

BY-LAWS OF DEERMEADOWS BAPTIST CHURCH, INC.

Revised & Approved by the church in Business Meeting April 18, 2018

ARTICLE I. – DENOMINATION AFFILIATION

The government of this church is vested in the body of Christian believers who comprise it. It is subject to the control of no other ecclesiastical body, but it recognizes the obligations of mutual counsel and cooperation, which are common among Baptist churches. The congregation is affiliated with and is a member of the Jacksonville Baptist Association, the Florida Baptist State Convention, and the Southern Baptist Convention.

ARTICLE II. – MEMBERSHIP

Section 1. – Qualifications

Persons may be received into the membership of Deermeadows Baptist Church in any one of the following ways:

- 1) By profession of faith and baptism by immersion according to Scripture
- 2) By promise of letter from another Baptist church
- 3) By statement of a prior conversion experience and New Testament baptism
- 4) By profession of faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, by an individual requesting membership but who is physically unable to be baptized by immersion

A request for membership may be made by responding to the invitation in a worship service, or by request to a member of the ministerial staff. A person who requests membership and who meets the above referenced requirements shall become a member of the church at that time, subject to affirmation at a subsequent church business meeting.

Section 2. – Associate Membership

Professing Christians who wish to identify with Deermeadows Baptist Church but who do not wish to change membership may be received as associate members of the church. They may not hold elected office, vote on church matters, or serve on a Church Committee or Ministry Council.

Section 3. – Termination of Membership

Church Membership shall be terminated in the following ways:

- 1) Death
- 2) Transfer of church letter to another church of like faith and practice.
- 3) Removal of membership upon affiliation with another church. In such cases, if requested, the receiving church shall be granted a statement of Christian standing
- 4) Removal upon the written request of the member wishing to be removed from the church roll.
- 5) Termination of membership by action of Deermeadows; according to the procedures established in Article IX of this document.

ARTICLE III. – PASTORS, CHURCH STAFF, OFFICERS AND DEACONS

All Ministerial Staff members and church officers shall be members of Deermeadows Baptist Church. Their general function and responsibilities shall be as follows (specific duties shall be included in the Operations Manual):

Section 1. – Senior Pastor

- 1) Duties of the Senior Pastor: The Senior Pastor is responsible for leading Deermeadows Baptist Church to function as a congregation under the authority of the New Testament. The Senior Pastor will lead the congregation, the organizations, and the church staff in performing their tasks. The Senior Pastor is the leader of the worship, proclamation, education, and pastoral ministries of the church. The Senior Pastor shall serve as an ex-officio member without voting privileges of all church committees and organizations, and his leadership is to be recognized in them.
- 2) Tenure of Office of the Senior Pastor: The tenure of the Senior Pastor may be terminated by his resignation, retirement, death, or by the request of the church. If the termination of the Senior Pastor's tenure is by request of the church, it shall be upon the affirmative vote by secret ballot of two-thirds of those members present and voting in a special church-wide business meeting for which two weeks published notice shall be provided to all Deermeadows members. Any accusation against the Senior Pastor which could result in a recommendation for termination shall be investigated by representatives of the deacon body chosen by the Deacon Chair and Chairman of the Personnel Committee. Before such recommendation shall be made to the church, due

notice must be given to those affected, who shall have full opportunity for a complete explanation to the Deacon Officers and Personnel Committee.

- 3) Selection of a Senior Pastor: A Senior Pastor shall be chosen and called by the church whenever a vacancy occurs. The process for that call shall be as follows:
 - (a) Senior Pastor Search Committee. A Pastor Search Committee consisting of four active deacons and five other church members, totaling nine members, shall be recommended by the deacons and approved by the church. There shall be no more than one immediate member of the same family serving on the committee. The Search Committee shall accurately represent the demographics of the church family. A non-voting staff liaison shall serve the nine-member committee to provide assistance and ministry perspective as needed.
 - (b) Call of Senior Pastor. The Senior Pastor's election shall take place at a special business meeting called for that purpose, of which at least two week's written notice shall be provided to all Deermeadows members. The election shall be by secret ballot; the call to serve as Senior Pastor shall require an affirmative vote of at least two-thirds of those members present and voting.
 - (c) Compensation of Senior Pastor. The Pastor Search Committee shall recommend the initial annual compensation of the Senior Pastor to the Personnel Committee in consultation with the Personnel and Finance Committees (Article IV, Section 4). The Personnel Committee shall recommend the Pastor's salary to the Finance Committee in succeeding years.

