

Constitution and Doctrinal Statement of  
Plano **Bible** Chapel  
Plano, Texas

**Article I – Name**

The name of this church shall be Plano Bible Chapel and it shall be located in Plano, Texas.

**Article II – Purpose and Goals**

Section 1 – Purpose

This church shall be a body of professing Christians who have joined together for the purpose of glorifying God individually and collectively (I Cor. 10:31).

Section 2 – Goals

We will have a threefold goal as a church. It shall be our goal to evangelize our community and the world by introducing individuals to the grace of God and by inviting them to trust Jesus Christ as their Savior (Matt. 28:19; Acts 1:8). It shall be our goal to edify believers in Jesus Christ, building them up in their faith, so that they may become mature, reproducing Christians (Eph. 4:11-16). It shall be our goal to develop leaders who will be able to assume positions of responsibility in this and other churches (2 Tim. 2:2).

**Article III – Doctrine**

Section 1 – The Scriptures

We believe the Bible to be the verbally inspired word of God, without error in the original writings, and the supreme and final authority in doctrine and practice, for both this church and every individual Christian (2 Tim. 3:16; 2 Pet. 1:21).

Section 2 – The Godhead

We believe in one God who eternally exists in three persons: the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. Each person of the Godhead possesses the same nature and attributes, but each is distinct in office and activity (Deut. 6:4; Matt.28:19).

Section 3 – Jesus Christ

We believe that Jesus Christ is the eternal Son of God, that he became man without ceasing to be God having been conceived of the Holy Spirit and born of the virgin Mary, that He lived a sinless life, that he died as a substitutionary sacrifice for every human being, that He was physically raised from the dead by divine power, that he presently serves in heaven as our Intercessor and Advocate, and that He will return to earth (John 1:1, 14; 5:18; 2 Cor. 5:21; Acts 2:31-33; 1 John 2:1-2; John 14:1-2).

Section 4 – The Holy Spirit

We believe that God the Holy Spirit is a person who restrains evil in the world, convicts men of sin, regenerates those who trust Christ as Savior, baptizes them into the body of Christ, indwells them

permanently, seals them unto the day of redemption, bestows spiritual gifts on each one, and fills those yielded to Him. We believe that some gifts of the Spirit, such as speaking in tongues and miraculous healings, were given as authenticating signs in the early church and were temporary. We believe, however, that God answers prayer for the sick in accordance with His will (John 16:7-11; 3:8; I Cor. 12:4-11, 13; John 14:16-17; Eph. 4:30; 5:18; I Cor. 14:22-24; Heb. 2:4; I John 5:14-15; Jas. 5:15-16).

## Section 5 – Angels

We believe that angels are spiritual beings which were created sinless. Presently angels exist in both fallen and unfallen states, the former state including Satan and his demons. We believe that Satan is a personal being who is the enemy of God and all Christians (Heb. 1:13-14; 2 Pet. 2:4; Isa. 14:12-14; Gen. 3:1-19; Heb. 2:14; Rev. 20:10).

## Section 6 – Man

We believe that man was created by God as a human being and that he did not evolve from a lower form of life. We believe that he was created innocent and in the image of God. Through their own choice, Adam and Eve fell and their sin has resulted in physical and spiritual death to themselves and their posterity. We believe that man is totally depraved, that is, in no way is he able to commend himself to God. He has inherited a sinful nature, is alienated from God, and in need of salvation (Gen. 1:1, 27; Col. 1:16-17; Gen. 2:17; 3:19; Eph. 2:1-2).

We believe that God administers His purpose on the earth through man under varying responsibilities, stewardships, or dispensations. These dispensations may be distinguished in Scripture through a consistent use of the normal method of biblical interpretation. We believe that God has a plan and program for Israel that is distinct from His plan and program for the church (Eph. 3:2-6, 9-11; Col. 1:25-27; Rom. 6:14; Heb. 7:18-19; I Cor. 10:32).

