



1601 N. Limekiln Pike, Dresher, PA 19025

215.646.5557

*cheltenham.org*

# **CONSTITUTION and BY-LAWS**

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# Constitution of Chelten Baptist Church

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## Article 1 Church Name

The legal name of the church is Chelten Baptist Church of Dresher, Pennsylvania, but the church shall be known as Chelten, a Church of Hope.

## Article 2 Church Purpose

Chelten, a Church of Hope exists to worship the triune God, to nurture his family, and to share his gospel of hope.

## Article 3 Statement of Faith

1. We believe in one God, existing eternally in three distinct persons, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit (Deut 6:4; Matt 3:16–17).
2. We believe in God the Father Almighty, Creator of heaven and earth, and of all things visible and invisible, who is infinite in divinity and sovereignty, and who loves and redeems (Ps 135:6; Isa 44:24; 1 Cor 8:6; 1 John 4:8).
3. We believe in the Lord Jesus Christ, who is the eternally begotten Son of the Father, who is of one essence with the Father, was incarnate by the Holy Spirit and the Virgin Mary, and is truly God and truly human, like us in all respects, except sin, and that his two natures are united in one person (Matt 1:18; John 1:1, 14; Phil 2:5–8; Heb 2:17; 4:15).
4. We believe that the Lord Jesus Christ lived a holy life and accomplished redemption through the shedding of his blood in death on the cross as an atoning and substitutionary sacrifice for sins (Rom 3:24–25; Heb 7:26; 1 Pet 3:18; 1 John 4:10).
5. We believe in the bodily resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ, who ascended into heaven, and who intercedes for us there as high priest and advocate and who will return bodily to this earth to set up his kingdom (Acts 1:9–11; Rom 8:34; 2 Tim 4:1; Heb 7:23–25).
6. We believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord and giver of life, who proceeds from the Father, who together with the Father and the Son is worshipped and glorified (John 6:63; 15:26; Rom 8:11; 2 Cor 3:8, 17).
7. We believe that the Holy Spirit spoke through the prophets, baptizes believers into the body of Christ, seals them for the day of redemption, indwells them, and empowers them for holy living (Acts 1:16; Rom 15:13; 1 Cor 12:13; Eph 4:30).
8. We believe that the Old and New Testaments are the verbally inspired word of God, inerrant in the original writings, and that they are of supreme and final authority in matters of faith and practice (Ps 119:160; 2 Tim 3:16–17; 2 Pet 3:15–16).

9. We believe that human beings were created in the image of God and that they sinned, thereby incurring the wrath of God, and that as a result all are sinners, separated from God, and are unable to save themselves (Gen 1:27; Rom 1:18; 3:23; 5:12; Eph 2:1–3).
10. We believe that salvation is received by grace through faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, not by works of merit, and those who believe are born again by the Holy Spirit and become children of God (John 1:12–13; Eph 2:8–9; Titus 3:5).
11. We believe in the bodily resurrection of all human beings: eternal life for the redeemed and eternal punishment for the unredeemed (Matt 25:46; John 5:28–29; Rom 6:5; 2 Thess 1:9).
12. We believe in and celebrate two sacraments ordained by the Lord Jesus Christ which are to be received by believers: baptism with water in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit, which is a public profession of faith in Christ, and the Lord's Supper, which is a participation with Christ and a remembrance of his death until he returns (Matt 26:26–29; 28:19; Acts 8:36–39; Rom 6:3–4, 8; 1 Cor 10:16–17; 11:23–34).
13. We believe in one, holy, universal, and apostolic church. We believe that a local church is a body of believers who covenant together for the regular proclamation of word and sacrament, discipleship, and the spread of the gospel (Matt 28:19; Acts 2:42–47; Eph 2:19–21; 5:25–27; Heb 10:24–25; 12:28).

We agree that the Nicene Creed expresses the essential truths of what all Christians believe everywhere.

## **Article 4 Church Government and Association**

The government of this church shall be congregational in form, vested in the body of the members who compose it. It shall be subject to no other ecclesiastical body, but recognizes and acknowledges the Holy Scriptures as its supreme and final authority in all matters of faith and practice.

The leadership, officers, boards, and committees of the church shall be set forth in the by-laws.

It shall be the intent of this church to cooperate with other Bible-believing, gospel-centered churches that also acknowledge the supreme and final authority of the Holy Scriptures in all matters of faith and practice and with CBAmerica and its related associations and organizations. Specific cooperation with the aforementioned and other religious bodies shall lie within the prerogative of the church.

Upon dissolution of the church, any church assets must be distributed to one or more organizations of like doctrine and recognized as a religious organization by the Internal Revenue Service. No private individual shall be entitled to share in a distribution of church assets.

## Article 5 Church Covenant

We covenant together, that we will:

1. abstain from sinful desires which wage war against our souls (1 Pet 2:11);
2. stand firm, letting nothing move us, always giving ourselves fully to the work of the Lord (1 Cor 15:58);
3. not love the world or anything in the world (1 John 2:15);
4. do our best to present ourselves to God as ones approved, workers who do not need to be ashamed and who correctly handle the word of truth (2 Tim 2:15);
5. be very careful how we live—not as unwise but as wise, making the most of every opportunity because the days are evil (Eph 5:15–16);
6. attend the regular services of the church, and will not give up meeting together (Heb 10:25);
7. give financially, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver (2 Cor 9:7);
8. not merely listen to the word, but will do what it says (Jas 1:22);
9. confess our sins to each other and pray for each other (Jas 5:16);
10. bring up our children in the training and instruction of the Lord (Eph 6:4);
11. clothe ourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness, and patience, and will bear with each other and forgive one another (Col 3:12–13);
12. forget what is behind and strain toward what is ahead, pressing on toward the goal to win the prize for which God has called us heavenward in Christ Jesus (Phil 3:13–14);
13. faithfully take the initiative to present the gospel of Christ, corporately and individually, to the non-believing community (2 Cor 5:11–21);
14. follow God’s design for human beings by affirming his creation of two genders as male and female in his image, recognizing that marriage is a covenant relationship between one man and one woman for their lifetime, and that sexual activity is reserved for this relationship (Gen 1:27, 2:23–25; Exod 20:14; Ps 139:13; Matt 19:4–6; Rom 1:24–27; 1 Cor 6:9–10; Heb 13:4).