Section 2. – Ministerial Staff and other Church Employees

- (1) Ministerial Staff: The church shall call ministerial staff members as needed. A job description shall be written by the prospective minister's supervisor and approved by the Personnel Committee. Ministerial staff members other than the Senior Pastor shall be recommended to the church by the Personnel Committee and called by church action.
- (2) Non-ministerial Staff and Other Church Employees: Non-ministerial staff and other church employee positions, including administrative assistants, support or custodial staff, may be filled by their supervisor with approval of the Staff Supervisor and Personnel Committee without church action. A job description for such positions shall be written by the prospective supervisor and approved by the Personnel Committee.

Section 3. – Deacons

- (1) Number of Deacons: The number of deacons shall be thirty (30).
- (2) Rotation: Ten deacons shall be elected each year and shall serve for a regular term of three years on a rotation basis. The term of office of one-third of the number of deacons shall expire on December 31 of each year. After serving as a deacon for a three-year term or the completion of the term of a vacancy of more than one year, no deacon shall be eligible for reelection until the lapse of at least one year.
- (3) Qualifications of Deacons: Any member of Deermeadows Baptist Church over twenty-five years of age and a member for at least one year shall be eligible for election to the office of deacon. The member must be willing, able to serve, and meet the qualifications of deacons as outlined in Scripture (Acts 6:1-7; 1 Timothy 3:8-13) and as established by the church.
- (4) Duties of Deacons: The deacons shall serve as spiritual assistants and advisors to the Senior Pastor and with him shall serve the church membership, devoting themselves to the spiritual affairs of the church. They shall serve as exemplary members of the larger church body. They shall assist the pastor in administering the ordinances and the work of ministry to the needs of the church and community. Deacon Officers for the coming year shall be elected at the December meeting that shall include both the newly elected deacons and those continuing to serve. Deacon Officers are to be elected in accordance with procedures adopted by the deacon body. The deacon body is also responsible for electing an Interim Pulpit Supply Ad-hoc Committee in the event of the resignation of the Senior Pastor. This committee shall be composed of not more than five members. It shall be responsible for coordinating with the ministerial staff pulpit supply responsibilities until a new Senior Pastor can assume his duties. Any long-term commitment (more than three months) to an interim pastor shall be approved by the congregation in a church business meeting.
- (5) Nomination of Deacons: (a) A current church directory shall be made available to the congregation by the first Sunday in August. Any member qualified to serve may recommend for consideration. Recommendations must be submitted to the church office no later than the second Sunday in September on nomination forms provided by the church.

- (b) A five-member Deacon Interview Committee shall be formed to carry out the interview process for prospective deacons. The committee shall serve for one year and shall include the Deacon Vice-chair, who shall serve as the chair of the committee, and four additional members. Two of the four shall be active deacons, and the other two shall be from the church membership at large, which may include a former deacon not actively serving at the time. Both the deacons and the church members at large shall be recommended by the Senior Pastor, or his designee, and the Deacon Chair. The committee shall be confirmed by the church in a February business meeting. The Senior Pastor, or his designee, shall serve as an ex-officio member of the committee. The Deacon Interview Committee shall serve for the remainder of the year. In the event of a vacancy on the committee, the Deacon Chair and the Senior Pastor, or his designee, shall recommend a replacement and submit that name to the church for confirmation.
- (6) Election of Deacons: The Deacon Interview Committee shall review the number of nominations received by those nominated and consider the nominees in the order of the number of nominations they received. The committee will recommend to the church those who are willing and able to serve as servant leaders, devoting themselves to service and assistance to the ministries of the church, the members, and the ministers. For those receiving closely ranked numbers of nominations, the committee shall exercise its judgment as to whom it will recommend to the church. The full committee, or two or more representatives of the committee, shall have at least one interview with the nominee it is considering to recommend and the nominee's spouse (if married). The complete list of nominees selected by the committee shall be submitted to the church, with appropriate biographical information, for election by the church at a fall church business meeting.
- (7) Filling Vacant Positions on the Deacon Body: In the event an active deacon position becomes vacant, the Deacon Interview Committee shall select a replacement from nominees remaining on the list of nominees from the previous selection process. The nominee selected shall serve the remaining term of the vacancy upon election by the church at the next business meeting. Should the remaining term of a vacancy be less than one year the Deacon Chair and the Senior Pastor may determine the position need not be filled until the next regular election of deacons.
- (8) Deacon Emeritus: Upon recommendation of the Senior Pastor and deacon body, the church may elect to the office of Deacon Emeritus those who have modeled exemplary character in the office of deacon through their long, continued,

