

# **SOUTHPORT BAPTIST CHURCH DBA ONE CHRISTIAN CHURCH**

## **Constitution**

**Preamble:** Believing that the Lord God Almighty, in His grace, has directed the establishment of this church for the glorification of His Name, and in belief that the affairs of this church should, therefore, abide by His Scriptures and be carried out in a manner that promotes all things being done properly and in order, we do hereby adopt this constitution as the guiding document for its governance.

### **Article I. Name**

This body shall be known as Southport Baptist Church, Inc. dba ONE Christian Church Hereinafter referred to as Southport Baptist Church, Inc. dba ONE Christian Church the congregation and the Church.

### **Article II. Objectives and Affiliation**

1. To glorify God by reaching, teaching, and loving in Jesus' Name.
2. To increasingly endeavor toward this end, both locally and globally, so that the saints may be strengthened and sinners be exposed to the gospel message of hope through faith in the person of Jesus Christ alone.
3. To use the means of God-centered worship, biblical teaching, faith-sharing outreach, caring fellowship, and consistent Christian living by its members.
4. These objectives shall be accomplished in voluntary affiliation with the American Baptist Churches in its local and national expressions. The Church is autonomous and maintains the right to govern its own affairs, independent of any denominational control.

### **Article III. Statement of Basic Beliefs**

We accept the Bible as the inspired Word of God and the only sufficient, certain and authoritative basis for all our beliefs.

### **Article IV. Church Covenant**

By the grace of God, having, as we trust, been brought by divine grace to repent and believe in the Lord Jesus Christ and to give up ourselves to Him, and having been baptized by immersion and upon our profession of faith, in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, we do now, relying on His gracious aid, joyfully and solemnly enter into this holy covenant with each other. Knowing that our Lord Jesus taught that the greatest commandment is to love the Lord our God with all our heart, soul,

mind and strength, and that the next is to love our neighbor as ourselves, we endeavor to do these things in the following manner:

**Regarding the Corporate Body of Southport Baptist Church, Inc. dba ONE Christian Church we desire and intend to:**

1. Walk together in Christian love, working and praying for the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace; (Ephesians 5:1-2)
2. Strive for the advancement of this church in knowledge, holiness, unity and warmth of fellowship; (Hebrews 12:14)
3. Promote its spirituality and well-being;
4. Sustain its worship, ordinances, and doctrines; (1 Timothy 4:16)
5. Submit to the church's discipline upon ourselves and lovingly assume our responsibility to participate in the discipline of other members, as taught in Scripture; (Hebrews 12:5-11)
6. Give it sacred preeminence over all institutions of human origin; (Colossians 1:18)
7. Commit our resources for the support of the ministries of this church, the relief of the poor, the cause of revival, reformation, and the spread of the gospel through all nations. (2 Corinthians 8:7)

**Regarding ourselves individually, we desire and intend to:**

1. Maintain personal and family devotions.
2. Religiously educate our children and any others who are given to our care; (Colossians 3:16)
3. Seek the salvation of our kindred and acquaintances; (Matthew 28: 18-20)
4. Be just in our dealings, faithful in our engagements, and exemplary in our conduct; (2 Corinthians 4:2)
5. Personally contribute time and money, cheerfully and regularly, to the support of the ministries of this church, the relief of the poor, the cause of revival and reformation, and the spread of the gospel through all nations. (2 Corinthians 8:7)

**Regarding our relationships with one another, we desire and intend to:**

1. Watch over one another in brotherly love, affectionately caring and encouraging whenever possible, and gently correcting when necessary; (John 13: 34-35)
2. Remember one another in prayer; (James 5:16)
3. Aid one another in sickness and distress; (Matthew 25: 31-46)
4. Cultivate the ability to rejoice at each other's joys and bear with each other's burdens and sorrows with tenderness and sympathy; (Romans 12:15)
5. Cultivate Christian courtesy in speech by avoiding all tattling, backbiting, and excessive anger; (1 Peter 2:1)
6. Be slow to take offense, always ready for reconciliation and mindful of the teaching of our Savior to secure it without delay. (2 Corinthians 5:19)

**Regarding our relationship with the world, we desire and intend to:**

1. Strive by God's grace and power to live Christ-like in the world, walking circumspectly and denying ungodliness and worldly lusts; (Titus 2:12)
2. Use our influence as salt and light to combat any practices which lead to moral and spiritual decay both personally and socially; (James 1:22-25)
3. Be zealous in our efforts to advance the kingdom of our Savior, seeking the salvation of our family, friends, neighbors, co-workers, and all the nations. (Matthew 28: 18-20)

When by God's hand we move from this place, we will as soon as possible, unite with some other church where we can carry out the spirit of this covenant and the principles of God's Word.

May the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with us all. Amen.

## **Article V. Church Government and Relationships**

Under the Lordship of Jesus, the government of Southport Baptist Church, Inc. dba ONE Christian Church is vested in the members who compose it. (*see Bylaws, Article I – Membership*).