## Article 6 By-Laws

The church shall, as occasions warrant, enact such by-laws as shall enable an effective fulfillment of its ministry, as shall be needed to meet any legal requirement, or to provide proper discipline of its members.

The by-laws shall be meant to implement the provisions of this constitution and the articles of incorporation, and therefore, shall at no time be effective if found to be contrary to the constitution or articles of incorporation.

## Article 7 Amendments

The constitution or by-laws may be amended at any business meeting of the church, providing notice of the proposed amendment is announced during regular meetings for worship on the two immediately previous Sundays. A written explanation of the wording and need for the proposed amendment shall also be made available two Sundays prior to the business meeting.

An amended constitution and by-laws, or one rewritten and adopted, shall supersede all previous constitutions and by-laws of Chelten Baptist Church.

## **Article 8 Interpretation**

The boards, officers, ministry staff, and members of the church shall endeavor to conform their decisions to the best of their understanding and knowledge to scriptural teachings, and to the constitution and by-laws of the church. If a question arises regarding ministry practices, the interpretation of Scripture, or the interpretation of the constitution and by-laws, the board of elders shall render a decision with respect to such interpretation. A decision of the board of elders with respect to such questions shall only be overridden by a seventy-five percent (75%) vote of members present at a business meeting. The constitution and by-laws shall be interpreted strictly, in accordance with the normal, common usage of words and phrases, and in a manner consistent with Scripture, the statement of faith, the original intent of the framers where ascertainable, and the entire constitution and by-laws.

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# By-Laws of Chelten Baptist Church

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## Article 1 Church Membership

Any person, after a profession of faith in the Lord Jesus Christ and subscribing to the statement of faith and church covenant, may be received into membership on the recommendation of the board of deacons, approval by the board of elders, and by a vote of the membership at any meeting for worship or business.

### Section 101 Requirements for Membership

- A. By Profession of Faith:** The following requirements must be met before becoming a member of Chelten Baptist Church:
1. A credible profession of faith in Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord.
  2. Baptized as a believer.
  3. Personal agreement with the Chelten Baptist Church constitution and by-laws, including the statement of faith and the church covenant.
  4. A favorable recommendation from the board of deacons and the board of elders and approval of the membership.
  5. Attendance at membership classes coordinated by the board of deacons; this requirement may be waived by the board of deacons.
- B. By Letter of Transfer:** A letter of transfer, if transferring from another church, may be accepted providing the requirements of article 1 section 101.A have been met.

### Section 102 Responsibilities of Membership

- A.** It shall be the responsibility of members to fulfill the obligations of members within the constitution and by-laws of the church to remain in good standing.
- B.** The life of a Christian should include love for God and for one's neighbor and the following minimal standards of involvement in the church:
1. Time spent in prayer each day and faithfully praying for the church and its ministries
  2. Regular reading and study of God's word
  3. The exercise of one's spiritual gifts and talents
  4. A desire to witness to unbelievers and to pray for their salvation
  5. Consistent involvement in church ministries
  6. Consistent attendance at worship services
  7. Faithful and consistent financial support
  8. Loyalty to and support of the church's ministries
- C.** Members relocating to a distance from the church that prevents their regular attendance and participation are encouraged to unite with a local church of like mind and doctrine as Chelten Baptist Church.

### Section 103 Receiving New Members

#### **A. By Profession of Faith**

1. Meet the requirements in article 1 section 101.A
2. Complete an application for membership
3. Be interviewed by members of the board of deacons
4. Make a credible profession of faith in Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord
5. Be approved by a vote of the membership
6. Be welcomed formally as a new member at a worship service

#### **B. By Letter of Transfer**

1. Provide a letter of transfer or dismissal in good standing from a church of like doctrine.
2. Follow the steps in article 1 section 101.A.

### Section 104 Types of Membership

**A. Full Membership:** Members who hold full membership may vote and request the floor at any business meeting, may hold an office for which they are qualified, and may teach in the church if qualified. These members fall into the following categories:

1. **Active Member:** An active member should faithfully fulfill the responsibilities of membership as outlined in article 1 section 102.B.
2. **Missionary Member:** A member who fulfills all of the attributes of an active member except for regular attendance due to missionary activities. They may be either a non-resident of the area or, although a resident of the area, are normally engaged in mission-related activities elsewhere on Sundays. It is expected that missionary members who reside in the area will attend the church when not engaged in mission activities.
3. **Shut-in Member:** A member who fulfills all the attributes of an active member except for regular attendance due to age, infirmity, or disability.
4. **Military Service Member:** A member who fulfills all the attributes of an active member except for regular attendance, being unable to attend regularly because he or she is in the military service and is stationed in another part of the country or overseas. Although all members are urged to unite with a church of like faith and practice where they are located, when circumstances are considered acceptable by the board of deacons, such members may remain as military service members provided they continue to be in contact with and in support of the church's ministry, and under the discipline of the church.

**B. Limited Membership:** Members who hold limited membership may not vote nor have the privilege of the floor at any business meeting. Members fall into the following categories:

1. **Inactive Member:** A person who has previously been an active member of the church but who is no longer contributing to the life, worship, and witness of the church. This includes:
  - a. A person who has been absent from the church for a period of six months or more, except those in the categories of missionary, shut-in, non-resident, or military service, will be placed on the inactive list.
  - b. A person who attends irregularly while attending and supporting another church in the area will be placed on the inactive list.
  - c. Any person who has been on the inactive list for two years in succession will be dropped from the roll. No person will be dropped before being notified, if possible, at the last known address.

- d. An inactive member may be reinstated to active status upon request and after six months of consistent attendance and interest in the church's ministry.
- e. A list of inactive members will be made available to the membership at least once a year.
2. **Associate Member:** A person who otherwise meets the requirements for active membership but who wishes to retain membership in one distant church.
  - a. Associate members will be given diaconal care as provided for active members and will be permitted to teach in the church, if qualified and approved by the board of elders.
  - b. This provision is intended primarily for students and missionary residents in the community. A person's associate membership is subject to cancellation by the board of deacons at the end of an associate member's commitment to the church and after approval by the board of elders.
3. **Non-Resident Member:** A member who fulfills all the attributes of an active member except for regular attendance, being unable to attend regularly because he or she has moved such a distance from the church as to make regular attendance impractical. Although all members are urged to unite with a church of like faith and practice where they are located, when circumstances are considered acceptable by the board of deacons, such members may remain as non-resident members provided they continue to be in contact with and in support of the church's ministry and under the discipline of the church.