honorable, and faithful service at Deermeadows. The Deacon Emeritus serves in an advisory capacity to the deacon body without the requirements associated with active deacons and without voting privileges on the deacon body.

Section 4. – Moderator

The Chairman of the Deacons shall preside as moderator of all church business meetings. In the absence of the Chair, the Vice-chair shall serve.

Section 5. – Clerk

The Church Clerk shall keep suitable records of all the official actions of the church. The church may delegate some clerical responsibilities of the Clerk to an administrative assistant. All records are church property and shall be filed in the church office. The church may elect an assistant clerk when necessary. The Clerk's term of office shall be one year; he/she may be eligible to succeed him/herself.

Section 6. – Treasurer

A Church Treasurer shall be elected annually and may serve two successive years. The Treasurer shall serve as an Ex-officio member of the Finance Committee with voting privileges and is responsible for presenting a current financial report to the congregation at church business meetings.

The Treasurer's records, other than individual giving records, shall be open for review according to church policy and the laws of the State of Florida. They shall receive an annual audit from an outside auditing firm. All church financial records are church property and shall be filed in the church office.

An assistant treasurer may be elected by the church as needed. The Church Treasurer, Assistant Treasurer, and Financial Secretary shall be bonded in amounts to be determined by the Finance Committee and according to church policy.

Section 7. – Corporate Officers

Deermeadows Baptist Church is an incorporated entity under the laws of the State of Florida. The corporate name of the church is: Deermeadows Baptist Church, Inc.

- (1) Corporate Officers: In accordance with the Articles of Incorporation and for corporate purposes only, the church shall have a President, a Vice-President, a Secretary and a

Treasurer. The officers listed below shall be recognized as the Corporate Officers of Deermeadows:

The Corporation.....Deermeadows Baptist Church
President.....Chairman of the Deacons
Vice-President.....Vice-Chairman of the Deacons
Secretary.....Church Clerk
Treasurer.....Church Treasurer

(2) Contractual Agreements: Contracts or agreements to which the church is a party shall be executed by the President or as required by the terms of the contracts or agreements. If necessary, they shall be attested by the Church Clerk. Contractual Agreements (or original copies) shall be filed in the church office as required according to best accounting practices.

Section 8. – Directors

As required by Florida Law, Deermeadows Baptist Church, Inc. shall have three Directors. The Directors shall be the Chairman of Deacons, the Vice-chairman of Deacons, and the Church Treasurer.

ARTICLE IV. – ADMINISTRATIVE COMMITTEES

Section 1. – Principles of Administrative Committee Ministry

Administrative Committees, which are designated in sections 2-8 hereof, are permanent, standing committees that provide volunteer leaders opportunities to engage their interests, gifts, and training in ministry. They exist to facilitate key operational functions of the church. Administrative Committees shall have an elected chair, vice chair, and recording secretary. Administrative Committee members shall be nominated by the Nominating Committee for election by the church. With the exception of the Permanent Endowment Fund Committee, members shall serve on a three-year rotation and may not succeed themselves unless special circumstances dictate otherwise. Such circumstances shall be reported to and approved by the church. Members of the Permanent Endowment Fund Committee shall serve for a term of five years and may succeed themselves for an additional term as provided for in Section 8 hereof. Members shall contribute to the work of the Administrative Committee they serve as evidenced by consistent attendance and active participation. Members may not serve as a voting member of more than one Administrative Committee at the same time. Members of the Permanent Endowment Fund Committee may serve on one additional Administrative Committee at the

same time. With the exception of the Permanent Endowment Fund Committee, Administrative Committees shall have appointed deacon liaisons who serve with voting privileges and staff liaisons who serve without voting privileges.