As a local church, the style of government will be elder-led and congregational, submissive to the Word and Will of God as best understood and congregationally affirmed. The offices of the church will be Elder and Deacon, (*see Bylaws, Article II – Offices*).

## **Article VI. Amendments to the Constitution**

Amendments to this constitution may be made at any Members' Meeting of the church, regular or special, provided:

1. That each proposed amendment shall have been presented in writing at the previous Members' meeting.
2. That each proposed amendment shall have the support of the Elders before coming before the congregation for official consideration.
3. That copies of the proposed amendment shall have been furnished to the members no less than two weeks prior to the one in which the amendment is to be considered.
4. That the Members' meeting at which the proposed amendment will be considered is announced from the pulpit on two (2) successive Sundays prior.
5. That the proposed amendment must pass by a two-thirds (2/3) majority of the members present.

The revised version of this constitution shall be made available to all church members.

# Southport Baptist Church, Inc. dba ONE Christian Church

## By-Laws

### **Article 1 - Church Membership**

#### *Section 1 – How Members are Received*

1. Southport Baptist Church, Inc. dba ONE Christian Church will strive to be comprised of regenerate (born again) church members.  
It will receive into its membership those individuals who come as a result of the Lord's leadership and who are willing to meet the following requirements:
  - A. Express a personal faith in Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior as evidenced by a changed life and a growing desire for intimacy and holiness before God.
  - B. Have been or are willing to be baptized by immersion after profession of faith.
  - C. Attend and complete a Prospective Member's Class during which time they will, at a minimum, be made aware of the history, doctrine and governance of Southport Baptist Church, Inc. dba ONE Christian Church, affiliation with the ABC, USA and opportunities for service.
  - D. Affirm the Church Covenant.
  - E. Meet with the Senior Pastor and/or Associate Pastor to discuss the items above and any other issue a prospective member might have.
2. An individual shall be considered a candidate for membership once they have completed the above and when they present themselves, before the congregation for membership. At the next appropriate Members Meeting, candidates for membership will be formally submitted by the Elders and voted on by the church body.
3. Individuals may be received into the membership of the church through:
  - A. Baptism of immersion, after public profession of faith
  - B. Transfer of Membership Letter from another Baptist Church
  - C. Statement of faith, and previous church affiliation
  - D. Restoration, after church discipline.
4. Watchcare Membership shall comprise those who are in the military, college or who otherwise know of a short-term residency in our community and who, because of their temporary residency, do not desire to transfer their membership. After meeting the requirements above,

Watchcare members will be afforded all the privileges of members, excepting the privilege of voting during Members' Meetings. When a Watchcare member moves away, their membership shall be terminated.

5. Non-Resident Membership shall comprise those individuals who for reasons of health and family have moved away and who cannot join a local church in their relocated area.

### *Section 2 – Responsibilities of Members*

Noting that many expectations of membership are outlined in the Church Covenant, let us be reminded in summary that members are expected to joyfully fulfill the following: To include but not be limited to i.e. Malachi 3:8-10; John 15:12-17; Acts 2:43-47; Romans 12:10-11, 15:30; 1 Corinthians 12:15; Galatians 6:1; Ephesians 4:11-12, 6:18-19; 1 Thessalonians 3:12, 4:9-10; Hebrews 10:23-25, 13:17-18; James 5:16; 1 Peter 4:10-11; 1 John 4:7-8

1. Be present during worship and prayer services.
2. Be present during Members' Meetings.
3. Be in prayer for the leadership of the church, one another, and brothers and sisters around the world.
4. Exhibit love for all the body.
5. Be involved with ministry as individually gifted and impassioned.
6. Provide financially for the ministries of the church through tithes and offerings.
7. Be watchful over and encourage one another toward holiness.

### *Section 3 – How Members May Be Dismissed*

1. Membership may be dismissed for an individual member through death, transfer of membership to another church, or voluntary resignation.
2. A member who does not attend any service of worship, bible study or prayer time, or have not supported the Church financially for at least a one year period of time, and after having been contacted about their non-attendance, continues to be absent for an additional three (3) months, shall be reluctantly released from church membership. Exceptions to this will be made for the aged, homebound, non-resident member, those serving in the military, or away for college. (Hebrews 10:23-25)
3. Any member being found guilty and unrepentant after Church Discipline may be dismissed by the vote of the church.

