

# **Statement of Faith and Practice**

## **Adopted by**

# **Lighthouse Baptist Church**

1. We believe in the Holy Scriptures accepting fully the writings of the Old and New Testaments in the original as the inerrant, verbally inspired Word of God, infallible in all of its parts and the only authoritative rule of faith and practice. (II Timothy 3:16 and II Peter 1:19-20).
2. We believe that there is one God eternally existent in three persons: Father, Son and Holy Spirit.  
(Luke 3:21-22, Matt. 28:18-20).
3. We believe that Jesus Christ was begotten by the Holy Spirit, born of a virgin, Mary, and is true God and true man. (Matt. 1:18-25)
4. We believe in the total depravity of man, that all human beings are born with a sinful nature, and in the case of those who reach the age of moral responsibility, are sinners by choice and are lost and have within themselves no possible means of salvation. (Psalms 58:3, Romans 3:10-23, Romans 5:19)
5. We believe that the Holy Spirit convicts of sin, making all believers in Jesus Christ children of God through the miracle of the new birth, assuring them of Heaven, and by his indwelling enables Christians to live a godly life. (John 3:1-18, Eph. 4:30, I Corinthians 6:19-20)
6. We believe in salvation by grace through faith, that salvation is the free gift of God, not by any virtue of works of man but received only by personal faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, that all true believers possess the free gift of eternal life, a perfect righteousness, sonship in the family of God, and the divine guarantee that they shall never perish. (Eph. 2:4-10, Romans 8:35-39, John 10:27-30)
7. We believe that the Lord Jesus Christ died for our sins according to the scripture, as a representative and substitutionary sacrifice and that all who believe in him are justified on the grounds of his shed blood. (Hebrews 9:11-22, I Peter 1:18-20, I Cor. 13:3, Eph. 1:7, Col. 1:14)
8. We believe that the soul of the saved at death go immediately to be with Christ in Heaven, that at the Judgment Seat of Christ, their works will be judged and rewarded for what was done for the Lord. The soul of the unsaved at death descend immediately into Hades until the Great White Throne Judgment, at which time their bodies shall be raised from the grave, and they shall be cast into the Lake of Fire, the place of final conscious, and everlasting punishment. (II Corinthians 5:1-10, Romans 14:7-12, Rev. 20:11-15, Revelation 20:4-6).

# Lighthouse Baptist Church

## CONSTITUTION AND BY-LAWS

### PREAMBLE

For the preservation and security of the principles of our faith, and to the end that this body may be governed in an orderly manner consistent with the teaching of God's Word, we do declare and establish this constitution. This constitution is to remain in effect until changed or altered by majority vote of the congregation.

### ARTICLE I

#### "NAME"

The church shall be known as the "Lighthouse Baptist Church"

### ARTICLE II

#### "PURPOSE"

Our purpose is to build a growing, friendly fellowship, that is positive in approach, firm in belief, evangelistic in purpose, and nurturing in ministry,

### ARTICLE III

#### "CHARACTER"

Polity... The government of this church is vested in its local membership. It is not subject to the control of any other ecclesiastical body.

Doctrine... This church holds the Scriptures as its final authority and guide in all matters of faith and practice.

### ARTICLE IV

#### "MEMBERSHIP"

Members shall be received into the church as follows:

- (a) By public profession of faith in Christ, followed by New Testament Baptism.
- (b) By letter from another Baptist Church, or church of like faith and practice, provided they have received Scriptural baptism.
- (c) By statement of Christian experience and New Testament baptism into a Baptist Church, or church of like faith and practice, provided that church no longer exists, or for some valid reason that person is not able to obtain a letter.
- (d) By restoration.

### ARTICLE V

The ordinances of this church shall be two: Believer's Baptism, and the Lord's Supper.

Baptism:

- (a) Baptism shall be by immersion only.
- (b) Repentance and faith in Christ shall precede Baptism.
- (c) The authority of the church shall administer baptism.

Note: The church advises that baptismal candidates review material on the church ordinances in the church membership course.

Lord's Supper:

- (a) The Lord's Supper shall be observed as often as prescribed by the authority of the church.
- (b) The deacons shall assist the pastor in the administering of the Lord's Supper. In their absence the pastor shall appoint someone to assist.
- (c) As this is the "Lord's Table", not man's, the church shall administer the "Lord's Supper to only those who are born again and are scripturally baptized.