Section 2. – Nominating Committee

The Nominating Committee shall be responsible for nominating members of Administrative Committees, Ministry Teams whose members may not succeed themselves (Benevolence, Church Properties, and Stewardship Education), Church Clerk, and Church Treasurer. Its work shall be conducted such that all positions are filled and receive church approval as necessary prior to the start of the new ministry year. Members of the Nominating Committee shall be fully participating church members giving evidence of a maturing faith. The Nominating Committee shall consist of seven members. A member of the deacon body shall serve as an ex officio member with voting privileges. A member of the ministerial staff shall serve as staff liaison without voting privileges.

Section 3. – Finance Committee

The Finance Committee is responsible for developing and recommending to the church an overall financial plan, including the annual church budget and spending plan. The Finance Committee shall serve with ministerial staff and volunteer leaders to administer the financial gifts of church members and other sources in accordance with sound principles of financial management to facilitate the mission and purpose of the church. The Finance Committee shall consist of seven members; the Church Treasurer and the Deacon Chair shall serve as ex officio members with voting privileges. The Finance Committee shall have a ministerial staff liaison without voting privileges.

Section 4. – Personnel Committee

The Personnel Committee is responsible for recommending prospective staff members to the church as specified in Article III, Section 2 of this document. The Personnel Committee is responsible for developing the Personnel budget and salary administration within the framework of the unified church budget. The Personnel Committee shall consist of seven members and serve with the Senior Pastor or his designee to develop terms and conditions of employment and dismissal, employee benefits, and to evaluate the overall effectiveness of the church staff. The Vice-chair of the deacons shall serve as an ex officio member with voting privileges. The Senior Pastor or his designee shall serve as the staff liaison to the Personnel Committee without voting privileges.

Section 5. – Missions Committee

The Missions Committee is responsible for developing and coordinating a missions strategy that complements the mission and purpose of the church. The Missions Committee will develop and promote the annual missions budget, in coordination with the Finance Committee, and oversee its implementation and disbursement. The Missions Committee is responsible for identifying and engaging local, national, and international ministry opportunities. The Missions Committee shall serve as a liaison between the church and denominational or like-minded mission agencies. The Missions Committee shall consist of seven members. A member of the deacon body shall serve as an ex-officio member with voting privileges. The Missions Committee shall include a ministerial staff liaison who serves without voting privileges.

Section 6. – Weekday Preschool Committee

The Weekday Preschool Committee serves to develop and promote an effective partnership between the Weekday Preschool Ministry of Deermeadows and the mission and purpose of all other ministries of Deermeadows. The Committee shall endorse the annual budget of the Weekday Preschool Ministry and submit the budget to the Finance Committee for final approval. The Weekday Preschool Committee shall consist of seven members and shall work in conjunction with the Personnel Committee to fill vacancies in the Director's position. A member of the deacon body shall serve as an ex-officio member with voting privileges. Employees or members of an employee's family may not serve on the Weekday Preschool Committee. The Weekday Preschool Director and Minister to Preschool shall serve as non-voting ex-officio members of the committee.

Section 7. – Special or Ad Hoc Committees

The creation of a Special or Ad Hoc Committee may be recommended to the Nominating Committee by the deacon body or an Administrative Committee in conjunction with the Pastor to address specific issues for a specified time frame. Special or Ad Hoc Committees shall operate as Administrative Committees for the life of the committee. They shall include an appropriate number of members to accomplish the task. A deacon officer shall serve as an ex officio member with voting privileges. They shall include a ministerial staff liaison without voting privileges and shall be discontinued when the purpose for their creation has been fulfilled and reported to the church.

Section 8. – Permanent Endowment Fund Committee

The Permanent Endowment Fund Committee shall be responsible for the implementation of the Permanent Endowment Fund and the Permanent Endowment Fund Gift Acceptance Policy as approved by the church. The committee shall be comprised of 5 voting members together with the Senior Pastor (ex-officio, non-voting) and a current member of the Finance Committee

named by the Finance Committee (ex-officio, non-voting). Due to the fact that economic cycles tend to have longer terms, the terms of the voting members shall be five years and the members may succeed themselves for one additional term. Voting members of this committee may serve on no more than one additional Administrative Committee.