### *Section 4 – How Members are Disciplined*

1. Realizing that the Bride of Christ is called to be pure and holy, and realizing that we are called to gently, lovingly, but firmly correct those in error, this church will conduct, when necessary, church discipline as outlined in Scripture. (Matthew 18:15-17; 1 Corinthians 5:1-5, 11; Galatians 6:1-5; 1 Timothy 1:20; Titus 3:10-11; 1 Peter 4:17)
2. Such actions would be directed towards any member who is known to be committing acts of unchristian conduct, or who consistently upsets the unity of the church, therefore resulting in the defamation of both the Name of Christ and the witness of this church.
3. We believe that church discipline, far from unloving, is needful to honor the name of Christ, protect the flock, educate and edify the body, and ensure purity. It is pursued in the hope that an erring brother or sister in Christ would repent and be restored into proper fellowship with the Lord and this church.
4. It will be the responsibility of the Elders to follow through on the action of Church Discipline, and any recommendation brought before the church concerning an individual member will be made by the Elders.
5. The process includes:
  - A. An initial, private, one-on-one admonition by a congregation member who has personal knowledge of ongoing improper conduct.
  - B. If A, above, does not reveal the accusation false, or result in repentance and restoration, a second admonition in the presence of one or two other Elders will be given.
  - C. A reasonable effort must be made to secure a private resolution of personal offense in the hope that such public censure by the church will not be required.
  - D. If, again, A and B, above, does not result in repentance and restoration, there will be a call for public correction before the gathered church at a Members' Meeting. If this also fails, then the member can be (1) publicly admonished, (2) removed from leadership position and/or (3) expelled from fellowship and his/her membership terminated with a two-thirds (2/3) majority of the voting members present.
  - E. If along the way, the accused repents, and makes any appropriate restitution, restoration will be considered accomplished.
6. If, after having been dismissed through church discipline, an individual becomes repentant and publicly confesses their previous wrongdoing, and makes any appropriate restitution, the church will consider the sin to be dealt with and the offense removed. The disciplinary process will be considered ended, and the individual may again request membership within the body.
7. This church is committed to preserving Scriptural morals in the face of outside societal influences seeking to degrade the Biblical family, pervert the moral values of our nation, and intimidate God's people from speaking God's truth in love; we have adopted the following statement:

## **Sexual Immorality**

We believe that God has commanded that no intimate sexual activity be engaged in outside of marriage between a man and a woman. We believe that any form of homosexuality, lesbianism, bisexuality, bestiality, incest, fornication, adultery, and pornography are sinful perversions of God's gift of sex. We believe that God disapproves of and forbids any attempt to alter one's gender by surgery or appearance.

(Gen. 2:24; Gen. 19:5; Gen. 26:8-9; Lev. 18:1-30; Rom. 1:26-29; 1 Cor.5:1; 6:9; 1 Thess. 4:1-8; Heb.13:4)

We believe that the only Scriptural marriage is the joining of one man and one woman.  
(Gen.2:24; Rom.7:2; 1Cor. 7:10; Eph5:22-23)

## **Article 2 - Offices**

### *Section 1 – Summary*

1. The Biblical offices in the church are that of Elders and Deacons.
2. In addition, our church recognizes the administrative positions under these by-laws of Clerk and Treasurer, Assistant Treasurer.
3. Officers shall be called to office by vote of the membership of the Church as provided for in Article 7, Section 3, Paragraph 1 of these By-Laws.
4. All Officers must be members of the church in good and regular standing prior to their nomination.

### *Section 2 – Elders*

#### *Section 2a: Elders (General Statements)*

1. The church shall recognize persons gifted and willing to serve in this calling, and elect them in accordance with Article 7, Section 3, Paragraph 1 of the by-law provisions on elections. These persons shall be received as gifts of Christ to His church and set apart as Elders.
2. The Elders shall be comprised of persons who satisfy the qualifications for the office of Elder set forth in 1 Timothy 3:1-7 and Titus 1:6-9, Romans 16:1-2. In support of the history of the component parts of the Church and in accordance with our American Baptist position on women in leadership, the office of Elder may be held by a female.
3. The Elders shall lead in a Christ-like example by:
  - A. Consistently modeling spiritual character, attitudes, values, and behavior among the Congregation.

- B. Providing and inviting the opportunity for frequent and ongoing contact with members of the congregation.
  - C. Conducting the affairs of the church in an atmosphere of openness and mutual sensitivity, focusing as much on nurturing one another as on decision-making.
4. The Elders shall be members of the church for a minimum of three (3) years prior to serving, (1 Timothy 3:6, 5:22), with the exception of the initial Elders.
  5. The majority of the active Elders shall be members not in the regular pay of the church.
  6. All Elders must agree wholeheartedly with the Church Covenant, Constitution and By-Laws.
  7. No Elder shall hold the office of Deacon during their tenure.
  8. All decisions made by the Elders shall be reached after prayerful consideration, voting in a spirit of humility, with each Elder regarding one another before him/herself, and moving toward the goal of unity. (Philippians 2:3-4)
  9. An Elder's term of office may be terminated by resignation or by dismissal if they are found to be physically or mentally incapacitated or spiritually unqualified. (Matthew 18:15-17, 1 Timothy 3:1-7, and Titus 1:5-9)

*Section 2b: Responsibilities of Elders*

1. The Elders shall, first and foremost, devote their time to prayer and the ministry of the Word by teaching and encouraging sound doctrine and practice, and by shepherding God's flock. (Acts 6:2, 4)
2. The Elders must be able to teach/preach at the request of the Pastor, or in the absence of the Pastor. (1 Timothy 3:2; 2 Timothy 4:2)
3. The Elders must give aid in procuring speakers either at the Pastor's request or in his absence. (Titus 1:9-11)
4. The Elders at the request of the Pastor(s) shall take particular responsibility to examine and instruct prospective members and recommend to the congregation those who fulfill the expectations for membership. (Titus 1:9)
5. The Elders must examine and recommend to the congregation all prospective candidates for offices. (Acts 6:2-6; Titus 1:9-11)
6. The Elders shall examine and discern the need for and recommend to the congregation the creation and dissolution of all ministry teams.

