

CONSTITUTION AND BYLAWS

Constitution and Bylaws of Crossroads Baptist Church, Corinth MS

Preamble

This Constitution and Bylaws are made to:

1. Preserve and secure the principles of our faith.
2. Preserve the liberties of each individual member of the church.
3. Ensure freedom of action of independence from any religious body or organization.
4. Provide for orderly conduct of internal affairs, in dealing with others, and of governing church members.

I. Name

The name of this church shall be Crossroads Baptist Church. It shall be affiliated with the Alcorn Baptist Association, the Mississippi Baptist State Convention, and the Southern Baptist Convention.

II. Church Location

The address of the principal office of this church shall be: 1020 CR 400, Corinth, MS 38834

III. Purpose

The purposes of Crossroads Baptist Church are:

1. To worship God, who is worthy of all praise and glory.
2. To fulfill the Great Commission set forth in Matthew 28:19-20.
3. To see the Lost Redeemed, the Redeemed Discipled, and the Discipled Evangelize to the Glory of God and the Praise of Jesus Christ.
4. To minister to the needs of the members and others as the church is able to do so.

IV. Articles of Faith

1. We believe the Holy Bible as the inspired Word of God, without any error, the all-sufficient authority in matters of faith, doctrine, and Christian living.
2. We believe in one God, eternally existing in three Persons: the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit.
3. We believe in the Virgin Birth of Jesus Christ, and that He is true God and man. He died on the cross for our sins. He rose bodily from the dead, ascended into heaven where He sits at the right hand of the Father and is now our High Priest and Advocate.
4. We believe that man was created in the image of God but fell into sin and is, therefore, lost. Only through regeneration by the work of the Holy Spirit can man's salvation and spiritual life be obtained.

5. We believe that eternal salvation is the free gift of God, entirely apart from man's works, and is possessed by any and all who have faith in and receive Jesus Christ as their personal Lord and Savior.
6. We believe in a regenerated church membership: that is, persons who have accepted Jesus Christ as their personal Lord and Savior.
7. We believe that baptism is by immersion and the Lord's Supper is a memorial to His suffering and death on the cross. These are ordinances to be observed by the church in its present age. They are, however, not to be regarded as means for man's salvation.
8. We believe in the personal, bodily, imminent, and glorious return of the Lord Jesus Christ and that His second coming inspires believers for dynamic and zealous life and service for Him while waiting for His return.
9. We believe in the bodily resurrection of the dead, the everlasting blessedness of the saved in heaven, and the everlasting punishment and separation from God of the unsaved in hell.
10. We believe in the autonomy of the local church. The church shall manage its own affairs and shall not be subject to any other religious body or organization.
11. We subscribe to the "Baptist Faith and Message" adopted by the Southern Baptist Convention as our larger statement of faith with scriptural references.

V. Government

The government of Crossroads Baptist Church is vested in its members. The membership retains unto itself the right of exclusive self-government in all phases of its life and organization. It recognizes the needs for mutual counsel and cooperation, which are common among Baptist churches. This church will cooperate with and mutually work with the Alcorn Baptist Association, the Mississippi Baptist State Convention, and the Southern Baptist Convention.

VI. Non-Profit Status and Liquidation

This church is not organized for profit. In the event of liquidation or dissolution of the church, all of its assets and property of every nature and description whatsoever shall be paid over and transferred at the direction of the trustees of Crossroads Baptist Church to the Alcorn Baptist Association, the Mississippi Baptist State Convention or both.

VII. Amendment

This Constitution and Bylaws may be amended provided the proposed amendment shall have been presented in writing at a regular church business meeting and then circulated to the membership. Amendments to this Constitution and Bylaws shall be by two-thirds vote of members of the church who are qualified to vote and are present in the business meeting with a quorum to discuss and vote for this matter.