### ARTICLE VI

The Scriptural officers of a New Testament Church are two. The Pastor and the Deacons.

Pastor:

- (a) Before a man is selected or ordained as Pastor, he must meet the Scriptural qualifications set forth in the Word of God concerning the office of Pastor (I Timothy 3:1-7, and Titus 1:5-11).

- (b) The pastor shall be called by a 75% vote of the church. The call shall be an indefinite length of time.
  - (c) The pastor shall have complete control of the pulpit, he shall have the final word as to who will fill it in his absence.
  - (d) The pastor shall reserve the right to secure the evangelists for the revivals.
  - (e) The pastor shall have at least an annual two-weeks vacation with pay.
  - (f) The pastor shall secure the supplies for the pulpit at all times, and shall be responsible for the expenses of said supplies except when:
    - 1. On vacation
    - 2. Illness occurs
    - 3. On business for the church
    - 4. Away in revivals (at least two Sundays)
  - (g) The pastor shall use proper discretion in regards to the amount of time he is out of the pulpit speaking in revivals, camps, etc.
  - (h) The pastor shall be the moderator of all business sessions. In absence of the pastor, there will be no business meetings regarding policy or personnel changes in the church.
  - (i) The pastor may be dismissed from his office only on the grounds of:
    - 1. Personal immorality
    - 2. Deviation from the Articles of Faith as adopted by this church.
    - 3. Gross neglect of his duties and responsibilities as pastor.
- Note: For these stated reasons, the deacons may call a business meeting, after exhaustive scriptural procedure.
- (j) The pastor can be dismissed only by the majority vote of the church.
  - (k) In the event the need arises, the pastor shall have the privilege of choosing and dismissing his own staff such as an assistant pastor, a secretary, or other needed staff members.
  - (l) In the event the pastor is dismissed, for reasons stated above, there will be no severance pay. He will be given 30 days to vacate the parsonage.
  - (m) In seeking a pastor the church shall consider only one candidate at a time in view of a call.
  - (n) The pastor shall select all teachers and workers for the various organizations.
  - (o) In the event the church is without a pastor, the deacons will assume the responsibility of:
    - 1. Conducting business decently and in order.
    - 2. Providing the spiritual direction in all ministerial areas.
    - 3. Forming the pulpit committee (as approved by a majority vote of the church).

Deacons:

I. Spiritual Qualifications:

- (a) Before a man is selected or ordained as a deacon, he must meet the Scriptural qualifications set forth in the Word of God concerning the office of Deacon. (I Tim. 3:8-13, Acts 6:1-7).
- (b) Before a man is selected or ordained as a deacon, his wife shall also meet the qualifications set forth in the Word of God.
- (c) A deacon may serve two years, with a recommended one year inactive period following his term.
- (d) When qualified, a deacon may be ordained upon the recommendation of the Pastor and approval of the church.
- (e) The deacon shall understand that this position is that of a “Servant” and that he does not run the church, nor have anymore authority than that of any other member.
- (f) The deacons shall meet with the Pastor when the Pastor deems necessary, and the deacons may request a called meeting when a need or problem may arise which may necessitate such a meeting.
- (g) A deacon may be dismissed from his office on the following grounds:
  - 1. Personal immorality
  - 2. Deviation from the Articles of Faith and Practice adopted by this church.
  - 3. Gross neglect of his duties as set forth in the Word of God concerning a deacon.

II. Election procedure of deacons:

- (a) Deacons must meet Biblical requirements to be nominated.
- (b) It is recommended that the church have one deacon per every twenty households.
- (c) Deacon’s terms shall follow fiscal years.

- (d) The available deacon positions shall be filled by those that receive the greatest number of qualified votes.

## ARTICLE VII

### Trustees:

- (a) The trustees shall recognize that there is nothing Scriptural about their office, but that it is one that was instituted by and is required by the U.S. Government. The U.S. Government recognizes these men have no authoritative power over any financial matter, rather that as their names appear on Titles, Deeds, Mortgages, Bills of Sale, They simply represent the already given approval of the church to buy and sell property in the name of the church.
- (b) While the trustee's responsibilities are primarily with the physical operations of the church, they still must meet the following spiritual qualifications of I Timothy 3:8-13, and Titus 1:5-11 (minus the requirement to be the husband of one wife).
- (c) Trustees shall be nominated by the church, and those that receive the greatest number of votes shall fill the positions.
- (d) The trustees shall serve for one year, and may serve consecutively.
- (e) The trustees shall act as legal representatives of the church and shall aid the church in financial transactions, as they become necessary.