### Section 105 Removing Members

- A. **Letter of Transfer or Dismissal:** A letter of transfer or dismissal may be granted to a member in good standing upon request by the member and approval of the board of deacons and the board of elders. This request shall be made in writing and presented to the chairman of the board of deacons to be processed by the church clerk. A written notification shall be cosigned by a pastor and provided to the departing member. A letter of transfer shall be provided for those requesting a transfer of membership to a church of like doctrine, and a letter of dismissal shall be provided for those requesting to be dismissed from membership to join a church of unlike doctrine.
- B. **Removal from Membership Roll**
  1. Inactive members may be removed from the membership roll as outlined in article 1 section 104.B.1.
  2. Any member in good standing who has united with another church without requesting a letter of transfer or dismissal may be removed from the membership roll upon approval by the board of deacons and the board of elders. A written notification shall be cosigned by a pastor and provided to the departing member.
  3. If a member in good standing requests in writing to be removed from the membership roll, the church clerk shall comply after receiving approval from the board of deacons and the board of elders. A written notification shall be cosigned by a pastor and provided to the departing member.
  4. A list of those removed from the membership roll shall be made available to the membership at least once a year.
- C. **Death of Member:** Upon the death of any member, his or her name shall be removed from the membership roll.

- D. Discipline of Member:** A member, disciplined by the vote of the membership, shall have his or her name removed from the membership roll and placed in disciplinary status. This shall be done after the procedures of discipline stated in article 1 section 106 of these by-laws have been followed completely.

#### Section 106 Discipline of Members

- A.** We recognize that the word of God places the responsibility for the discipline and restoration of erring members upon the local church. It is understood that those who are known to be in violation of their covenant relationship with this church and the clear teaching of God's word and who thus bring reproach to the name of Christ, are subject to discipline. If, after sufficient time, counsel, and prayer with the board of elders or the failure to participate in any such requested counsel or prayer, the erring member does not correct his or her misconduct, disciplinary action shall be instituted. Discipline of members shall be the responsibility of the board of elders acting on behalf of the church and in harmony with the instructions of God's word (Matt 18:15–20; Gal 6:1; 2 Thess 3:6–15).
- B.** When an individual suffers in personal character or otherwise from the conduct of a member, the offended party will be expected to proceed in a spirit of kindness toward the offender in accordance with the teaching of Matt 18:15–20. No individual differences shall be brought into the church until this course has been pursued and it has been brought to the chairman of the board of elders and he agrees to the institution of proceedings under this section.
- C.** No complaint from a party shall be presented against a member, nor shall any action be taken by the church until the alleged offense shall have been specifically stated in writing, signed by the accusing party, and delivered to the chairman of the board of elders.
- D.** If, after having followed the teaching of Matt 18:15–20, a party accuses a member of improper conduct and shows basis in fact, it shall be the duty of the board of elders to inform the accused party of the accusations made against them. The member shall be required to appear at a meeting of the board of elders. In case of refusal or failure to appear after written notice, given at least two weeks before the scheduled meeting, the chairman of the board of elders shall give notice to the accused party that they shall have thirty days to request a hearing before the board of elders, and/or present their defense in writing, after which, within a reasonable period of time, the board of elders shall decide if further disciplinary action is warranted and if so decided, said action, which may include exclusion, shall be put to a vote of the members of the church at a special business meeting. It shall be the duty of the board of elders to review annually all those under discipline and to seek to restore the person back into the fellowship of the church (1 Cor 5:1–13; 2 Cor 2:6–8).
- E.** Persons excluded from membership may be restored again as members in good standing by confession of their error and by giving evidence of repentance. This shall be done with oversight by the board of elders and then by a vote by the members of the church at any business meeting.
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## Article 2 Church Meetings

### Section 201 Meetings for Worship

- A. **Public Worship:** On each Sunday, there shall be at least one meeting for public worship. Other meetings for prayer, Bible study, worship, and fellowship shall be held as scheduled by church leadership.
- B. **Lord's Supper:** The Lord's Supper shall be ministered on the first Sunday of each month, unless circumstances require it to be observed at another time.
- C. **Offerings**
  - 1. A regular offering shall be taken at Sunday worship services to support the church's budgeted missions and ministry expenses.
  - 2. On the first Sunday of the month, an offering for the fellowship fund will be received during the same time as the regular offering, providing assistance to the needy of the church and community.
  - 3. Any special offerings shall be taken with the approval of the board of elders.
  - 4. All offerings must be processed through the church unified accounting system.

### Section 202 Annual Business Meeting

- A. A church business meeting shall be held at least once a year. The notice of the annual business meeting shall be announced during regular meetings for worship on the two immediately preceding Sundays.
- B. The agenda shall include the election of boards and officers, adoption of the church budget, and other business as determined by the board of elders for the following fiscal year.
- C. If the board of elders determines that circumstances warrant the annual business meeting to be held electronically, the meeting will be scheduled and governed by the provisions of these by-laws.

### Section 203 Special Business Meetings

- A. Special business meetings may be called by the board of elders, or at the written request of seven members to the board of elders. The notice and purpose of the meeting shall be announced during regular meetings for worship on the two immediately preceding Sundays.
- B. Members may be received, church letters granted, and delegates to councils and associations appointed at any regular worship service or business meeting of the church.
- C. If the board of elders determines that circumstances warrant a special business meeting to be held electronically, the meeting will be scheduled and governed by the provisions of these by-laws.

### Section 204 Moderator

- A. The moderator shall be elected annually by the board of elders, shall be accountable to the board of elders, and shall preside at all business meetings of the church. In the event matters affecting the moderator personally are being acted upon, he or she shall appoint a temporary moderator to preside while considering the particular question that relates to him or her.
- B. In the event the moderator is absent, the board of elders shall appoint a temporary moderator.
- C. The moderator shall conduct business meetings in accordance with the provisions of these by-laws.