7. The Elders shall oversee the work of the appointed ministry teams and agents of the church. (Acts 6:5)
8. The Elders shall assist in the ordinance of baptism.
9. The Elders in conjunction with the pastor(s) shall gently but firmly admonish and correct those in error, aiding and overseeing the process of church discipline as necessary. (Matthew 18:15-17, Galatians 6:1; Titus 1:9-11 ;) (*see Article 1, Section 4, on How Church Members are to be Disciplined*)
10. The Elders shall coordinate and promote the ministries of the church, ensuring a balance between edification of the saints and evangelizing the lost, being mindful of the Kingdom's work both locally and globally. (Ephesians 4:12; 2 Timothy 4:5)
11. The Elders shall ensure that all who minister the Word to the congregation are properly qualified and scripturally sound. (1 Thess. 3:9, 5:22; 1 Timothy 6:3-5; Titus 1:9-11; James 3:1)
12. The Elders shall ensure that all song leaders, as well as all songs sung in our services, are God-honoring and edifying to the body. (Colossians 3:16; Ephesians 5:19; 1 Timothy 6:3-5; Titus 1:9-11)
13. The Elders shall appoint the Moderator for all Members' Meetings.
14. The Elders shall pray for the sick upon request and be responsible for a shepherding group. (James 1:27, 5:14)
15. The Elders shall communicate to the congregation on a regular basis, at least quarterly, concerning the activities and concerns of the Elders.
16. The Elders in conjunction with the Pastor(s) shall establish policies and practices for the Church consistent with its purposes.
17. The Elders shall approve guidelines for the use of church facilities and equipment for non-ministry related endeavors, including the terms and conditions of any such use.
18. The Elders and Deacons will meet together at least quarterly for the purpose of prayer.

*Section 2c: Organization of Elders*

1. The number of Elders serving at any one time shall not be less than five (5) with a maximum number of nine (9).

2. An Elder's term of office shall be for three (3) years. If an Elder, other than the Senior or Associate Pastor(s), has served two (2) consecutive three (3) year terms, they may only be elected to the active Eldership after at least one year following the close of their last term of service as Elder. Exception: In unusual circumstances, the Elders may ask the congregation to allow an Elder to serve one additional one-year term (Partial terms filled due to vacation of an Elder position do not count against the two (2) consecutive three (3) year terms.)
3. Of the initial Elders [other than the Pastor(s)], three (3) shall serve an initial term of three (3) years, two an initial term of four (4) years and two an initial term of five (5) years. This will ensure stability in the infant years of the church and also allow a minority of the Elders to rotate off at a time. Any increase or decrease in number of Elders shall be made as a recommendation from the Elders to the church body.
4. The Elders must meet at least bi-monthly.
5. A quorum for meetings of the Elders is defined as at least one-half of the Lay Elders plus at least one-half of the Vocational Elders. In any matter affecting an individual Elder, at the request of the other Elders, that Elder shall remove himself from the discussion and vote.
6. The Elders shall organize themselves on a yearly basis to ensure orderly meetings.

*Section 2d: Senior Pastor as Elder*

1. The Senior Pastor shall be an Elder of the church. He/she shall perform the duties of an Elder described in Section 2b, above, and shall be recognized by the church as one, who in response to God's call, has devoted their vocational life, full-time, to the ministry of the Word and prayer in the service of the church of Christ.
2. The Senior Pastor shall preach, administer the ordinances of baptism and the Lord's Supper, and perform such other duties as usually pertain to that office.
3. In the absence or incapacity of the Senior Pastor and/or Associates the Elders shall assume responsibility for those duties, any of which can be delegated.

*Section 2e: Associate Pastor(s) as Elders*

1. An Associate Pastor shall be an Elder of the church. They shall perform the duties of an Elder described in Section 2, above, and shall be recognized by the church as one, who in response to God's call, has devoted their vocational life, full/part-time, to the ministry of the Word and prayer in the service of the church of Christ.

2. In addition to their duties as outlined in their job description(s), the Associate Pastor(s) shall assist the Senior Pastor in the performance of his regular duties as needed.
3. In the absence or incapacity of the Senior Pastor for defined periods of time (such as sabbatical or illness), the Associate Pastor(s) may assume the responsibility for his duties.

