

Anthony Drive Baptist Church Constitution

We declare and establish this constitution to preserve and secure the principles of our faith and to govern the body in a decent and orderly manner. This constitution will preserve the liberties of each individual church member and the freedom of action of this body in relation to other churches.

Article I. Church Name

This body shall be known as Anthony Drive Baptist Church, Inc. The primary offices will be located at Ennis, Texas.

Article II. Mission Statement

In obedience to God, as a Christ-centered body of believers, we commit to disciple, enable and encourage one another to love, worship, and serve our Savior, Jesus Christ. Furthermore, we commit to share the Good News and ourselves with our neighbors in Anthony Drive Baptist Church, in the surrounding communities, and throughout the world.

Article III. Purpose Statement

Anthony Drive Baptist Church exists for:

1. WORSHIP - "To participate in public worship services together and to maintain personal daily devotions." (John 4:24)
2. EVANGELISM - "To share the good news of Jesus Christ with as many people as possible in our community and throughout the world." (Matthew 28:18-20; Acts 1:8; 2 Peter 3:9)
3. MINISTRY/MISSIONS - "To serve unselfishly in Jesus' name, meeting the physical, emotional, and spiritual needs of those in our Church, community and in the world." (1 Peter 4:10,11; Matthew 25:34-40; 1 Thessalonians 5:11; Galatians 5:13)
4. DISCIPLESHIP - "To help members develop toward full Christian maturity and train them for effective ministry. To promote personal, spiritual growth and discipleship through Bible teaching." (Ephesians 4:11-13; Matthew 18:20; 2 Timothy 2:1,2)
5. FELLOWSHIP - "To encourage, support and pray for each other as members of the family of God. To share our lives together." (1 John 1:7; Acts 2:44-47; Hebrews 10:23-25; Romans 15:5-7; John 13:34, 35)

Article IV. Doctrinal Statement

Anthony Drive Baptist Church subscribes to the Doctrinal Statement of the BMA of America.

Article V. Church Covenant

Having been led, as we believe by the Spirit of God, to receive the Lord Jesus Christ as our Savior and, on the profession of our faith, having been baptized in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit, we do now, in the presence of God and this assembly, most solemnly and joyfully enter into covenant with one another as one body in Christ.

We endeavor, therefore, by the aid of the Holy Spirit to walk together in Christian love, to strive for the advancement of this church, in knowledge, holiness and comfort; to promote its prosperity and spirituality; to sustain its worship, ordinances, discipline and doctrines; to contribute cheerfully and regularly to the support of the ministry, the expenses of the church, the relief of the poor, and the spread of the gospel through all nations.

We also endeavor to maintain family and secret devotions; to religiously educate our children; to seek the salvation of our kindred and acquaintances; to walk circumspectly in the world; to be just in our dealings, faithful in our engagements, and exemplary in our deportment; to avoid all tattling, backbiting and excessive anger; to abstain from the sale of, and use of, intoxicating drinks as a beverage; to be zealous in our efforts to advance the kingdom of our Savior.

We further endeavor to watch over one another in brotherly love; to remember one another in prayer; to aid one another in sickness and distress; to cultivate Christian sympathy in feeling and Christian courtesy in speech; to be slow to take offense, but always ready for reconciliation and mindful of the rules of our Savior to secure it without delay.

We moreover endeavor that when we remove 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.

Article VI. Government and Relationships

The government of this church is vested in the body of believers who compose it. All internal groups created by and empowered by the church shall report to and be held accountable to the church membership unless specific action is taken by church membership as outlined in the bylaws.

Article VII. Affiliation

Anthony Drive Baptist Church is autonomous and maintains the right to govern its own affairs, independent of any denominational control. However, the Bible teaches that local churches should seek voluntary fellowship with other doctrinally sound churches. This association is to provide help and encouragement while working together as the Lord directs. This is a voluntary association that in no way involves the surrender of the individual church's freedom or dependence on God.

Anthony Drive Baptist Church has chosen to associate with other churches of the Ellis-Hill Baptist Association, the Baptist Missionary Association of Texas, and the Baptist Missionary Association of America.