### Church Secretary:

- (a) The church secretary shall be appointed by the pastor, subject to the review of the church.
- (b) The church secretary shall be responsible for recording all official minutes of the church, keeping a record of the membership, etc.
- (c) The church secretary shall send for all church letters, and shall mail out church letters as it becomes necessary.
- (d) The church secretary may serve as many years as the church and Pastor approve.

### Church Treasurer and Missions Treasurer:

- (a) The treasurer of the church shall be appointed by the pastor subject to review of the church.
- (b) The treasurers and trustees shall be responsible for all money that is given to the church, and disbursements of the same, as approved by the pastor.
- (c) The treasurer shall keep an accurate record of all incomes and expenses.
- (d) The treasurer shall prepare a report at least every quarter and any other times as the church deems necessary.
- (e) The treasurer shall be bondable.
- (f) The treasurer shall make available a copy of the financial statement to all members.

## ARTICLE VIII

### Discipline:

- (a) The church shall administer discipline in accordance with the teaching of the scriptures.
- (b) A person may be excluded from membership upon the grounds of moral or doctrinal impurity as set forth in the Bible.
- (c) Before any person is excluded from membership they must be given opportunity for repentance and restoration to fellowship.
- (d) Any member of the Sunday School who is inactive consistently without valid reason for a period of one year can be removed from the active roll and placed on the inactive status, until such time said person makes known public their desires to be reinstated as an active member.
- (e) Teachers and officers shall subscribe to the Articles of Faith adopted by this church.

### Support of the Church:

- (a) The church shall be supported by tithes and offerings.
- (b) The church shall adopt an annual budget as a financial guide.

### Meetings:

- (a) The church shall have a Sunday School, Morning Worship, Wednesday Night Prayer service, Sunday Evening service, and any other meetings it deems necessary to carry on its witness for Christ.

- (b) The church shall have business meetings as necessary, the pastor and the deacons may call for business meetings provided announcement is made two services, (excluding Sunday School), preceding the called meeting.
- (c) A quorum consist of 30% of active attending members to constitute a valid vote.

Voting Qualifications:

- (a) The person must be sixteen years of age and must be a member of this church.
- (b) Any member who is inactive consistently in Sunday School and worship service without a valid reason for a period of three months shall be asked not to participate in the vote.
- (c) An officer or teacher may be dismissed from their position upon grounds of:
  - 1. Unfaithfulness
  - 2. Personal immorality
  - 3. Deviation from the Articles of Faith and Practice adopted by this church.

Missions:

- (a) The church shall support as many missionaries and mission projects as it financially can do.
- (b) Missionaries and mission projects shall be recommended by the deacons and approved by a majority of the church.

Literature:

- (a) The Bible shall be the basis literature used by the church.
- (b) If other literature is used it shall be literature which teaches the same position, and doctrines set forth in the Articles of Faith adopted by the church.
- (c) It is recommended that we use the KJV from the pulpit.

Committees:

- (a) The pastor shall appoint all committees, subject to approval of the church as the needs call for.
- (b) The various committees shall function and serve only as long as they are needed for a prescribed task. When the task is completed the committee will cease to be in existence.

Amendments:

- (a) The constitution and by-laws must be amended or changed by a majority vote of the members present.
- (b) The statement of Faith and Practice adopted by this church can't be changed.

## ARTICLE X

Financial Board:

- (a) A board of deacons and trustees, along with the Pastor and Treasurer, shall act as a financial board of the church.
- (b) Once a month this financial board will meet and decide what bills will be paid.
- (c) All regular bills will be paid when due (salaries, utilities, and mortgages, etc.)
- (d) The spending limits are as follows:
  - 1. Pastor, \$500.00
  - 2. Staff, \$100.00
  - 3. Deacons, \$100.00
  - 4. Trustees \$100.00

Note: Any member desiring to purchase/donate any item to the church, please seek the pastor's approval prior to purchase or reimbursement.

(e). Statement of Dissolution: In the event that Lighthouse Baptist Church of St. Louis should cease to exist, the remaining funds, personal property, and real estate will be given to the Baptist Bible Fellowship of Missouri.