## Section 7 – Salvation

We believe that salvation is a gift of God and is received by man through personal faith in Jesus Christ and His sacrifice for sin. We believe that man is justified by grace through faith apart from works, and that all true believers are kept secure in Christ by the power of God forever (Acts 13:38-39; Rom. 6:23; Eph. 2:8-9; Rom. 8:1, 38-39; John 10:27-30).

We believe that sanctification is positional, progressive, and ultimate. Christians are called to a holy life of fellowship, service, and testimony in the power of the Holy Spirit. God will reward the faithfulness of Christians at the Judgment Seat of Christ (John 17:17; Eph. 5:25-27; I Thes. 5:23; Heb. 10:10, 14; I Pet. 1:15-16; I Cor. 3:12-17; John 14:1-3; 2 Cor. 5:10).

## Section 8 – The Church

We believe that the universal church, the body of Christ, is a spiritual organism composed of all genuine Christians who live between the Day of Pentecost (Acts 2) and the Rapture (I Thes. 4:16-17). A believer becomes a member of this church by the baptizing work of the Holy Spirit at the moment he trusts Christ as his Savior (I Cor. 12:13; Col. 1:18).

We believe that the local church is an assembly of professing Christians who voluntarily join together in one locality to worship God, study the Bible, observe the ordinances, practice Christian fellowship, pray, evangelize the lost, and be equipped for Christian service (Acts 2:42-47; I Cor. 1:1-2; Eph. 4:11-13).

We believe that Christ instituted the ordinances of water baptism and the Lord's Supper which are to be observed by believers until He returns, and that these are the only ordinances He so appointed. By water baptism a believer identifies himself publicly with Christ and His people. Water baptism is intended to be for believers only and by immersion whenever possible. The Lord's Supper is a memorial of Christ's death, the elements being symbolic of His body and blood. Every believer should partake of the Lord's Supper frequently (Matt. 28:19-20; Rom. 6:1-14; I Cor. 11:23-26).

## Section 9 – The Future

We believe in the personal, imminent return of Jesus Christ for the church. This event (the Rapture) will be followed in order by the Tribulation, the Second Coming of Christ to earth, the Millennial Reign of Christ on the earth, and entrance into the Eternal State.

We believe that the souls of believers in Jesus Christ pass immediately into His presence at death and remain there in conscious bliss until the resurrection of the body at His coming for the church, when soul and body will be reunited and joined with Him forever. We believe that after death the souls of unbelievers remain in conscious misery in Hades until the final judgement of the Great White Throne at the close of the Millennium when soul and body reunited shall be cast into the Lake of Fire, not to be annihilated, but to be punished with everlasting separation from the presence of the Lord. We believe in a literal heaven and a literal hell (Luke 16:19-26; 23:43; 2 Cor. 5:8; Phil. 1:23; 2 Thes. 1:7-9; Rev. 20:11-15).

## **Article IV – Government**

### Section 1 – Authority

This church acknowledges the Lord Jesus Christ as its Head (Col. 1:18). The Scriptures are the objective revelation of God by which He expresses His will to the church (2 Tim. 3:16; 2 Pet. 1:21). This church shall be neither accountable to nor under the jurisdiction or supervision of any other ecclesiastical body.

The government of this church shall be vested in the governing board of elders (Acts 20:28-31; 1 Tim. 3:1-7; 5:17-22; Tit. 1:5-9; Heb. 13:17). Though the elder board shall be the final human authority in the church, it shall have the power to delegate to individuals, committees, and organizations the right to transact any of its business or to exercise any of its powers, but the exercise of such authority shall be subject to the supervision and control of the board.

### Section 2 – The Governing Board of Elders

The governing board of elders shall be the official board of the church. It shall be composed of all the elders of the church whose term is active and shall also include the senior pastor. All succeeding references to "the board" or to "the elders" in this document refer to the governing board of elders. It shall lead, govern, and oversee the church. The elders shall strive to remain sensitive to the feelings of individual members of the church by many means in order to provide representative rather than dictatorial leadership (1 Pet. 5:1-4).