BYLAWS

I. Church Membership

a. Qualifications

Membership of Crossroads Baptist Church shall consist of people having made a profession of their faith in Jesus as Lord and Savior, and who, having been scripturally baptized by immersion, are in full agreement with the Articles of Faith and the CBC Covenant of Membership, who have had a membership interview with a Pastor, and who have attended the “CBC 101” Membership Class (see Article 1, Section d below)

b. Reception

Membership in the church may be attained by a majority vote of the church in any of its regular meetings and in one of the following manners:

- i. By scriptural baptism and immersion after profession of faith in Jesus Christ as personal Lord and Savior, as commanded by Christ in Matthew 28:19.
- ii. By transfer of church letter from another church.
- iii. By a statement of faith of their prior experience of conversion and scriptural baptism by immersion in another evangelical church of like faith and practice.
- iv. By restoration to the church membership after having been dropped or removed due to church discipline.

c. Termination

Membership in this church shall be terminated when a member:

- i. Requests a letter of transfer to join another church or is dropped from the roll of membership when he or she joins another church. A letter of transfer is not necessary.
- ii. The member dies.
- iii. Is dismissed by a vote of the church due to reasons and circumstances provided in Section VII, Church Discipline. The pastor(s) and deacons will do all they can to counsel the member for restoration prior to action of dismissal.
- iv. Request of the member to be dismissed from the church membership.

d. Orientation of New Members

Candidates for membership and new members must attend the CBC 101 Membership Class to learn and understand the privileges and responsibilities of belonging to the Lord's church.

- i. Members in good standing shall have the right to a voice and vote in all church transactions and shall have the right and privileges to full participation in the life and work of the church.
- ii. It shall be the duty of church members to uphold the Articles of Faith, Constitution, and Bylaws of Crossroads Baptist Church.

e. Duties of a Member

On becoming a member of Crossroads Baptist Church, in addition to the agreement to the Crossroads Baptist Church Covenant, Articles of Faith, Constitution, and Bylaws, each member further covenants to love, honor, and pray for the Pastor(s); to recognize the authority of the Pastor(s) in spiritual affairs of the church; to cherish a brotherly love for all members of the church; to support the church in prayer, tithes, offerings, with other financial support as the Lord enables, as well as the use of time, use of gifts, and use of abilities for the building up of Crossroads Baptist Church and for the advancement of the Great Commission; in accordance with Hebrews 10:25, each member agrees to attend all gatherings, meetings, and events of the church for the purpose of worship, spiritual nourishment, and the building up of Christian love and good works, unless divinely hindered; and in accordance with Biblical commands, to support Crossroads Baptist Church through a lifestyle walk affirming the beliefs and practices of the church.

II. Church Officers

All church officers must be members of the church in good standing.

a. Pastors:

- i. The qualifications for a pastor shall be consistent with those listed in 1 Timothy 3:1-7 and Titus 1:5-9. Training, skills, and experiences are needed in this area of leadership.
- ii. Responsibilities:
 1. These generally fall into the following areas: preaching, teaching, pastoral counseling, administration, planning, and guiding the church to grow and fulfill its purposes.
 2. They shall lead the church, the organizations, and all leaders of the church in performing their tasks in worship, proclamation, education, and evangelism.

3. Pastors shall be an ex-officio member of all church standing committees.
 4. Pastors shall assist the other Pastors and deacons in securing pulpit supply for times of absence.
- iii. Call
- a. A pastor shall be chosen and called whenever a vacancy occurs.
 - b. A pastor's selection committee shall be appointed by the church to seek out a suitable pastor and this committee's recommendation will serve as a nomination.
 - c. The pastor's selection committee will recommend only one candidate at a time.
 - d. The pastor's election shall take place at a meeting called for that purpose, of which at least one-week notice shall be given to the members.
 - e. An affirmative vote of three-fourths (3/4) of those present is necessary for an approved choice.
 - f. If a current church member meets the qualifications as specified above, the steps concerning a pastor's selection committee may be bypassed and the church member candidate may go before the church membership for a vote. Pastor(s) and deacons must approve him as a candidate and serve to operate in the place of the selection committee to present the nomination of the church member. An affirmative vote of three-fourths (3/4) of those present is necessary for an approved choice.
- iv. Terms of Service
1. A pastor will serve until the relationship is terminated by either his request or that of the church. In either case, at least thirty (30) days' notice shall be given unless otherwise mutually agreed.
 2. There shall be a written mutual contract/agreement made between the pastor and the church.

b. Church Staff

This church shall employ or call full or part-time staff as it shall need.

- i. Staff members other than that of the pastor shall be recommended for employment by an elected personnel committee.
- ii. A written job description and mutual contract/agreement will be prepared when the need for church staff is determined.

c. Deacons

i. Number, term of office

There shall be five (5) deacons for the first 100 resident members and one (1) for each additional fifty (50) of portion thereof. Deacons shall be elected for a term of service of three (3) years.