### Section 205 Transaction of Business

#### **A. Eligible Voters**

- 1. Active members, eighteen years old or older, may vote on all questions.
- 2. Members must be present to vote.
- 3. It shall be the duty of the board of deacons to review the membership of the church no more than sixty days prior to the annual business meeting to determine the accurate number of eligible voters.

#### **B. Quorum**

- 1. No business may be officially transacted without a quorum present. Ballots shall be available to members for the transaction of business at business meetings, except for the following items of business: the approval of new members, the approval of minutes, the approval of board reports, and the adjourning of a meeting. Ballots shall be available to members for viewing two weeks before the meeting.
- 2. Thirty percent (30%) of the members eligible to vote, determined according to the procedure set forth in article 2 section 205.A., shall constitute a quorum for transacting only the following kinds of business:
  - a. Resolutions granting approval to make any financial commitment or transaction concerning enlargement, removal, erection, acquisition, sale of buildings, or real estate property
  - b. Call and termination of a pastor
  - c. Amendments to the articles of incorporation, constitution, or by-laws, or their interpretation based upon article 8 of the constitution
  - d. Dissolution of the corporation
- 3. Fifteen percent (15%) of the members eligible to vote shall constitute a quorum for transacting all business other than the specific matters defined above.

#### **C. Majority**

- 1. The affirmative vote of seventy-five percent (75%) of those present shall be necessary to act on any matter listed in article 2 section 205 B.2., providing there is a necessary quorum.
- 2. The affirmative vote of greater than fifty percent (50%) of those present shall be sufficient to act on any other matter, providing there is a necessary quorum.
- 3. Any action approved as provided here shall constitute an action of the church.

#### **D. Agenda**

- 1. The following shall be addressed in the order of importance established by the moderator at the annual business meeting:
  - a. Approval of minutes
  - b. Treasurer's report

- c. Election of boards and officers
  - d. Approval of church budget
  - e. Reports of boards and committees
  - f. Old business
  - g. New business
  - h. Adjournment
2. The election of boards and officers shall take place at the annual business meeting and a short biography and statement of qualifications for candidates nominated for church offices shall be made available to members at least two weeks before the annual business meeting.
  3. A proposed church budget and reports from boards and ministries shall be made available to members at least one week before the annual business meeting.

**E. Minutes:** The church clerk shall record minutes of all business meetings and make available copies of such minutes to members within four weeks after any meeting.

**F. Rules of Order:** The latest edition of *Robert's Rules of Order* shall constitute the basis for ruling in the business meetings, boards (voting criteria is set by each board), and committees of the church (voting criteria is set by the overseeing board), a digest of which is as follows:

1. The moderator is not expected to take part in the debate, although he or she may state matters of fact within his or her knowledge affecting the subject under discussion and inform the church on points of order when occasion calls for it.
2. All motions, when sustained by a second, shall be stated distinctly by the moderator previous to any discussion thereof.
3. A member desiring to speak shall address the moderator, then shall not proceed until recognized by the moderator. When several rise together, the moderator shall decide who will speak first. No member shall speak more than twice on the same subject while others who have not spoken desire to speak, unless to explain, nor shall any member have the right to interrupt a member speaking, even to explain.

#### **G. Ordination**

1. A candidate for ordination shall be a man who is a member in good standing of a Baptist church.
2. The candidate's request for ordination shall be made in writing to the chairman of the board of elders.
3. If the candidate demonstrates calling and qualification to gospel ministry, the membership shall then vote whether or not to proceed with the ordination.
  - a. If in the affirmative, the chairman of the board of elders will call an examining council consisting of members from the board of elders and any others as they think appropriate to consider the candidate's calling (including character, ministry, Scripture, and theology) for the gospel ministry.
  - b. The examination council will make a recommendation to the board of elders.
  - c. The board of elders will communicate their decision to the church.
4. After examination of the candidate by the council, if the decision of the board of elders is affirmative, an ordination service will be scheduled by the board of elders.
5. Any special offering received at the ordination service shall be given to the candidate.
6. The membership reserves the right to revoke its ordination endorsement should the candidate fall into disrepute in character, ministry, Scripture, or theology. Revocation of endorsement shall be governed by the procedures of article 1 section 106, as if the case were one of discipline.

**H. Licensing**

1. A license to preach shall be granted to a man who is a member in good standing, believing himself and believed by others to have been called to preach.
  2. Such persons shall be examined by the board of elders and shall be recommended for a vote by the membership.
  3. Each license shall be reviewed annually by the board of elders and shall be operative as long as the holder is a member in good standing of the church.
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## Article 3 Pastors and Ministry Directors

Chelten Baptist Church shall take a team approach to pastoral ministry and staff direction, creating a leadership model focused on the purpose and vision of the church. Specific pastoral positions will be recommended by the board of elders to the membership. Each position shall be designated to one of the following categories: pastoral leadership team, other pastors, or staff ministry directors. A specific description of duties and responsibilities shall be prepared for each position. The church shall employ as many pastors and ministry directors as is necessary to effectively serve.

### Section 301 Pastoral Leadership Team

#### **A. Qualifications**

1. A pastoral leadership team member shall be ordained, meet the qualifications of 1 Tim 3:1-7, and have necessary biblical and theological training.
2. He shall subscribe to and be in complete agreement with the statement of faith and church covenant of Chelten Baptist Church.
3. He shall be able to articulate the vision of the church, develop leadership in the church, and shepherd and care for the needs of people.
4. Each pastoral leadership team member, in keeping with the purpose of his call and giftedness, shall be provided with a written job description that shall be reviewed annually and updated as necessary by the board of elders.
5. Each pastoral leadership team member shall have an annual job performance evaluation, and a 360 (full-spectrum) review every third year, by the board of elders.

#### **B. Procedures for the Call of Pastoral Leadership Team Member:**

1. A pastoral leadership team member shall be called in the event of a need in the church by a search committee appointed by the board of elders and operating in accordance with article 5 section 502.
2. Within thirty days of appointing a search committee, the board of elders shall establish a salary range, benefits, an appropriate job description, selection criteria, and with the input of the trustees, a budget for expenditures associated with the search.
3. A pastoral leadership team member candidate shall be presented to the congregation in a series of introductory meetings and shall preach on two different Sundays during his candidacy prior to any action by the membership. At least two weeks' notice shall be given to the congregation of a candidate's visit and preaching schedule.
4. The candidate, having been interviewed and approved by the board of elders, shall then be presented to the members for a vote at a business meeting. The notice and purpose of the business meeting shall be announced during regular meetings for worship on the two immediately previous Sundays.
5. Only one candidate at a time shall be presented to the church.
6. In the event that the board of elders desires to promote a pastor to the pastoral leadership team, the search committee shall consist of the board of elders, and the board shall follow all other requirements in the search committee section.