Article VIII. Conducting Church Affairs

The conduct of the affairs of Anthony Drive Baptist Church not addressed in the Articles of Incorporation or this Constitution will be outlined in the bylaws of Anthony Drive Baptist Church, Inc. These bylaws define the church's organizational structure, the rights of members in the structure, and the procedures by which these rights may be exercised.

Article IX. Amendments to the Constitution

It is the responsibility of the pastor, church staff, and deacons to review the constitution, proposing any revisions or adjustments necessary to maintain their effectiveness, and to bring these changes to the church in church conference.

This constitution, adopted February 26, 2012, shall supersede all previous bylaws of the church.

A new constitution may be adopted or this constitution may be amended or repealed by the affirmative vote of a two-thirds (2/3) majority of votes cast at a meeting called for such purpose.

The church membership shall be given two weeks advance notice of the time of such meeting. Further, a copy of the proposed changes shall be made available to members at two consecutive weeks of Sunday morning worship services in advance of the meeting.

Anthony Drive Baptist Church Bylaws – As amended in conference on Aug. 14, 2012

Article I. Church Membership

Section 1. General

This is a sovereign Baptist church under the Lordship of Jesus Christ. The membership retains unto itself the right of exclusive self-government in all phases of the spiritual and temporal life of this church.

Membership in this church shall consist of all persons who have met the requirements for membership, as provided in Article I, Section 2, been approved by the congregation, and are listed on the membership roll.

Section 2. Candidacy

Any person may offer himself as a candidate for membership in this church.

1. By profession of faith in Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior and Scriptural baptism, or
2. By promise of a letter of recommendation from another Baptist church of like faith and practice, or
3. By statement of prior conversion experience and Scriptural baptism in another Baptist church of like faith and practice, or
4. By restoration as provided in Article I, Section 6.

A majority vote of those church members present and voting shall be required to elect such candidates to membership. Any dissent shall be resolved according to Article I, Section 6 of these bylaws.

Section 3. Responsibilities of Members

In order to be a responsible member of Anthony Drive Baptist Church, members must:

1. Be in basic agreement with the church's statement of faith and purpose.
2. Discover, develop and deploy their spiritual gifts in the ministries of the church.
3. Be diligent to live according to the statements of the church covenant.
4. Be faithful in attendance to worship services and Bible study.
5. Become a student of the Word of God and of prayer.
6. Make a commitment to personal evangelism and discipleship.
7. Encourage scriptural stewardship of time, talents, and tithes, and offerings.

Section 4. Voting Responsibilities of Members

Only active members of the church are entitled to vote on questions submitted to the church in conference. An inactive member is defined as a member whose predominant

attendance is at another church, or a member who has not attended the church in three months with exceptions to those members who are homebound due to medical reasons or age, or those who are on active military duty. Members must be present to vote. Any questions of eligibility will be referred to the church clerk.

Section 5. Termination of Membership

Membership shall be terminated in the following ways:

1. By death.
2. By dismissal to another Baptist church.
3. By disciplinary action of this church as provided in Article I, Section 6.
4. By erasure upon joining with a church of another denomination.
5. By personal request for name to be removed from church membership.

Note: Letters of dismissal shall be granted only to other churches of like faith and order and not to individual members requesting termination of membership.

Section 6. Discipline

It shall be the basic purpose of Anthony Drive Baptist Church to emphasize to its members that every reasonable measure will be taken to assist any troubled member. The pastor, members of the church staff, and deacons are available for counsel and guidance. Reconciliation rather than punishment should be the guideline that governs the attitude of one member toward another.

Should some serious condition exist which would cause a member to become a liability to the general welfare of the church, every reasonable measure will be taken by senior teaching pastor and by the deacons to resolve the problem in accordance with Matthew 18:15-35, I Corinthians 5:1-13, II Corinthians 2:1-11.