1. After the term of service of three years has expired, deacons will be required to take a one-year sabbatical for prayer, study, and spiritual discipleship under the direction and guidance of a pastor of CBC.
2. In the event that there are less than three (3) biblically qualified men to serve in the role of Deacon, the term of service provision shall be waived so as to help meet the need of biblical leadership necessary for the growth, health, and vibrancy of Crossroads Baptist Church.

ii. Qualifications

1. A church deacon must meet the qualifications listed in 1 Timothy 3:8-13.
2. A deacon shall demonstrate an exemplary Christian testimony in private, family, and public life; a committed Christian and partner of the pastors; supporter and promoter of the church mission and vision, faith, practice, and ministries.

iii. Election

1. When a deacon vacancy occurs, the chairman of the deacons shall announce that an election of a deacon shall be held during a named church business meeting.
2. The deacons will enlist active men to be recommended to the church. The duties, qualifications, and importance of the office of a deacon will be interpreted to the candidates and shared with the church prior to a scheduled election of deacons.
3. Any biblically qualified man willing to serve in the role of deacon will be required to undergo an observation and discipling period of no less than ninety (90) days. This observation and discipling period must take place prior to the scheduled election of new deacons.

iv. Ordination

1. Selection, election, and ordination of deacons is a privilege of the local church.
2. When ordination of deacons is planned by the church, it shall authorize the pastors to assemble a council to examine the candidates concerning their qualifications to serve as deacons.
3. The council directed to examine the deacons shall be composed of the pastors and the deacons of Crossroads Baptist Church.
 - a. Inactive deacons on sabbatical are welcome and encouraged to attend but are not required.
4. When the council recommends the ordination of deacons, the ordination service shall be scheduled and led by the pastors.

v. Duties

1. Elected deacons shall elect the chairman of their committee.
2. Deacons serve in a ministry of encouragement and counsel for the pastors concerning the progress and welfare of the church.
3. Assist the pastors in ministering to the members by implementing a deacon ministry plan.
4. Develop a deacon candidate discipleship plan.
5. Seek to solve any fellowship problem of the church.
6. Assist the pastors in administering the church ordinances.
7. Serve as church membership committee.
8. Disciple deacon candidate(s) under observation for the role of deacon.

vi. Termination/Resignation

1. A deacon will serve for the duration of his elected 3-year term unless the relationship is terminated by either request or that of the church. In either case, at least thirty (30) days' notice shall be given unless otherwise mutually agreed.
2. If said deacon is responsible or chair of any committees and wishes to resign that position also, the deacon is responsible for finding his replacement, as well as training his replacement, to help minimize any negative impact to the regular function and operation of the church prior to the separation of his duties.
3. If a deacon is terminating/moving his membership to a different church, the standard thirty (30) days' notice mentioned above is required to help minimize any negative impact to the regular function and operation of the church prior to the termination of his membership.

vii. Safety and Security

1. It shall be the responsibility of the deacons to see to the safety and security of Crossroads Baptist Church members, guests, and affiliates while on the premises.
2. This responsibility includes:
 - a. A selection of a security team
 - b. All security team members must successfully complete a background check, be approved to hold an enhanced conceal carry permit, and complete active shooter training.
3. Safety and Security shall fall under the authority of the Pastors and Deacons of Crossroads Baptist with the provision to appoint a leader of Safety and Security at the discretion of the Pastors and Deacons of Crossroads Baptist.

d. Lay Leader

- i. In the event that an individual presents himself or herself as qualified to teach and lead in various positions within the body, but does not biblically qualify to fill the role of a Pastor or Deacon of Crossroads Baptist Church, that individual shall:
 1. Be a member in good standing
 2. Demonstrate an exemplary Christian testimony in private, family, and public life; a committed Christian and partner of the pastors and deacons; supporter and promoter of the church mission and vision, faith, practice, and ministries.
 3. Should be a growing Christian disciple who understands that everyone has spiritual gifts and experiences that are vital to the body of Christ (see 1 Corinthians 12). This person benefits from having one or more of these spiritual gifts: compassion, discernment, faith, helping, leadership, and servanthood.

e. Moderator

- i. The church moderator may be a pastor or a lay leader elected to this position.
- ii. The moderator shall preside at all regular and called business meetings of the church.
- iii. In the absence of the moderator, the chairman of deacons shall preside over the regular and called business meetings of the church.
- iv. In the absence of the moderator and the chairman of deacons, the church clerk shall call the church to order and an acting moderator will be elected.