**C. Term of Office:** A pastoral leadership team member shall be called for an unlimited time.

#### **D. Termination**

1. If a pastoral team leader at any time shall resign from his position, the church shall be given sixty days' notice from the date of resignation to the termination of his duties.
2. Should the relationship between a pastoral leadership team member and the congregation become detrimental to the welfare of the church according to the board of elders, the relationship, after a vote of the membership, shall be terminated within sixty days from the date of the vote of approval. In the event of termination of employment, pursuant to this or any other subsection, the church shall provide reasonable and fair severance compensation as determined by the board of elders, if appropriate.
3. In the first case, termination may be accomplished in a shorter time if mutually agreed upon by the pastor and a vote of the membership. In the first case in which the relationship between the pastoral leadership team member and the congregation have become detrimental to the welfare of the church, or in the second case, termination may be accomplished in a shorter time if agreed upon by a vote of the membership.

### **Section 302 Other Pastors**

#### **A. Qualifications**

1. A pastor shall be a sincere Christian and meet the qualifications of 1 Tim 3:1-7. It is desirable that he shall have necessary biblical and theological training.
2. He shall subscribe to and be in complete agreement with the statement of faith and church covenant of Chelten Baptist Church.
3. A pastor shall have the professional training appropriate for the particular position to which he is called and said training shall be described in the job description for the position.
4. Each pastor, in keeping with the purpose of his call and giftedness, shall have a written job description that shall be reviewed annually and updated as necessary by the board of elders.
5. Each pastor shall have an annual job performance evaluation by a pastoral leadership team member, under the supervision of the board of elders.

**B. Procedure for Calling:** The board of elders shall serve as a search committee for calling any pastor, other than a pastoral leadership team member. A pastor shall be interviewed and recommended by the board of elders to the membership for affirmation at a business meeting.

**C. Term of Office:** A pastor shall be called for an unlimited time.

#### **D. Termination**

1. If a pastor at any time shall resign from his position, the church shall be given thirty days' notice from the date of resignation to the termination of his duties.
2. Should relationship between a pastor and the congregation become detrimental to the welfare of the church according to the board of elders, the relationship, after a vote of the membership, shall be terminated within thirty days from the date of the vote of approval. In the event of termination of employment, pursuant to this and any subsection, the church shall provide reasonable and fair severance compensation as determined by the board of elders, if appropriate.
3. In both the above cases, termination may be accomplished in a shorter time if mutually agreed upon by the pastor and the membership.

### Section 303 Staff Ministry Directors

#### **A. Qualifications**

1. A staff ministry director shall be a sincere Christian and meet the qualifications of his or her job description. It is desirable that he or she shall have adequate biblical knowledge and/or biblical training.
2. He or she shall be in complete support of the constitution and by-laws of the church.
3. He or she shall have the professional training appropriate for the position and said training shall be described in the job description for that position.
4. Each staff ministry director shall be provided with a written job description that shall be reviewed annually and updated as necessary by the board of elders.

**B. Procedure for Employment:** The board of elders shall oversee the search and selection of all ministry directors.

**C. Term of Office:** A ministry director shall be called for an unlimited time.

**D. Termination:** Termination or resignation of a staff ministry director shall be initiated by the pastoral leadership team with the approval of the board of elders, in accordance with current church employment policies.

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## Article 4 Boards and Officers

### Section 401 Board of Elders

#### A. Qualifications

1. Elders shall be men who are members who meet the scriptural requirements of 1 Tim 3:1–7 and Titus 1:6–9.
2. **Terms Defined:** The term “elders” shall collectively refer to the board of elders, and shall include pastoral elders and lay elders; the term “pastoral elders” shall refer to those elders on the board who are either Pastoral Leadership Team members or other pastors; the term “lay elders” shall refer to those elders on the board who do not serve at the church as pastors.

#### B. Term of Office

1. There should be a minimum of six elected lay elders. There should be a maximum of eight elected lay elders or a maximum of two elected lay elders per pastoral elder on the elder board, whichever number is greater. Should a pastoral position become vacant, the board may consider this position open for one year for the purpose of electing lay elders.
2. Pastoral leadership team members and other pastors shall be ex-officio voting members of the board of elders.
3. Lay elders shall be elected for a term of three years. As evenly as possible, one-third shall be elected each year. They may serve a maximum of two terms consecutively.
4. In the event a lay elder is found to no longer meet the qualifications of his office, he may be removed from office providing:
  - a. written charges are made by three members of the church;
  - b. the charges are found to be true upon investigation by the board of elders;
  - c. if he is a lay elder, the membership votes for his removal at a business meeting of the church.
5. If a lay elder is removed his successor shall be elected through normal procedures at a business meeting of the church. If a pastoral elder is removed, procedures under article 3 section 301.D or article 3 section 302.D shall be observed.
6. In the event a lay elder resigns, the resignation shall be made in writing and presented to the chairman of the board of elders for the appropriate action.

#### C. Duties

1. The elders shall elect their own chairman, vice chairman, and secretary, and shall appoint the moderator each year. These officers may serve for a maximum of two consecutive years.
  - a. The moderator, who is not required to be an elder, may serve an unlimited number of terms.
  - b. A pastoral leadership team member or other pastor may not be elected to the position of chairman, vice chairman, or moderator.
2. The lay elders shall guide, support, aid, and hold accountable the pastors in directing the ministries of the church. The board of elders shall generate, and the pastors shall implement, the vision of the church.
3. The board of elders shall, on an annual basis, evaluate the performance of church ministries, make recommendations for any improvements needed, and establish the size of standing committees and boards according to need.
4. The board of elders shall prepare and publish an annual plan and report of progress toward church goals. The plan is to include the annual budget. The elders shall have the authority to adjust a budget submitted by any ministry of the church after consultation with that ministry.
5. The board of elders shall review any and all changes to the constitution and by-laws proposed by a member and, if approved, shall make a recommendation to the membership concerning said

proposal. They shall review and approve all church operating policies and any proposed changes in policies.