The board shall meet at least once a month and a quorum of at least three-fourths of the elders shall be required to transact business. At the first meeting of the new church year (January through December) the board shall elect a chairman, vice-chairman, and secretary to serve for a period of one year. The vote of at least three-fourths of all the elders shall determine major actions and policies.

The board shall be responsible to do the following:

- 1) Lead the church to determine and execute its objectives. (1 Tim. 3:5)
- 2) Govern the affairs of the church. (Acts 20:28; 1 Pet. 5:2-4)
- 3) Oversee all church organizations and their programs. (Tit. 1:7-9)
- 4) Provide for the spiritual needs of the church. (Acts 20:28)
- 5) Feed the church from the written Word of God. (Acts 20:32)
- 6) Protect the church from its spiritual enemies. (Acts 20:28-31)
- 7) Exercise discipline of individuals in the church as needed (see Article IV, Section 8).
- 8) Pray for and with the people.
- 9) Visit people needing counsel and comfort in times of need.

### Section 3 – Major Committees

#### a. The Deacon Committee

The deacon committee shall be composed of all the deacons of this church whose term is active. It shall serve under and be responsible to the elder board.

This committee shall meet as needed and a quorum of at least three-fourths of the deacons shall be required to transact business. At the first meeting of the new church year the committee shall elect a chairman, vice-chairman, and secretary to serve for a period of one year. The vote of at least three-fourths of all the deacons shall be required to pass motions.

The deacon committee shall be responsible to do the following:

- 1) Provide for the physical needs of the church. (Acts 6:1-6)
- 2) Maintain the properties and equipment of the church.
- 3) Organize and administer the finances of the church.
- 4) Minister to the physical and material needs of the church.

#### b. The Trustee Committee

The trustee committee shall be composed of all the elders and deacons of the church whose term is active. It shall serve under and be responsible to the elder board. It shall function on the same level of authority as the deacon committee.

The trustee committee shall meet as needed and at least once each year (as required by Texas law). A quorum of at least three-fourths of the trustees shall be required to transact business. At the first meeting of the new church year the committee shall elect a chairman, vice-chairman, and secretary to serve for a period of one year. The vote of at least three-fourths of all the trustees shall be required to pass motions.

The trustee committee shall be responsible to do the following:

- 1) Provide for the needs of the church which have legal or governmental ramifications.
- 2) Act for the church in the purchase or sale of real properties.
- 3) Lead the church in providing additional buildings and facilities in which to meet.
- 4) Secure legal counsel for the church as needed.

#### Section 4 – Elders and Deacons

a. Qualifications

Elders must meet the qualifications set forth in 1 Timothy 3:1-7; Titus 1:6-9; 1 Peter 5:1-4; and Acts 20:28-35 as interpreted by a majority of the elders.

Deacons must meet the qualifications set forth in 1 Timothy 3:8-13 as interpreted by a majority of the elders.

Elders and deacons must be able and willing to serve as well as being personally qualified for their respective offices.

b. Number

There shall be as many elders and deacons as there are men who are qualified, willing, able and needed to function in this capacity in the judgment of the elder board.

c. Appointment

A nominating committee shall be appointed by the elder board to serve for a period of four months (normally September through December). This committee shall be composed as much as possible of an equal number of elders, deacons, and other members in the church, but will not contain less than six individuals. After a thorough study of the men in the church, this committee shall recommend to the board men who, in its judgment, are qualified, willing, and able to function as elders or deacons as the needs of the church may require. The board shall vote on each man nominated. A three-fourths majority vote of all the elders shall be required for each nominee to remain on the ballot. The ballot shall then go to the church. A three-fourths majority vote of confidence by the members of the congregation who are voting shall be required for each nominee to be appointed as an elder or deacon. The congregational vote shall be taken by secret written ballot which has been sent to each member in the church at least two weeks in advance. The whole process shall normally be completed before December 31 of each year.