The terms of the initial voting members shall be staggered with two members elected for a term of five years, two members elected for a term of three years and one member elected for a term of one year. Which initial members will serve for these staggered terms will be recommended by the Nominating Committee.

ARTICLE V. – MINISTRY COUNCILS

Ministry Councils serve to accomplish specific, ongoing tasks and provide wise counsel to facilitate and expand ministry effectiveness within a defined, age-graded ministry area. Their function is to ensure ministry tasks are accomplished as effectively as possible within budgetary constraints to fulfill the mission and purpose of the church as expressed in the Council's area of responsibility.

Ministry Councils are comprised of volunteer leaders actively serving in a ministry area. They are created by the Ministerial Staff member responsible for the ministry area. Ministry Council members shall serve for one year and may succeed themselves in consultation with the Ministerial Staff. Ministry Councils shall include, but are not limited to:

Preschool Ministry Council

Children's Ministry Council

Student Ministry Council

A current list of functioning Ministry Councils and their members will be maintained in the Church Operations Manual and on file in the church office. Church action is not required regarding changes of membership or participation on Ministry Councils.

ARTICLE VI. – MINISTRY TEAMS

Ministry Teams serve to accomplish specific, ongoing tasks and provide wise counsel to facilitate and expand ministry effectiveness within a defined ministry area (such as Baptism, Lord's Supper, Counting, or Decorating). Ministry Teams may recommend policy to Administrative Committees and Ministerial Staff. Their function is to ensure ministry tasks are accomplished as effectively as possible within budgetary constraints to fulfill the mission and purpose of the church.

Ministry Teams shall have an organizational structure and practice similar to Administrative Committees, including a Chair, Vice-chair, Secretary, and staff liaison. All Ministry Teams shall follow a three-year member rotation. Except as noted in Article VI, Section 1 below, members of all Ministry Teams may succeed themselves.

Section 1. – Ministry Teams with Significant Budgetary Oversight

Ministry Teams with significant budgetary oversight responsibilities (which are Media Center/Library, Benevolence, Church Properties and Stewardship Education) shall follow a three-year member rotation and may not succeed themselves unless special circumstances dictate otherwise. In such cases, member's continued service shall be approved by the Nominating Committee. Positions on Benevolence, Church Properties, and Stewardship Education shall be filled by the Nominating Committee according to Article IV, Section 2 of this document. Positions on the Media Center/Library, due to its large size, shall be filled by the Chair, staff liaison or other team members with the approval of the Chair and staff liaison.

Section 2. – Ministry Teams without Budgetary Oversight

Members on Ministry Teams without budgetary oversight (which include Decorating, First Impressions, Baptism, Counting, Lords' Supper, Ushers, Parking, etc.) shall follow a three-year member rotation and may succeed themselves. Positions shall be filled by the Chair, staff liaison, or other team member of the ministry team with approval of the Ministry Team Chair and staff liaison.

A current list of Ministry Teams with and without budgetary oversight responsibilities shall be maintained in the Church Operations Manual in the church office. Church action is not required regarding changes of membership or participation on Ministry Teams with or without budgetary oversight.

ARTICLE VII. – MINISTRY ORGANIZATIONS OF THE CHURCH

All ministry organizations of Deermeadows Baptist Church, such as Bible study, age-graded ministries, and men's and women's ministries shall include a staff liaison responsible for recruiting volunteer leadership which shall be affirmed by the church. All teaching and training materials must be approved by the Pastor and/or the ministry staff liaison and be consistent with the mission and purpose of the church. Ministry Organizations are subject to review by the ministerial staff in consultation with volunteer leaders and may be altered or discontinued in accordance with the Mission and Purpose of Deermeadows Baptist Church.

ARTICLE VIII. – CHURCH MEETINGS

Section 1. – Worship Services

The church shall gather to worship God every week and shall include opportunities for instruction in God’s word, prayer, and ministry. Services shall be open for all people expressing a genuine desire to worship God and honor Christ in this community of faith and shall be conducted under the leadership of the Senior Pastor or his designee.