*Section 2f: The Calling of the Senior Pastor and Associate Pastors*

In the calling of any person to these positions, the Elders will be responsible for recognizing godly and gifted persons within the church, or searching for godly and gifted persons outside of the church. In addition, however, the church must be given adequate opportunity to assess the preaching and ministry gifts of any candidate before being asked to express its judgment, and must receive assurance from the Elders that having interviewed the person concerned, they are in no doubt as to that persons wholehearted agreement with our doctrine, church covenant and constitution and by-laws. Having been nominated by the Elders, the congregation will voice its prayerful judgment during a Special Members' Meeting, with a call being extended to the candidate provided that two-thirds (2/3) majority of the voting members present, during the Special Members' Meeting affirm the Elders' nomination. The quorum for this Special Members' Meeting shall be thirty percent (30%) of the voting membership. The call will also serve as receiving both the Pastor and spouse, if they are married, and their children, if appropriate, into the membership of the church.

*Section 2g: The Termination of the vocational call of the Senior Pastor and Associate Pastors*

1. By Resignation: A Pastor, after sensing the call of God in a new direction of ministry, may submit their resignation to the congregation, provided that four week notice is given.
2. By Grievance: When a grievance exists against a Pastor, either due to their preaching or teaching contrary to the beliefs of this church or to alleged conduct on their part unfitting an Elder, any member may bring such grievance before the Elders. If the Elders, after thorough investigation and consideration, believe the grievance to be true and substantial, they shall call for a Special Members' Meeting. The vocational call of the Pastor may be terminated at such a meeting given the following:
  - A. A recommendation of the Elders for removal, and,
  - B. That attendance of at least thirty percent (30%) of the voting membership is present, and,
  - C. A two-thirds (2/3) majority vote by ballot is reached.

The termination shall be immediate and any compensation shall be rendered in not more than 30 days. Unless otherwise recommended by the Elders, the church will compensate the Pastor so removed with not less than one-twelfth of their total annual compensation.

### *Section 3 – Deacons*

#### *Section 3a: General Statements concerning Deacons*

1. Deacons and nominees for Deacon shall be qualified for the office as specified in the Bible (1 Timothy 3:8-12). The church shall recognize persons who are giving of themselves in service to the church, who possess particular gifts of service and who are willing to serve in this calling. These persons shall be received as gifts of Christ to His church and set apart and ordained as Deacons. Deacons will be ordained for life. The Deacons shall be active in all areas of church life. In support of the history of the component parts of the Church Deacons are reserved for males.
2. The Deacons shall be members of the church for a minimum of one (1) year prior to serving, with the exception of the initial Deacons. A Deacon's term of office shall be for three (3) years. If a Deacon has served two (2) consecutive three (3) year terms, he may only be elected as an active Deacon after at least one year following the close of his last term of service as Deacon. Exception: In unusual circumstances, the Elders or Deacons may ask the congregation to allow a Deacon to serve one additional one year term. (Partial terms filled due to vacation of a Deacon position do not count against the two (2) consecutive three (3) year terms.)
3. A Deacon's term of office may be terminated by resignation or by dismissal if they are found to be physically or mentally incapacitated or spiritually unqualified. (Matthew 18:15-17, 1 Timothy 3:1-7, and Titus 1:5-9)
4. The Deacons shall be nominated by members of the church. The Elders and a Deacons will compile and confirm (determine eligibility) the nominations and submit the names to the members for affirmation at an appropriate Members' Meeting.
5. The number of Deacons shall be determined by the needs of the ministry and by the call and qualification of persons in the church. This number shall be recommended by the Elders and Deacons and approved by the congregation.

#### *Section 3b: Responsibilities of Deacons*

The Deacons shall be ready to assist the Elders in any service that shall support and promote the ministry of the Word and Prayer, new and existing ministries of the Church, and the care for the members of the congregation. Their responsibilities include:

1. Working for the unity of the body and supporting the Elders;
2. Aiding the Elders in the visitation needs of the congregation;
3. Administering the Benevolence Fund to assist the poor and needy and otherwise providing aid in times of crises or distress;

4. Coordinating the greeting and welcoming ministries of the church;
5. Assisting in administering the ordinance of Communion;
6. Form a ministry team to prepare the communion elements and other services as needed;
7. Assisting at fellowship gatherings of the church;
8. Overseeing the usher ministry team in the gathering of tithes and offerings;
9. Meeting together with the Elders at least quarterly for the purpose of prayer.

### *Section 3b: Organization of Deacons*

The Deacons shall organize themselves however they determine to be best to achieve the mission of the church. The Elders or the Deacons may designate any specific Deacon or group of Deacons to specialize in some particular Diaconal function. Meetings of the Deacons, or teams thereof, shall be held at least quarterly or more often as needed to best fulfill the responsibilities of the Deacons.

## **Article 3 – Church Meetings**

### *Section 1 – Regular Worship Meetings*

The church will meet corporately at least on the Lord's Day for the purpose of worship through God-centered preaching, praise and prayer. The Deacons will be responsible for the direction of each of these services. (Hebrews 10:25; Acts 2:43-47)

### *Section 2 – Special Worship Meetings*

Special worship meetings may be called when the Elders and/or Deacons perceive there is a special need for prayer, renewal, and/or when a sense of the Lord's stirring toward revival necessitates such meetings.