f. Clerk

- i. The church clerk shall be elected and be responsible for keeping an accurate record of all business meeting transactions of the church and preparing the annual report to the association.
- ii. He or she shall keep a register of the names and addresses of the church members, with dates of admission, dismissal, dedication of children, and deaths of members of the church family.
- iii. He or she shall issue letters of dismissal voted by the church and write letters of transfer of membership, prepare written reports of the church, and keep an accurate history of the church.
- iv. An assistant church clerk may be appointed or elected if and when the church deems this role necessary.
- v. In the event of resignation, the clerk is responsible for finding and training his/her replacement before the termination of duties to help minimize any negative impact on the regular function and operation of the church.

g. Treasurer

- i. The church treasurer shall be elected as the custodian of all moneys of the church and shall disburse these moneys by checks as authorized by the church.
- ii. He or she shall keep, at all times, an itemized account of all receipts and disbursements and shall render a monthly and annually written report of this account to the church.
- iii. The treasurer's report shall be audited annually by an auditing committee, as deemed necessary by the majority of the church in a scheduled or called business meeting.
- iv. An assistant church treasurer may be appointed or elected if and when the church deems this role necessary.
- v. In the event of resignation, the treasurer is responsible for finding and training his/her replacement before the termination of duties to help minimize any negative impact on the regular function and operation of the church.

h. Financial Secretary

- i. The church financial secretary shall be elected and shall be responsible for seeing that the offerings are properly received, counted, and deposited in the church's bank account.
- ii. An assistant financial secretary may be elected if and when the church deems this role necessary.
- iii. He or she shall properly credit each contributor and their offerings.
- iv. He or she shall be responsible for mailing a quarterly or annual record of contribution to donors.
- v. The Financial Secretary may serve as the Assistant Treasurer if approved by three-fourths (3/4) vote of a majority membership present at a called church business meeting.
- vi. In the event of resignation, the financial secretary is responsible for finding and training his/her replacement before the termination of duties to help minimize any negative impact on the regular function and operation of the church.

i. Trustees

- i. At least three (3) trustees shall be elected from the church to hold in trust the property of the church.
- ii. The office of trustee is separate from that of a Pastor and deacon and the two roles cannot be held concurrently unless otherwise voted on by the church.
- iii. 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 each action.
- iv. It shall be the function of the trustees to sign any, and all legal documents involving the sale, mortgage, purchase, or lease of church property or any other legal documents requiring the signature of the trustees for and on behalf of the church.

j. Vacancies

In case of vacancy in any office, except that of a pastor or deacon, the vacancy shall be filled by the church at a regular or special meeting as soon as possible after such vacancy has occurred.

III. Ministry to Minors

- a. Responsibility of CBC members in regards to ministry to minors:
 - i. All members of Crossroads Baptist Church are called to protect the minors that attend services.
 - ii. It is the responsibility of any member of Crossroads Baptist Church to immediately notify a pastor if the suspicion of sexual misconduct or abuse is occurring.
 1. Said sexual misconduct or abuse should be reported whether the abuse is occurring on or off the campus of Crossroads Baptist Church.
 - iii. Said pastor is then required to notify local law enforcement if any suspicion of sexual misconduct or abuse against minors occurs, so that further investigation may occur.
 - iv. If a minor informs a CBC member of abuse or misconduct that adult individual is a “Mandatory Reporter” and must report the account of abuse to a pastor and to local law enforcement with said pastor even if the minor requests anonymity.
- b. For those CBC members who are working with minors through teaching Sunday School, nursery, or through another programmatic event or outreach event:
 - i. Two non-related adults must be present at all times when teaching Sunday School, nursery, or other programmatic event or an outreach event.
 - ii. A background check must be passed prior to any individual working with another non-related adult in ministry to children.
 1. No person(s) may work with minors before the background check has been completed and the results obtained by the pastor(s) and deacons.
 2. If a background check returns criminal history of any sort that individual will not be eligible to work in ministry to children.
 - iii. If an allegation of sexual misconduct or abuse is lodged against a CBC member currently working with minors, that individual will be required to step down immediately from children’s ministry while the investigation is conducted by local law enforcement.

IV. Church Teams

Church Teams shall be formed as needed for successfully accomplishing the mission and purpose of the church. Church Team members shall be elected by the church from nominations presented by a Nominating Team, and nominations from the floor with consent of the nominee. All Teams shall have a minimum of three (3) members with a leader. Any team member elected to fill any vacancy shall serve the unexpired term of the person vacated. Each team leader shall submit an annual budget request to the Budget and Financial Teams. Once a team has fulfilled its duties, the team will be disbanded.