6. The board of elders shall refute those who oppose the truth. They shall be responsible for shepherding the flock and overseeing the discipline of members as outlined in article 1 section 106 of these by-laws.
7. The board of elders shall pray for the sick and spend time in intercession for the needs of the congregation.
8. The board of elders shall have direct responsibility to investigate, interview, and hear prospective candidates for all pastor and ministry director positions.
9. The board of elders shall oversee the boards of deacons and deaconesses as they shepherd and care for the congregation.
10. The board of elders shall form committees as necessary to effectively fulfill the responsibilities of their office. Members for the function of these committees will be drawn from the membership, and each committee will be chaired by an elder. Specific terms and duties of a search committee and the missions committee, both appointed by the board of elders, are detailed in article 5 sections 502–503.
11. The board of elders shall have final authority over the boards of deacons, deaconesses, and trustees, consistent with the authority already granted to those boards by the constitution and by-laws.
12. The board of elders shall maintain written job descriptions for elder board members, the chairman, the vice chairman, the secretary, and the moderator. They shall be reviewed annually.

#### **Section 402 Board of Deacons**

**A. Qualifications:** Deacons shall be men who are members who meet the scriptural requirements of 1 Tim 3:8–13 and Acts 6:3–7.

#### **B. Term of Office**

1. The goal shall be at least one deacon for each thirty-five congregants. Deacons shall be elected for a term of three years. As evenly as possible, one-third shall be elected each year. They may serve a maximum of two terms consecutively.
2. In the event a deacon is found to no longer meet the qualifications of his office, he will be removed from such office providing:
  - a. written charges are made by three members of the church;
  - b. the charges are found to be true upon investigation by the board of elders;
  - c. the membership votes for his removal at a business meeting of the church.
3. In the event a deacon resigns, his successor shall be elected through normal procedures at a business meeting of the church.
4. In the event a deacon resigns, the resignation shall be made in writing and presented to the chairman of the board of deacons for the appropriate action.

#### **C. Duties**

1. The board of deacons shall elect their own chairman, vice chairman, secretary, and fellowship fund chairman each year. These officers may serve for a maximum of two consecutive years.
2. The board of deacons shall assist and cooperate with the boards of elders and deaconesses in shepherding the flock, caring for the congregation, and the coordination of their ministries.
3. It shall be the duty of the board of deacons to seek out members of the church or those in close relation to the church who are in need and aid in meeting those needs, to inquire into the character and eligibility of applicants for membership or dismissal, to build relationships with

the members under their diaconal care, to visit congregants as needed and appropriate, to distribute the elements of the Lord's Supper, and assist with baptism services.

4. The board of deacons shall form committees as necessary to effectively fulfill the responsibilities of their office. Members for the function of these committees will be drawn from the membership, and each committee will be chaired by a deacon. Specific terms and duties of the nominating committee and fellowship fund committee, appointed by the board of deacons, are detailed in article 5 sections 504 and 505.
5. The board of elders shall have final authority over the board of deacons, consistent with the authority already granted to the board of deacons by the constitution and by-laws of the church.
6. The board of deacons shall maintain written job descriptions for deacon board members, the chairman, the vice chairman, fellowship fund chairman, and the secretary. They shall be reviewed annually.

### **Section 403 Board of Deaconesses**

**A. Qualifications:** The deaconesses shall be women who are members and who have gained a reputation of Christian grace and godliness. They shall meet the same general standards as set forth for deacons as intimated in 1 Tim 3:11.

#### **B. Term of Office**

1. The goal shall be at least one deaconess for every thirty-five congregants.
2. Deaconesses shall be elected for a term of three years. As evenly as possible, one-third shall be elected each year. They may serve a maximum of two terms consecutively.
3. In the event a deaconess is found to no longer meet the qualifications of her office, she will be removed from office providing:
  - a. written charges are made by three members of the church;
  - b. the charges are found to be true upon investigation by the board of elders;
  - c. the membership votes for her removal at a business meeting of the church.
4. In the event a deaconess resigns, her successor shall be elected through normal procedures at a business meeting of the church.
5. In the event a deaconess resigns, the resignation shall be made in writing and presented to the chairman of the board of deaconesses for the appropriate action.

#### **C. Duties**

1. The board of deaconesses shall elect their own chairman, vice chairman, and secretary each year. These officers may serve for a maximum of two consecutive years.
2. The board of deaconesses shall assist and cooperate with the boards of elders and deacons in shepherding the flock, caring for the congregation, and the coordination of their ministries.
3. The board of deaconesses shall assist with pastoral care activities, visit members, prepare the elements for the Lord's Supper, and assist with baptismal services.
4. The board of deaconesses shall enlist, encourage, and guide other women of the church in using their spiritual gifts in the ministries of the church.
5. The board of deaconesses shall form committees as necessary to fulfill the responsibilities of their office. Members for the function of these committees will be drawn from the membership. Each committee will be chaired by a deaconess.
6. The board of elders shall have final authority over the board of deaconesses, consistent with the authority already granted to the board of deaconesses by the constitution and by-laws of the church.
7. The board of deaconesses shall maintain written job descriptions for deaconess board members, the chairman, the vice chairman, and the secretary. They shall be reviewed annually.

### Section 404 Board of Trustees

**A. Qualifications:** The trustees shall be members of honest report, living exemplary lives, and shall have given evidence of being spiritually mature and full of wisdom. They shall also be gifted to those particular duties to which they shall be assigned.

#### **B. Term of Office**

1. There shall be a minimum of six trustees.
2. Trustees shall be elected for a term of three years. As evenly as possible, one-third shall be elected each year. They may serve a maximum of two terms consecutively.
3. The church treasurer shall be an ex-officio non-voting member of the board of trustees.
4. In the event a trustee is found to no longer meet the qualifications of this office, they will be removed from such office providing:
  - a. written charges are made by three members of the church;
  - b. the charges are found to be true upon investigation by the board of elders;
  - c. the membership votes for his removal at a church business meeting.
5. His or her successor shall be elected through normal procedures at a business meeting of the church.
6. In the event a trustee resigns, the resignation shall be made in writing and presented to the chairman of the board of trustees for the appropriate action.