All such proceedings shall be pervaded by a spirit of Christian kindness and forbearance. If it is determined that the welfare of the church will best be served by the exclusion of the member, the church may take this action by a two-thirds vote of the members present at a meeting called for this purpose; and the church may proceed to declare the offender to be no longer in the membership of the church.

Any person whose membership has been terminated for any condition which has made it necessary for the church to exclude him may upon his request be restored to membership by the recommendation pastor and deacons and an affirmation vote of the church upon evidence of his repentance and reformation.

Article II. Church Officers and Ministry Teams

Section 1. Pastor

The pastor is responsible for leading the church to function as a New Testament church. The pastor is the under-shepherd of the church in divine worship, aggressive evangelism, deliberate discipleship, and compassionate ministry.

The pastor must meet the qualifications for the office of pastor as set forth in 1 Timothy 3:1-7 and Titus 1:6-9.

As such, he will lead the congregation, the organizations, and the pastoral staff to perform their tasks.

In the pursuit of a new pastor, the deacons shall call a special church conference in which the church shall elect a Pastor Search Team to seek out a pastor, and its recommendation will constitute a nomination.

The affirmation of the pastor shall be at a duly called meeting in accordance with Article III, Sections 2 and 3. Upon the recommendation of the Pastor Search Team the church membership shall have an affirmation vote at a duly called meeting in accordance with Article III, Sections 2 and 3.

The Pastor Search Team shall bring to the consideration of the church only one name at a time.

Election shall be by secret ballot with an affirmative vote of eighty-five percent (85%) of those members present being necessary for a call. The pastor, thus elected shall serve until the relationship is terminated by his request or the church's dismissal action as provided herein.

Upon the resignation of the pastor, a new pastor shall be called according to the process as outlined above.

The pastor shall give at least two weeks' notice at the time of resignation before terminating his responsibilities as pastor.

The church may declare the office of pastor vacant. Such action shall take place at a meeting called for that purpose, of which the membership has been given two weeks written notice. The meeting may be called upon recommendation by the deacons. The chairman of the deacons shall preside at the meeting. An affirmative vote of two-thirds (2/3) of the members present shall be necessary to declare the office vacant. If the membership votes the office vacant, the termination of pastoral duties shall be effective immediately upon publication of the results of the vote. The deacons will recommend to the church for approval a fair separation package; in rare cases will less than 30 days salary be honored. If the affirmative does not prevail, the same question cannot be presented to the church until the lapse of at least three (3) months from the date of the vote.

Any written agreements entered into between the church and pastor shall be honored by the church regardless of the nature of the termination of the relationship.

Section 2. Church Staff

The church staff shall include both ministerial staff and non-ministerial staff members. All ministerial staff members shall be recommended to the church by the pastor and the deacons. All ministerial staff members will be directly responsible to the pastor.

At the time of resignation by a ministerial staff member, at least two (2) weeks' notice shall be given to the church.

The church may terminate a ministerial staff member by majority vote upon the recommendation of the pastor and the deacons. The termination of the duties shall be effective immediately upon publication of the outcome of the vote. The deacons will recommend to the church for approval a fair separation package; in rare cases will less than 30 days salary be honored.

The pastor and the deacons shall have the authority to employ and terminate approved and budgeted non-ministerial staff members (e.g. church secretary, custodian, maintenance personnel, etc.).

Section 3. Deacons

In accordance with the meaning of the work and the practice of the New Testament, deacons are to be servants of the church. The task of the deacon is to serve with the pastor and staff in performing ministry tasks; proclaim the gospel to unbelievers; care for church members and other persons in the community; lead the church in achieving its mission.

A deacon must have been a member of Anthony Drive Baptist Church for the period of at least one year and meet the scriptural qualifications as set forth in 1 Timothy 3:8-13 and Acts 6:1-8.

A deacon shall serve until such time as his service is terminated by his resignation or a majority vote of the church at any regular or special conference called for that purpose.

There is no obligation to recognize a man to serve as a deacon who comes to the church from another church where he has served as a deacon.

