Section 3. Minutes and Agenda

Minutes of church business meetings and Elders' meetings are official records of the corporation, which shall be prepared by the church clerk and corporate secretary, respectively, and will be kept in the church office. Matters of a sensitive nature may be treated as confidential in the records. All minutes of meetings, except those deemed confidential, are open to the members upon request. All other records shall be available for inspection by the members subject to the written approval of the Elders.

Members of the church shall have the right to attend the Elders' meetings as observers. Members have the right to address the Elders during any meeting on any issue after giving prior notice to the Chairman. The Elders will determine when issues on their agenda are only suitable for executive session and the minutes will be treated as confidential. Commissions will follow the same procedures.

Regular records should be maintained by all Commissions and ministries as appropriate. Copies should be forwarded to the Chairman of the Elders and Senior Pastor.

Section 4. Annual Budget

Each March the Elders will recommend a budget for approval by the membership. Once approved, the budget is not a mandate to spend, but provides reasonable parameters for fulfilling the ministry in the coming year. The Elders are authorized and responsible to conduct the affairs of the church within that budget and see that delegated budget managers do also. They may also take action outside the budget if emergency conditions exist where a delay would likely cause material or irreparable loss, damage, or injury to people, property, or the welfare of the church. These expenses shall be promptly reported to the church.

Section 5. Annual Report

Following the close of each fiscal year the Elders will be responsible to present an annual report to the church. This report will at least contain financial and membership status reports. It should also contain a summary of the activities, accomplishments, and future goals of the Board of Elders, Commissions, Other Ministries, and Other Organized Groups.

Section 6. Financial Review

An external review of the church financial records and practices will be conducted at least every other year in accordance with acceptable standards and by professionally qualified persons retained by the Elders.

Section 7. Gifts

Any gifts of money or other property given to the church or any of its ministries will become the property of the church and will be administered by the Elders or their designees. If a gift is given under unacceptable conditions or for unapproved purposes, the Elders will seek an appropriate designation or attempt to return the gift to the donor. Designated gifts may only be given to funds established by the Elders, and will be used for the purposes designated within legal limits. The Elders are also authorized to establish, manage, and disburse designated funds which will advance the ministry of the church.

Section 8. Financial Policy

Funding for the local and world-wide ministry of BGBC will be obtained through the voluntary tithes, offerings, and gifts of the members and friends of the church. All fund-raisers are subject to approval by the Elders. Funds for outside persons, ministries, or other organizations may not be solicited, at or through the church, without approval of the Elders.

Section 9. Property Rights

BGBC exists in perpetuity without a specific term of existence. All real and personal property of BGBC is irrevocably dedicated to religious or charitable purposes. Members of BGBC have no individual rights in BGBC property. Upon termination of membership they are not entitled to any personal interest in these assets. If a division occurs in the church, all real and personal property of BGBC will be controlled by those members who abide by this Constitution and Bylaws and whose position is held by the majority of active voting members at a special business meeting. If BGBC is ever dissolved, liquidated, or abandoned as a corporation, all real and personal property of BGBC will be transferred to the Conservative Baptist Association of Southern California (CBASC) or its successor or designee and cannot benefit any private person or group. If CBASC is unable or unwilling to accept these assets, the property will be distributed, as the existing membership directs, to exclusively religious or charitable organizations which are in keeping with the mission of the church and which is recognized as a charity pursuant to Internal Revenue Code, section 501(c)(3).

Section 10. Purchase, Sale, and Encumbrance of Real Property

Subject to Section 9 above, the church may buy real property, or sell or encumber any of its real property with three-fourths of votes cast, by secret ballot, of a forty percent (40%) quorum of the active voting members.

Section 11. Use of Property

The use of any church property by any person or entity shall be at the discretion of the Elders.

Section 12. Merger

Any decision to merge with another church or organization shall require three-fourths of votes cast, by secret ballot, of a forty percent (40%) quorum of active voting members.

Article VI Amendments

Notice of any proposed amendment, including the text of the proposed amendment, must be given at a business meeting prior to the meeting at which the vote on the proposed amendment is to be taken. In addition, verbal or written announcement must be provided in a regular worship service at least two weeks prior to the meeting at which the vote will be taken.

This Constitution and Bylaws, except Article II of the Constitution and Article VI of the Bylaws, may be amended only at a special business meeting of the church by three-fourths of votes cast, by secret ballot, of a forty percent (40%) quorum of active voting members.

Article II of the Constitution and Article VI of the Bylaws may be amended by eighty-five percent (85%) of votes cast, by secret ballot, of a forty percent (40%) quorum of active voting members.

Article VII Resolution

Be it resolved that this Constitution and Bylaws, adopted by BGBC, will serve as a complete repeal, revocation, and cancellation of all previously existing Constitutions and Bylaws of BGBC. Immediately upon approval, it will become the operating document of the church.