### *Section 3 – Additional Meetings*

Other small-group/home-based discipleship, evangelism or prayer meetings may be organized and promoted throughout the week by members of the church. Such meetings must have the approval of the Elders and/or to be considered a church-sponsored activity.

### *Section 4 – Regular Members' Meetings*

The church will hold Regular Members' Meetings on a quarterly basis for the purpose of prayer, congregational business and testimony of God's activity. These meetings will be held on the third Wednesdays of April, July, October and January. Special meeting for approval of officers and adoption

of a budget will be held on the second Sunday of December immediately after first worship service. It is the expectation that all members will be encouraged to attend these meetings. The quorum will consist of 10% of the average attendance of Sunday morning worship in the last quarter. The voting membership is considered to be those who are active members and who are not under church discipline.

#### *Section 5 – Special Members’ Meetings*

Special Members’ Meetings may be called in order to consider matters of a significant and urgent nature to the life of the Church. Special Members’ Meetings may be called as required by the Elders, or at the written request, submitted to the Elders, of ten (10) percent of the voting membership. The date, time, and purpose of any Special Meeting shall be announced at all public services of the church within two (2) weeks preceding the meeting. In the event of a written request from the members, the Elders shall call a Special Meeting to be held within one month of their receipt of the request. The quorum and voting membership for a Special Members’ Meeting will be the same as for a Regular Members’ Meeting.

#### *Section 6 – How Members’ Meetings will be conducted*

Members’ Meetings will be conducted with a sense of decency and order (1 Corinthians 14:40), with an attitude of love and selflessness (Philippians 2:2-5; Colossians 3:12-17).

If any Members’ Meeting begins to become disorderly, a time of prayerfulness will be called for by the Moderator in the hopes that by doing so, both peace and order will be restored.

*Roberts Rules of Order* will be utilized to help with the orderliness of any Members’ Meeting.

## **Article 4 – Church Ordinances**

We believe that the Lord Jesus Christ has committed two ordinances to the local church: Baptism and the Lord’s Supper. We believe that Christian baptism is the immersion of the believer in water in the name of the triune God. We believe that the Lord’s Supper was instituted by Christ for commemoration of His death. We believe that these two ordinances should be observed and administered until the return of the Lord Jesus Christ. (Matthew 28:18-20, Romans 6:3-5; 1 Corinthians 11:23-26)

#### *Section 1 – Baptism*

Baptism will be offered to those who have publicly professed faith in Jesus Christ and who have met with at least one of the Pastors to discuss their conversion experience. A baptismal service will be scheduled as quickly as is permissible and convenient for the church and for the baptismal candidate.

## *Section 2 – Lord’s Supper*

The Lord’s Supper will be observed monthly on the first Sunday of the month. The Lord’s Supper will be open to anyone who professes personal faith in the Lord Jesus Christ and who has made that profession known publicly.

## **Article 5 – Standing Church Resource Teams**

### *Section 1 - Standing Church Resource Teams term of office for multiple year appointments*

A Standing Church Resource Team member can only serve two (2) consecutive three (3) year terms, Exception: In unusual circumstances, the Elders may ask the congregation to allow a Standing Church Resource Team member to serve one additional one year term. (Partial terms filled due to vacation of a Standing Church Resource Team member term does not count against the two (2) consecutive three (3) year terms.)

### *Section 2 – Nominating Team (Single Year Appointment)*

Meeting as needed, this team of five (5) members, including (1) Elder, will be discerning of the people resources that the Lord has given us and be responsible for ensuring that those having particular gifts are matched appropriately with the leadership/servant needs of the church and present their nominations to the church for approval. The policies and procedures of this team are outlined in the Nominating Team Handbook. The members of the Nominating Team will serve for a one (1) year term and will be presented to the congregation by the Elders for approval.

### *Section 3 – Stewardship Team (Multiple year appointment)*

Meeting monthly, this team of four (4) members, including one (1) Elder, will be responsible for overseeing the financial resources of the church, as stewards of the monies given by individuals unto the Lord. This team will be responsible for presenting an annual budget to the congregation for approval and for monthly oversight of the budget. The policies and procedures of this team are outlined in the Stewardship Team Handbook. The members of the Stewardship Team will serve for a three (3) year term and will be presented to the congregation by the Nominating Team for approval. The Treasurer and the Assistant Treasurer will be considered an ex-officio member of the Stewardship Team. Of the initial Stewardship Team members, two (2) shall serve an initial term of three (3) years, one (1) an initial term of two (2) years and one (1) an initial term of one (1) year. This will ensure stability in the infant years of

the church and also allow a minority of the Stewardship Team members to rotate off at a time. The Elder will be appointed at the discretion of the Elder Board.

#### *Section 4 – Properties and Equipment Team (Multiple year appointment)*

Meeting as needed, this team of five (5) members, including one (1) Elder, will be responsible for helping the church in the acquisition and maintenance of all church property and equipment. The policies and procedures of this team are outlined in the Properties and Equipment Handbook. The members of the Properties and Equipment Team will serve for a three (3) year term and will be presented to the congregation by the Nominating Team for approval. Of the initial Properties and Equipment Team, two (2) shall serve an initial term of three (3) years, one (1) an initial term of two (2) years and one (1) an initial term of one (1) year. This will ensure stability in the infant years of the church and also allow a minority of the Properties and Equipment Team to rotate off at a time. The Elder will be appointed at the discretion of the Elder Board.