Section 4. Moderator

The moderator shall be the pastor. In the absence of the pastor, the chairman of the deacons shall serve. Should the pastor and the chairman of the deacons be unable to serve, then the vice chairman of the deacons shall serve. If there is a vacancy in the position of pastor, then the chairman of the deacons shall serve as the moderator.

Section 5. Clerk

The clerk shall be elected annually to keep a correct record of all proceedings of regular and special business meetings of the church, in a book provided for that purpose. He or she shall sign letters of dismissal of members, and keep a correct roll of membership;

also cooperate in keeping records and papers belonging to the church. He or she may delegate some duties to the church secretary.

Section 6. Treasurer

The treasurer shall be elected annually by the church to serve as the custodian of all monies of the church and disburse these monies by checks as authorized by the church. He or she shall keep, at all times, an itemized account of all receipts and disbursements and shall render a monthly and annually written report of this account to the church. He or she shall secure ushers to receive offerings given in regular services as well as secure three other persons to assist in counting any received offerings. When the treasurer position is vacated, an audit of the financial records of the church shall be conducted. An assistant treasurer may be elected to aid the treasurer in performing the duties of his or her position.

Section 7. Directors (Trustees)

The chairman, vice chairman and treasurer of the deacons, elected annually by the deacons, shall serve as directors, and shall hold in trust the property of the church.

They shall have no power to buy, sell, mortgage, lease, or transfer any real property without a specific vote of the church authorizing each action. It shall be the function of the directors to affix their signatures to legal documents involving the sale, mortgaging, purchase or rental of property or other legal documents where the signatures of directors are required. The directors will serve as the officers of the corporation.

Section 8. Church Committees

The nominating/Christian education committee consisting of the pastor, the church ministerial staff, the chairman of the deacons, the Sunday school superintendent, the president of the Brotherhood, the president of the WMA, and three others elected annually from the floor during the June monthly church conference, shall, unless otherwise specifically provided by church policy, annually nominate members for church approval to serve on the following standing church committees: Counting, Finance, Property and Maintenance, Transportation and Ushers. The nominating/Christian education committee shall also be a standing committee.

The nominating/Christian education committee shall determine the number of members for each committee.

A person shall not serve on more three committees or ministry teams simultaneously.

Each committee shall be responsible for electing a chairperson and establishing operating guidelines. All committees shall be responsible to the church.

The pastor or his designated representative shall be an ex officio non-voting member of all committees.

Committees and their responsibilities shall be included in an addendum to these bylaws.

All committee chairpersons, having consulted with their committees, shall meet with the pastor, the church staff and ministry team leaders to develop an annual calendar of church events.

Section 9. Church Ministry Teams

The church shall create ministry teams to plan, promote and perform various ministries as needs arise. Any active member in good standing may volunteer to serve on one or more ministry teams.

A person shall not serve on more than three committees or ministry teams simultaneously.

It shall not be required that ministry team members be nominated or elected. The ministry team coordinator shall recruit and add members to ministry teams as needed. Members shall also be encouraged to volunteer to serve on ministry teams.

Each team is responsible for electing a team leader and establishing operating guidelines. All teams shall be responsible to the church.

The pastor or his designated representative shall be an ex officio non-voting member of all ministry teams.

Ministry teams and their responsibilities shall be included in an addendum to these bylaws.

All ministry team leaders, having consulted with their ministry teams, shall meet with the pastor, the church staff and committee chairpersons to develop an annual calendar of church events.

Section 10. Other Positions

Other positions exist to fulfill ministry in various areas. Descriptions of other positions are included in an addendum to these bylaws. The church may add other positions should the need arise.

Articles III. Church Meetings

Section 1. Worship Services

The church shall meet regularly at least each Sunday morning, for preaching, instruction, evangelism, and for the worship of Almighty God. Any other church meetings, which will be essential in the promotion of the objectives of the church, shall be placed on the church calendar. These meetings will be open for the entire membership of the church and for all people.