Section 2. – Church Business Meetings

The Church leadership shall conduct quarterly business meetings. Meetings shall be called by the Senior Pastor or his designee. Meetings shall be moderated pursuant to Article III, section 4. Published notice shall be given one week prior to the meeting through appropriate and effective means. Special meetings may be called by the Senior Pastor or his designee to consider matters of unusual and significant impact. Published notice of such meetings shall be provided at least one week prior to the special meeting.

Special meetings may be called by the deacon officers with approval of a majority vote of the full deacon body. Published notice of such meetings shall be provided as described for special meetings.

Section 3. – Quorum

- (a) Church Business Meeting: The members present at a regular or special meeting called according to the process described above shall constitute a quorum.

- (b) Deacons, Administrative Committees, Ministry Teams or Ministry Councils: The quorum for meetings of the deacons, Administrative Committees, Ministry Teams or Ministry Councils shall be at least 50% of their respective membership.

Section 4. – Parliamentary Rules

The most current *Robert’s Rules of Order Revised* shall be the authority for parliamentary procedure for business meetings, Deacons, Administrative Committees, Ministry Teams and Ministry Councils.

ARTICLE IX. – CHURCH DISCIPLINE

Section 1. – Personal Discord and Broken Relationships

In all cases involving difficulties between church members that result in significant personal discord and broken relationships, particularly as these impact the unity of Deermeadows

Baptist Church and worshipping God, the parties involved shall endeavor to bring about reconciliation in the manner described by the Lord in Matthew 5:23-24 and Matthew 18:15-16.

Section 2. – Deacon Action

Should a church member be accused of an offense leading to discord and disunity in the church, including broken relationships, hurtful doctrine or ongoing, willful and divisive sin, representative members of the deacon body under the direction of the Senior Pastor or his designee may be asked to investigate. Should the investigation, conducted in a spirit of prayer, forgiveness and confidentiality, lead to exoneration, restoration, or the removal of the cause of grief, no further action shall be taken and no report made to the larger deacon body or church.

Should the above actions not result in exoneration, restoration, or the removal of the cause of grief, the Deacon Body Chair and Senior Pastor may request a special meeting between the parties involved for a complete review of the issues with the deacon body in a meeting or meetings called for that purpose. Upon such review the deacons, in accordance with Matthew 18 and serving to represent Deermeadows Baptist Church, shall determine the appropriate action to be taken, up to and including removing the offending member(s) from church membership and disallowing continued participation at Deermeadows Baptist Church functions. A member of the deacon body may be assigned the individual(s) involved for a period of up to one year to pursue healing and restoration in a spirit of Christian love following the deacon action.

Section 3. – Readmission

Any person whose church membership has been terminated as outlined in Section 2 above may be restored at their request after a period of one year upon evidence of repentance and reformation and upon the recommendation of the Senior Pastor and the deacon body.

ARTICLE X. – CHURCH FISCAL YEAR

The church fiscal year shall begin January 1 and close December 31

ARTICLE XI. – CHURCH POLICIES, PROCEDURES AND OPERATIONS

In addition to the church by-laws presented herein, church policies, procedures, and operations guidelines shall be maintained in an operations manual available for review in the church office. These policies, procedures, and operations guidelines shall be maintained in the business administration office to facilitate the matters contained in the by-laws and shall be consistent with their intent.

ARTICLE XII. – REVIEW OF THESE BY-LAWS

The church by-laws shall be reviewed every three years by a committee nominated by the Nominating Committee and elected by the church in the first-quarter business meeting. The revisions shall be presented by the committee to the church for approval, to become effective the following year, unless otherwise provided. The By-laws Review Committee shall consist of not more than seven members and shall be dismissed with the approval of the revisions.

ARTICLE XIII. – AMENDMENTS

Changes and other amendments to the By-laws may be made in a special church business meeting. Such amendments shall have been presented in writing at a previous church business meeting and shall be reviewed by members of the previous by-laws review committee, if available, and the Senior Pastor or his designee. Written copies of the proposed amendment(s) shall have been made available to the church membership at least one week prior to the meeting in which it will be considered for approval. Approval shall be by simple majority vote of those present.