d. Induction

An induction service shall be planned by the board at which time each newly appointed elder and deacon shall be presented to the congregation and ordained to his respective ministry in the church. This service shall normally take place in January as needed.

e. Term of Service

Elders and deacons shall serve a term of three years with approximately one-third of each group's term of service expiring each year. An elder or deacon may succeed himself in office and begin serving an additional three-year term immediately after his present term of service expires provided, 1) he is nominated by the nominating committee, 2) he is approved by a three-fourths majority vote of the board, and 3) he has received a three-fourths majority vote of confidence by the congregation. (See Article IV, Section 4, c.)

f. Removal from Office

An elder or deacon may resign if he feels so led by God before his term of service has expired.

The elder board shall evaluate each elder and each deacon at least once each year. If an elder or deacon ceases to be qualified or ceases to function acceptably as an elder or deacon, he may be removed from office by a three-fourths majority vote of the board before his term of service expires.

## Section 5 – Other Officers

a. Treasurer

The treasurer shall be a deacon. He shall be appointed to the office of treasurer by the board and shall be responsible to the deacon committee. He shall have custody of the funds contributed to the church for any purpose and shall pay out the same as directed. He shall also make periodic financial reports.

b. Committee Chairmen and Directors

Committee chairmen and directors of church programs shall be selected by the elder board, the deacon committee, or the trustee committee, depending on their responsibilities, and shall be approved by the board. Each one shall be given a ministry description that will outline his or her title, function, responsibilities, term of service, and compensation at the time he or she is enlisted to serve.

c. Pastors and other Full and Part-time Employees

A search committee shall be convened for the purpose of selecting new pastors. The governing board of elders will closely evaluate the pastoral candidates recommended by the search committee. The candidate that results from this process must be approved unanimously by the board. A three-fourths majority vote of confidence by the members of the congregation who are voting shall be required for the candidate to be appointed as a pastor. The congregational vote shall be taken by secret written ballot which has been sent to each member in the church at least two weeks in advance.

Other employees shall be selected or approved by the board in consultation with the appropriate major committees.

The senior pastor shall be a member of the governing board of elders. Other staff members may or may not be elders or deacons depending on their personal qualifications and the ministry which they are hired to carry out.

## Section 6 – Policy Statements

More particular methods, procedures, and responsibilities shall be spelled out in written policy statements produced by the elder board and the major committees, and approved by the board. Policy statements may be revised by a three-fourths majority vote of the committee involved and the board.

## Section 7 – Membership

There shall be a formal membership roll. Any professing Christian who has met the requirements of the membership policy adopted by the governing board of elders will be a member of this church (I Cor. 12:13-27).

## Section 8 –Church Discipline

Church discipline ultimately shall be the responsibility of the elder board which may publicly announce the heretical doctrine or disorderly conduct of any member if his or her life mars the testimony of the church. In extreme cases the offending person may be denied the fellowship of the church. In every case of church discipline the desired result shall be the restoration to fellowship of the offending party (Matt. 18:15-18; Rom. 16:17; 1 Cor. 5:1-13; 2 Cor. 2:5-11; Gal. 6:1; 2 Thes. 3:6, 14-17; Tit. 3:10-11; 2 John 2:10-11).

### **Article V – Ordination**

Since it is the hope of this church that Spirit-filled men among us shall be led by God to specific ministries of leadership in the church of Jesus Christ, such men may be given a commendation to minister in a particular way and place by the elders convened for this purpose. The elders shall have the option of inviting one or more guests to join them in examining the candidate if they see fit. The candidate shall be examined concerning his understanding of and agreement with the doctrinal statement of this church, his Scriptural qualifications, his past experience and previous ministry, his leading to minister, and any other areas which the elders may specify. Upon a favorable decision of the elders, the candidate shall be approved for ordination. The time and form of the ordination ceremony shall be determined by the elder board (Acts 6:5-6; 13:3; I Tim. 4:14).