#### **C. Duties**

1. The board of trustees shall elect their own chairman, vice chairman, and secretaries (finance committee and trustee board), each year. These officers may serve for a maximum of two consecutive years.
2. It shall be the duty of the board of trustees, as legal representatives of the church, to execute all legal documents in regard to any and all property owned by the church including, but not limited to, banking documents, agreements of sale, deeds, mortgages, and other legal documents required to sell, purchase, acquire and/or encumber such property, as authorized by the church. All legal documents shall be signed by the chairman of the board of trustees and one other trustee.
3. The board of trustees shall be able to expend up to two percent (2%) of the total annual budget, in excess of the budget, within the fiscal church year, with the agreement the board of elders and without membership approval.
4. The board of trustees shall provide for the regular collection of tithes and offerings at such times and in such ways that may be determined best.
5. The board of trustees shall coordinate with the pastoral leadership team and the finance committee, the development of the proposed annual budget, which shall be submitted to the board of elders for approval and subsequent presentation to the membership at the annual business meeting for final approval.
6. The board of trustees shall appropriately care for the physical needs of the church facilities and all church property.
7. The board of trustees shall designate a representative to oversee granting or refusing to grant, the use of the church facilities, or any part of the church properties, for any service or requested use.
8. The board of trustees shall be responsible to review and approve all modifications of church properties. If a committee or ministry has plans for major modifications, they should be submitted to the chairman of the board of trustees, along with the purpose and estimated cost, for review and approval or other actions.

9. The board of trustees shall bond the church treasurer, assistant treasurer, church financial secretary, and any check signers of the church for a suitable amount for the faithful performance of their duties.
10. The board of trustees shall provide a counting team, comprised of the church treasurer, assistant church treasurer, trustee financial secretary, and any other trustee who can lend assistance to receive all tithes and offerings, and count, record, and deposit it in the bank to the credit of Chelten Baptist Church. An accounting of the amount of funds received for the fellowship fund shall be provided to the appropriate members of the board of deacons. There shall always be a minimum of two persons present to count.
11. The board of trustees shall maintain a close liaison with the church financial secretary who keeps accurate records of all receipts, giving credit where due, and acknowledging all special gifts.
12. The board of trustees shall form committees as necessary to effectively fulfill the responsibilities of their office. Members for the function of these committees will be drawn from the membership, although each committee will be chaired by a trustee. Specific terms and duties of a building committee, appointed by the board of trustees, are detailed in article 5 section 505.
13. The board of elders shall have final authority over the board of trustees, consistent with the authority already granted to the board of trustees by the constitution and by-laws of the church.
14. The board of trustees shall maintain written job descriptions for trustee board members, the chairman, the vice chairman, and secretaries (finance committee and trustee board). They shall be reviewed annually.

#### Section 405 Church Clerk

- A. **Qualifications:** The church clerk shall be elected for a term of three years. The church clerk may serve an unlimited number of terms.
- B. **Term of Office:** The church clerk shall keep an accurate roll of all church members. The church clerk shall partner with a pastor and the board of deacons to process any requests for letters of transfer or dismissal to other churches.
- C. **Duties**
  1. The church clerk shall record minutes of all business meetings of the church and make available copies of such minutes to members within four weeks after the meeting.
  2. The church clerk shall keep an accurate register of all church members. The church clerk shall process any requests for letters of transfer or dismissal to other churches.
  3. The church clerk shall assure that the church maintains an accurate and official record of church documents to include the constitution, the by-laws, a policy manual, and a general historical record of noteworthy events.
  4. The church clerk shall be accountable to the board of elders for all matters pertaining to business meetings. The church clerk shall be accountable to the board of deacons for all matters pertaining to membership.

#### Section 406 Church Treasurer

- A. **Qualifications:** The church treasurer shall be a member who has a knowledge of current bookkeeping and accounting procedures. They shall be familiar with the procedures in use by Chelten Baptist Church.
- B. **Term of Office:** The church treasurer shall be elected for a term of three years. The church treasurer may serve for a maximum of two consecutive terms.

**C. Duties**

1. The church treasurer shall ensure that the church complies with IRS and legal requirements.
2. The church treasurer shall be authorized to and will be available to sign checks as needed.
3. The church treasurer shall be a member of the finance committee.
4. The church treasurer shall be responsible for reporting the financial status of the church to the membership at the annual business meeting.
5. The church treasurer shall oversee the selection of an auditing firm. The finance committee will determine annually if an internal or external audit is required.
6. A voucher system shall be utilized to provide adequate control and expedite efficient payment of expenses. Each board or ministry shall designate persons authorized to sign vouchers.
7. The church treasurer shall be an ex-officio member of the board of trustees, and shall be accountable to the board of trustees, but without the privilege to vote.

**Section 407 Assistant Church Treasurer**

**A. Qualifications:** The assistant church treasurer shall be a member who is familiar with bookkeeping and accounting procedures.

**B. Term of Office:** The assistant church treasurer shall be elected for a three-year term. The assistant church treasurer may serve for a maximum of two consecutive terms.

**C. Duties**

1. The assistant church treasurer shall assume the responsibilities of the church treasurer if the church treasurer is unable.
  2. The assistant church treasurer may also serve as a check signer as needed.
  3. The assistant church treasurer shall be made familiar with the procedures used by Chelten Baptist Church.
  4. The assistant church treasurer shall be accountable to the board of trustees.
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## Article 5 Committees and Ministries

### Section 501 Church Committees

- A. Qualifications:** Members who serve on committees of the church shall be men and women who display a spiritual maturity and judgment, who have shown an active interest in the ministry of Chelten Baptist Church, and who, after acquainting themselves with the required duties, shall be willing to put forth the effort and time to sincerely perform the duties involved.

### Section 502 Search Committee

A committee appointed by the board of elders

#### **A. Term of Office**

1. In the event of a vacancy in a pastoral leadership team position, the board of elders shall appoint a search committee to secure candidates for the membership's consideration.
2. The committee shall consist of one pastor, one lay elder, one deacon, one deaconess, one trustee, and four members from the membership at large.
3. The committee is dissolved upon the filling of the open position.