#### *Section 5 – Memorial and Endowment Team*

The Memorial and Endowment Team shall be composed of six (6) members. The Senior Pastor and one Elder shall be *ex officio*, nonvoting members of the team. Members shall be elected for a staggered three-year period, two (2) members elected each year. However, all members of the team serve at the pleasure of the Church, which at any Called (Special) or Regular Meeting may reconstitute the membership of the team. The team shall formulate its rules and procedures. The team shall elect a Chairman, Secretary, and Treasurer. The treasurer shall at all times during the term be bonded by some insurance company selected by the team in such amount as the team shall determine.

- A. The Memorial and Endowment Team shall receive, administer and disburse such funds as may be entrusted to it and shall make quarterly reports and an annual summary report of their activities and accounts. The record of receipts and disbursements, including property held by the team, shall be subject to audit annually by auditors appointed by the Moderator and approved by the Church.
- B. The Memorial and Endowment Team shall act as trustee of the funds and shall have exclusive authority over said funds. The assets of the funds may be invested or reinvested in such securities or property as may be deemed by the Memorial and Endowment Team to be desirable, without being limited to the kinds of investments permitted to fiduciaries under the laws of Indiana in force at the time the investment is made. The Memorial and Endowment Team shall determine what receipts should be principal and income. The principal of the Endowment Fund shall be held in trust indefinitely. The assets of the Memorial Fund shall at all times be kept separate from the Endowment Fund and both funds shall be kept separate and apart from all other funds of the Church.
- C. **The Memorial Fund** is hereby established which shall consist of gifts, bequests, devises and acquisitions received by the Church in memory of individuals, families, events or otherwise.

- (i) Memorial donations may at times be designated for specific use subject to the acceptance or rejection of the Memorial and Endowment Team and subject to the provision that if, at any time thereafter, the Memorial and Endowment Team shall determine that it is impossible to carry out said purposes or conditions, the Memorial and Endowment Team shall have authority to void the condition and apply the same for some like purpose.
  - (ii) Both principal and interest from the Memorial Fund shall be used for the further advancement of the Kingdom of God through Southport Baptist Church dba ONE Christian Church in its various activities.
- A. **The Endowment Fund** is hereby established which shall consist of gifts, subscriptions, bequests, devises and acquisitions received by the Church where the principal is to be preserved indefinitely.
- (i) All gifts, subscriptions, bequests, devises or acquisitions made to the fund shall be subject to the acceptance or rejection of the Memorial and Endowment Team and any specified condition or purpose shall be deemed, made and received subject to the provision that, if at any time thereafter, the Memorial and Endowment Team shall determine that it is impossible to carry out said purposes or conditions, the Memorial and Endowment Team shall have authority to void the condition and apply the same for some like purpose.
  - (ii) The principal of the Endowment Fund shall be held in trust in perpetuity, and only the interest or appreciated income shall be used for the advancement of the Kingdom of God through Southport Baptist Church dba ONE Christian Church in its various activities.
- B. If at any time Southport Baptist Church dba ONE Christian Church be lawfully merged or consolidated with any other church, then in that event, all of the provisions hereof shall be deemed made for, and in behalf of such merged or consolidated church, which shall be entitled to receive all the benefits of said Memorial and Endowment Funds, and shall be obligated to administer the same in all respects and in accordance with the terms hereof.
- C. If at any time Southport Baptist Church dba ONE Christian Church be divided by congregational vote or a portion of the congregation shall secede, whether or not that portion be a majority of the congregational membership, said Memorial and Endowment Funds will be retained in full by that portion of the congregation maintaining access to facilities at 2901 E. Banta Road and recognized by The American Baptist Churches of Greater Indianapolis.
- D. In the event of the dissolution of Southport Baptist Church dba ONE Christian Church, said Memorial and Endowment Funds, subject to the payment of its debts, shall become the property of The American Baptist Churches of Greater Indianapolis, unless its congregation has previously made other disposition of said assets.
- E. The principle of any monies that were non-bequest and non-memorial funds may be spent on Church needs as determined by the team.

#### *Section 6 – Counting Resource Team*

The Counting Resource team shall be comprised of the Treasurer, Assistant Treasurer (both *ex-officio*), and at least sixteen (16) other members. Finance Committee members shall be Active Members of the Church and will be elected at the Annual Meeting for a three-year period; six (6) elected the first year and five (5) elected the second and third year. Duties:

- A. The Finance Committee shall receive all monies for the Church for current expenses, missions, building fund, and Special Offerings except Deacons Fund and Memorial and Endowment Fund which shall be administered by their respective Boards;
  - B. The Committee shall make an accurate record of funds received and shall deposit them promptly into the Church's bank account;
  - C. Two (2) or more member shall be required to count all monies;
- Members of this Committee are eligible to hold one (1) additional office.