V. Church Meetings

a. Worship Services

The church shall meet regularly each Sunday morning for the worship of God and for preaching and instruction of God's Word. Additional meetings may be held on Sunday evenings and Wednesday night or on other selected day(s) or evening(s) for continued worship, preaching, instruction, evangelism, designated prayer and Bible Study as determined by the authority of the pastors of CBC. These meetings shall be open for the entire membership of the church and for all people and shall be conducted under the direction of the pastors or designated church officer in the absence of the pastors.

b. Regular Business Meetings

Regular business meetings shall be held on the 2nd Sunday of March, June, September, and December. The agenda shall be circulated or made known to the church one week prior to the business meeting. Should there be any unusual meeting or matter of unusual interest to be brought before such regular meeting, notice shall be given the membership one week prior to that meeting.

c. Special Business Meeting

A special called business meeting may be called by the pastors, and with other church officers, or by action of the church to consider special matters of significant nature. A one-week written notice or announcement must be given for the specially called business meeting.

d. Quorum

The quorum consists of those who attend the business meeting, provided it is a stated meeting or one that has been properly called.

VI. Church Discipline

- a. Should any unhappy difference arise among members, the aggrieved member shall follow in a tender spirit, the rules given by our Lord in Matthew 18:15-17.
- b. Should any case of gross breach of relationship, or of public scandal occur, the pastors and deacons shall endeavor to resolve the conflict; and if this effort fails, shall report the case to the church.
- c. All such proceedings shall be pervaded by a spirit of Christian kindness and forbearance, but should an adverse decision be reached, the church may proceed to admonish or declare the offender to be no longer in the membership of the church.
- d. Any person whose membership has been terminated for any offense may be restored by three-fourths (3/4) vote of the members present at a called business meeting as stated in these By-Laws; upon evidence of his or her repentance and reformation; or if an account of continued absence, upon satisfactory explanation.

VII. Marriage

Due to the changing culture of our society, and in light of the *Obergefell v. Hodges* decision made by the Supreme Court of the United States on June 26, 2015 and its potential impact on churches, ministers, and laity, Crossroads Baptist Church accepts the following safe-guard statements as permanent Bylaws and Constitutional:

- a. Under the protection of the United States Constitution, the Pastor(s) of Crossroads Baptist Church, Corinth, MS will not be required to conduct same-sex marriage ceremonies and the facilities of Crossroads Baptist Church will not be required for the use of same-sex marriages.
- b. The Pastors and Crossroads Baptist Church will exercise their constitutional rights which includes the right to freely practice their religion.
- c. The following rights are guaranteed by the First Amendment of the US Constitution:
 - i. As the pastors religious beliefs prevent his participating in a marriage ceremony, for whatever reason, he is free to not participate.
 - ii. Crossroads Baptist Church, likewise, is free to deny the use of its facilities to anyone for whatever religiously motivated reason the church might have.
 - iii. Furthermore, we, the members of Crossroads Baptist Church, recognize the First Amendment's right to freely exercise religion and to be free from state entanglement regarding the faith, practice, choice of ministers and members, in what may be preached from the pulpit, and religious activities of Crossroads Baptist Church.

- d. Based on the Baptist Faith and Message's article on the family which defines marriage as the uniting of one man and one woman and declares that relationship to be the channel of sexual expression according to biblical standards, we approve this statement:
 - i. The Church, for its autonomy, shall determine criteria for church membership and the process for admission of members.
 - ii. The Church and its ministers shall only recognize, participate in, conduct, or allow Church facilities to be utilized for purpose of marriage ceremonies and other functions which are related to marriage, only in those instances where the marriage is deemed to be scriptural and not in contradiction to the Crossroads Baptist Church statement of faith, the Baptist Faith and Message, or biblical conscience. This shall prohibit the use of Church facilities for same-sex marriage ceremonies and related functions and shall bar the Church's ministers and members from conducting or otherwise participating in same-sex marriage ceremonies and related functions.
- e. Finally, be it further stated and recorded that we, the members of Crossroads Baptist Church, have decided and will obey the will of God as handed down through the Christian Scriptures, and not the will of man.

The above statements concerning biblical marriage were signed and ratified on 13 September 2015 by the leadership and laity of Crossroads Baptist Church.

Ratified by action of the church in its business meeting on: May 31, 2020

Moderator: Nick Brown, Pastor