### **Article VI – Amendments**

This constitution may be amended by a three-fourths majority vote of the elder board and a three-fourths majority vote of confidence by the members of the congregation who are-voting. The congregational vote shall be taken by secret ballot which has been sent to each member in the church at least two weeks in advance.

#### Amendment 1

The words underlined below were added to the constitution August 5, 1979.

Article IV, Section 4, Paragraph c: “A nominating committee shall be appointed by the elder board to serve for a period of four months (normally September through

December). This committee shall be composed as much as possible of an equal number of elders, deacons, and other men in the church, but will not contain less than six individuals... The whole process shall normally be completed before December 31 each year.”

Article IV, Section 4, Paragraph d: “This service shall normally take place in January as needed.”

The following 3 amendments, along with spelling and grammatical changes were added to the constitution on October 9, 2005:

## **Amendment 2**

The following sections of the constitution were amended as shown below in order to update the nominating and voting practices of the church:

Article IV, Section 4, paragraph c:

...This committee shall be composed as much as possible of an equal number of elders, deacons, and other ~~men~~ **members** in the church, but will not contain less than six individuals.... A three-fourths majority vote of confidence by ~~these~~ **the** members of the congregation who are present and voting shall be required for each nominee to be appointed as an elder or deacon. The congregational vote shall be taken by secret written ballot ~~as a meeting convened for this purpose and for which notice has been sent by mail to each family~~ **member** in the church at least two weeks ~~before the meeting~~ **in advance**. ...

Article VI:

This constitution may be amended by a three-fourths majority vote of the elder board and a three-fourths majority vote of **confidence by the** ~~these~~ members of the congregation who are present and voting. The congregational vote shall be taken by secret ballot ~~at a meeting convened for the purpose and for which notice has been sent to each family~~ **member** in the church at least two weeks ~~before the meeting~~ **in advance**.

## **Amendment 3**

The following section of the constitution was amended as shown below in order to implement a formal membership requirement and to move the specifics of how the church directory is maintained from the constitution to the church policy manual:

Article IV, Section 7:

There shall be ~~no~~ **a** formal membership roll. Any professing Christian **who has met the requirements of the membership policy adopted by the governing board of elders will be** ~~may consider himself or herself~~ a member of this church if ~~he considers it his church home (I Cor. 12:13-27)~~. ~~A church directory shall be maintained by the deacon committee which contains the names and addresses of families which are currently attending the services of the church regularly.~~

## **Amendment 4**

The following sections of the constitution were amended as shown below in order to clarify the role of the senior pastor, to cover the process by which all new pastors are found and installed, and to move the specifics of church employee contracts from the constitution to the church policy manual:

Article IV, Section 2: ~~The Elder Board~~ **The Governing Board of Elders**

The ~~elder board~~ **governing board of elders** shall be the official board of the church, and ~~it~~ shall be composed of all the elders of the church **whose term is active and shall also include the senior pastor. All succeeding references to "the board" or to "the elders" in this document refer to the governing board of elders.** ...

Article IV, Section 5, paragraph c:

**Pastors and other** Full and Part-time Employees

**A search committee shall be convened for the purpose of selecting new pastors. The governing board of elders will closely evaluate the pastoral candidates recommended by the search committee. The candidate that results from this process must be approved unanimously by the board. A three-fourths majority vote of confidence by the members of the congregation who are voting shall be required for the candidate to be appointed as a pastor. The congregational vote shall be taken by secret written ballot which has been sent to each member in the church at least two weeks in advance.**

**Other employees** Employees shall be selected or approved by the board in consultation with the appropriate major committees.

**The senior pastor shall be a member of the governing board of elders. Other staff** Staff members may or may not be elders or deacons depending on **their personal qualifications and** the ministry which they are hired to carry out. ~~Staff members shall be employed on a one-year renewable contract basis.~~