## **Article 6 – Church-Life Teams**

Other teams may be needed to help maintain the health of the life of the church in such areas as discipleship, Outreach/Missions, Member Care and Fellowships. In accordance with Article 2, Section 2b, Paragraph 6, the Elders shall examine, discern the need for, and recommend to the congregation the creation and dissolution of all such teams. At the time of their creation, a description of their composition, term and responsibilities shall also be presented to the congregation for affirmation. Teams will be expected to give a brief report outlining past actions and future opportunities at each Regular Member Meeting.

## **Article 7 – Other General Information**

### *Section 1 – Fiscal Year and Budget Plan*

The fiscal year for Southport Baptist Church, Inc. dba ONE Christian Church will be January 1 – December 31 of each year. The church will operate under a unified budget plan, meaning all of an individual's undesignated gifts will go towards the general budget of the church. Designated gifts can only be made for those accounts that have been approved by the church. For details on this and other financial procedures, please see the Stewardship Team Handbook.

### *Section 2 – Other Church Positions*

1. Clerk – The Clerk, serving annually, will be responsible to record the minutes of all regular and Special Members' Meetings of the church, to assist the church secretary (vocational) preserve an accurate roll of the membership, and to render reports as requested by the Elders, Deacons or the church. In the absence of the Clerk from any Members' Meeting, the Moderator will appoint a member as clerk for that particular meeting.
2. Treasurer – The Treasurer, serving annually, will not be an active Elder, Deacon, or paid church staff member, will ensure, while working with the Stewardship Team, that all funds and securities of the church are properly secured in banks, financial institutions, or depositories as appropriate. The Treasurer shall also be responsible for presenting regular reports of the account balances, revenues and expenses of the church at each Regular Members' Meetings. The Treasurer will also ensure that

full and accurate accounts of receipts and disbursements are kept in software and/or books belonging to the church, and that adequate controls are implemented to guarantee that all funds belonging to the church are appropriately handled by any officer, employee, or agent of the church. The Elders shall ensure an annual internal audit within the Elder Board. The Church shall appoint qualified individuals within the church (i.e. Accountants and/or CPA's) to perform the activities normally constituting an external audit. If qualified individuals are not available within the church, the Elder Board shall secure qualified individuals to perform such outside the church.

3. Assistant Treasurer – The Assistant Treasurer, serving annually, will not be an active Elder, Deacon, or paid church staff member, will ensure, while working with the Treasurer, that all funds and securities of the church are properly secured in banks, financial institutions, or depositories as appropriate. The Assistant Treasurer in conjunction with the Treasurer will also ensure that full and accurate accounts of receipts and disbursements are kept in software and/or books belonging to the church, and that controls are implemented to guarantee that all funds belonging to the church are appropriately handled by any officer, employee, or agent of the church.
4. Trustees – The Clerk, Treasurer and 3 members elected by the church shall serve annually and will hold in trust the church property. Upon a specific vote of the church authorizing each action, they shall have the power to buy, sell, mortgage, lease, or transfer any church property, with at least three signatures of the Trustees appearing on any legal document.

### *Section 3 – Annual Leadership Nominations and Affirmations*

1. Elders: With the exception of the initial Elders, regular elections for Elders will be held annually, beginning in December 2015, unless special elections should be necessary. On the first Sunday of November, congregational nominations for new Elders will be received by ballot and given to the Elders for review. Election for Elders, by ballot, will be held on the second Sunday of December. The time of service will begin on January 1 of the following year.
2. Deacons: Regular elections for Deacons will be held annually, unless special elections should be necessary. On the second Sunday of November congregational nominations for new Deacons will be received, by ballot, and given to the Elders and Deacons for review. Election for Deacons, again by ballot, will be held on the second Sunday of December. The time of service will begin on January 1 of the following year. Ordination for new Deacons will be scheduled as appropriate and convenient to the church and to the individuals.
3. On the second Sunday in December, during the Regular Members' Meeting, the Nominating Team will present a slate of servant leadership for the upcoming year including Clerk, Treasurer, Assistant Treasurer, Trustees, Standing Church Resource Teams, any Church Life Teams and any other position as requested by the Nomination Team. These positions will begin January 1 of the following year.

## **Article 8 – Amendments to the By-Laws**

Amendments to these by-laws may be made at any Members' Meeting of the church, regular or special, provided:

1. That each proposed amendment shall have been presented in writing at the previous Members' Meeting.
2. That each proposed amendment shall have the support of the Elders before coming before the congregation for official consideration.
3. That copies of the proposed amendment shall have been furnished to the members no less than two (2) weeks prior to the meeting in which the amendment is to be considered.
4. That the Members' Meeting at which the proposed amendment will be considered is announced from the pulpit on two (2) successive Sundays prior.
5. That the proposed amendment must pass by a two-thirds (2/3) majority of the members present, and that at least twenty percent (20%) of the voting membership of the church be present at such meeting.

The revised version of these By-laws shall be made available to all church members.