Section 2. Church Conference

The business of the church shall be conducted through three types of meetings:

1. The Annual Church Conference. The church will assemble each year on or about one month prior to the end of the fiscal year to adopt an annual church budget; approve the treasurer's report; hear reports from any teams, organizations and ministries of the church; elect members to church offices, ministry teams, and other positions; conduct miscellaneous business as needed; and pray for the church.
2. Monthly Church Conference. The church will assemble each month to approve the treasurer's report, hear reports from any teams, organizations and ministries of the church, conduct miscellaneous business as needed, and pray for the church.
3. Special Church Conference. The church will assemble for conference upon the request of the pastor and/or a majority of the deacons. Unless the church is without a pastor, special church conference may not be called by the deacons without giving the pastor reasonable notice. Special church conference will be announced two weeks prior to the date of the conference through the bulletin, mail, or announcement from the pulpit. On rare occasion an emergency may arise making the two-week notice impractical.

Section 3. Quorum

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

The only exceptions would be in the event:

1. Action was being proposed to declare the office of pastor vacant as provided in Article II. Section 1 or
2. Action was being proposed to fill the office of pastor as provided in Article II, Section 1.

Section 4. Parliamentary Rules

Roberts' Rules of Order, Revised, is the authority for parliamentary rules of procedure for all church conferences.

Section 5. Fiscal Year

The fiscal year of the church shall begin on September 1 and end August 31 of the following calendar year.

Article IV. Ordinances

Section 1. Baptism

A person who receives Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior by personal faith who professes Him publicly at any worship service; and who indicates a commitment to follow Christ as Lord, shall be received for baptism.

- Baptism shall be by immersion in water.
- Baptism shall be administered by the pastor or whomever the church shall authorize.
- Baptism shall be administered as an act of worship during any service called for that purpose.

Section 2. The Lord's Supper

The Lord's Supper is a symbolic act of obedience whereby members of the church, through partaking of the bread and fruit of the vine, commemorate the death of Jesus Christ and anticipate His second coming.

- The Lord's Supper shall be observed at least quarterly or as otherwise scheduled.
- The Lord's Supper shall be observed in the Sunday morning or any other service deemed appropriate.
- The pastor and deacons shall be responsible for the administration of the Lord's Supper.
- The deacons shall be responsible for the physical preparations of the Lord's Supper.

Article V. Licensing and Ordaining

Section 1. Licensing

Any male member of the church, who in the judgment of the church gives evidence by his piety, zeal, and "aptness to teach" that he is called of God to the work of ministry, after having preached in the hearing of the church, may be licensed to preach the Gospel of Jesus Christ provided a three-fourths vote of approval be given by qualified members of the church at a regular business meeting or special meeting called for such purpose.

Section 2. Ordaining

At such time as the church shall decide that one of its licensed preachers possesses the scriptural qualification for ordination to the Gospel Ministry, it shall call a council (presbytery) of ministers and deacons to examine the qualifications of the candidate to which council the propriety of ordaining shall be wholly referred.

No man shall be ordained by the church until such time as he has been duly called as the pastor of a Baptist church of like faith and order.

Candidates for deacons may be ordained at any time the need arises and qualified men are available. A three-fourths vote of approval by qualified members of the church at a regular business meeting or special meeting called for such purpose shall be required.

Section 3. Revoking of License and/or Ordination

A license or ordination by the church may be revoked with proper cause upon the recommendation of the pastor and deacons when proof of unbecoming behavior is supplied. The revoking of a license or ordination shall require a two-thirds vote of qualified members at a regular business meeting or a special meeting called for such purpose.

Article VI. Amendments

It is the responsibility of the pastor, church staff, and deacons to review the constitution and bylaws, proposing any revisions or adjustments necessary to maintain their effectiveness, and to bring these changes to the church in church conference.

These bylaws (adopted February 26, 2012 and revised on June 3, 2012) shall supersede all previous bylaws of the church.

New bylaws may be adopted or these bylaws may be amended or repealed by the affirmative vote of a two-thirds (2/3) majority of votes cast at a meeting called for such purpose.

The church membership shall be given two weeks advance notice of the time of such meeting. Further, a copy of the proposed changes shall be made available to members at two consecutive weeks of Sunday morning worship services in advance of the meeting.