#### **B. Duties**

1. The search committee shall elect its own chairman, vice chairman, and secretary.
2. The search committee shall investigate, interview, and hear prospective candidates for a pastoral leadership team position in accordance with the provisions in article 3 section 301.
3. The search committee shall be advised by the board of elders as to the salary and benefits to be offered a potential pastoral candidate.
4. The search committee shall be allocated expense money, when necessary, for use in seeking candidates.
5. Any candidate recommended by the search committee shall be approved by the board of elders prior to the candidate being presented to the church.
6. The search committee shall present one candidate at a time to the congregation.
7. When authorized by the membership, the search committee shall extend a call to the candidate to become a pastoral team leader at Chelten Baptist Church.

### Section 503 Missions Committee

A committee appointed by the board of elders

#### **A. Term of Office**

1. The missions committee shall consist of at least five members to be appointed by the board of elders, the number based on projected needs.
2. Each person shall be appointed for a term of three years. As evenly as possible, one-third shall be appointed each year. They may serve a maximum of two terms consecutively.

#### **B. Duties**

1. The missions committee shall elect its own chairman, vice chairman, and secretary each year.
2. The missions committee shall encourage and arrange missions activities within the church and coordinate periodic missions conferences and seminars.
3. The missions committee shall coordinate hospitality to visiting missionaries and oversee missionary housing.
4. The missions committee shall be responsible to communicate with the missionaries supported by Chelten and shall keep the congregation informed of their needs, prayer requests, and ministry activities.

5. The missions committee shall support and assist the pastoral staff directly responsible for missions.
6. The missions committee shall be responsible for helping the pastoral staff compile the church's annual missions budget.
7. The missions committee shall encourage evangelism and local outreach as the primary method of church growth.
8. The chairperson shall appoint subcommittees necessary to effectively carry out the responsibilities of the missions committee. Members for the function of these committees may be drawn from the congregation, but they will be chaired by a member of the missions committee.

#### **Section 504 Nominating Committee**

A committee appointed by the board of deacons

##### **A. Term of Office**

1. The nominating committee shall consist of one elder, two deacons, two deaconesses, one trustee, and three persons, appointed by the board of deacons, from the membership.
2. The nominating committee shall be appointed at the start of the church fiscal year.
3. Members will serve for one year, but may be reappointed for subsequent years.

##### **B. Duties**

1. The nominating committee will elect its own secretary, and the chairman shall be appointed from the board of deacons.
2. The nominating committee will receive recommendations from the boards for nominees who meet the required qualifications for open positions on the boards of elders, deacons, deaconesses, and trustees, and in the offices of church clerk, church treasurer, and assistant church treasurer. Prospective nominees must be members of the church in good standing.
3. Suggested nominations may also be made in writing by any member of the congregation to a member of the nominating committee no later than six weeks prior to the annual business meeting.
4. The nominating committee will submit a list of prospective nominees to the board of elders, two weeks prior to approaching the nominees. If, during this two-week waiting period, the board of elders advises the nominating committee that a person is unqualified for nomination, the committee will then remove the nominee. It is understood that the board of elders has the authority to veto any nomination by the committee.
5. When affirmed by the board of elders, nominees will be approached by the representative of the board on which the nominee will be asked to serve. The nominees will be given a description of the duties and responsibilities of the position and asked whether they will allow their name to stand in nomination for the position.
6. It will then be the responsibility of the chairman of the nominating committee to coordinate these efforts and prepare a list of nominees to fill open positions on boards and in offices.
7. The nominating committee's report shall be posted in the form of a ballot in two conspicuous locations in the church building at least three weeks prior to the annual business meeting.
8. Nominations from the floor of a church business meeting will not be accepted.
9. In the event of unexpired terms, the committee will abide by the same procedures as stated above, and proceed to fill the vacancy at any church business meeting.

**Section 505 Fellowship Fund Committee** A committee appointed by the board of deacons

**A. Term of Office**

1. The fellowship fund committee shall consist of three deacons and two deaconesses, appointed by the board of deacons. When necessary, the committee will consult with a member of the pastoral leadership team.
2. The fellowship fund committee shall be appointed at the start of the church fiscal year.
3. Members shall serve for one year but may be reappointed for subsequent years.
4. The chairman of the fellowship fund committee shall be a deacon.

**B. Duties**

1. The fellowship fund committee shall elect its own chairman each year.
2. The fellowship fund committee shall seek out members of the church or those in close relation to the church who are in short-term need and aid in meeting those needs.
3. The fellowship fund committee shall establish guidelines for the distribution of funds, which shall be reviewed annually by the board of deacons.

**Section 506 Finance Committee** A committee appointed by the board of trustees

**C. Term of Office**

1. The finance committee shall consist of one elder, three trustees, the church treasurer, the assistant church treasurer, and an appropriate staff member appointed by the board of trustees.
2. Members of the finance committee shall have good working knowledge of finance and business.

**D. Duties**

1. The board of trustees shall elect one trustee to be the chairman of the finance committee. The chairman may serve no more than two consecutive years.
2. The finance committee shall elect its own vice chairman and secretary each year.
3. The finance committee shall oversee, and coordinate with the board of trustees and the pastoral leadership team, the establishment of the annual budget for the church, in accordance with article 4 section 404.C.5.
4. The finance committee shall oversee any decisions related to any debt of the church, including, but not limited to, the financing or refinancing of any mortgage debt on the church's real estate.
5. The finance committee shall determine annually whether an internal or external audit is required.
6. The finance committee shall oversee matters as delegated to it by the board of trustees, including but not limited to, developing investment policies and overseeing audits.
7. The finance committee shall prepare written job descriptions for its officers, which shall be reviewed annually.
8. The finance committee shall report to the board of trustees; however, it will submit its proposed church budget to the board of elders for its approval and subsequent presentation to the membership for approval at the annual business meeting.

**Section 507 Ministries**

- A.** All activities of the church, other than those designated to the four boards, shall be classified as ministries.
- B.** Ministries may be initiated or terminated by the board of elders as deemed appropriate for the work of the church.
- C.** Directors of each ministry shall be appointed by the board of elders and be responsible to them through the pastoral staff.
- D.** The director of a ministry shall establish any support committees necessary for the effective function of the ministry.

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Constitution and by-laws revised by affirmative vote of the membership on May 15, 2022.