



Bylaws

Revised May 21, 2023

5522 Whitman Avenue

Fort Worth, Texas

BYLAWS

ARTICLE I. MEMBERSHIP

Section A. General

The membership of Wedgwood Baptist Church reserves the exclusive right to determine who shall be members of this church and the conditions of such membership.

The membership of Wedgwood Baptist Church shall be composed of persons who

1. have given evidence of regeneration
2. have been baptized by immersion
3. subscribe to the constitution and bylaws of this church
4. have completed the requirement of new member orientation for church membership and
5. have been admitted by the membership of the church

Section B. Methods of Admission

A candidate to be considered for membership shall present himself or herself for membership by one of the following:

1. By baptism - A person makes a public profession of faith in Christ and is baptized by immersion.
2. By recommendation from another church of like faith and order - A church of like faith and order refers to a church that practices believer's baptism by immersion upon one's profession of faith and holds to similar core doctrines.
3. By statement of faith in Christ as their Lord and Savior and having had believer's baptism by immersion.

Section C. Privileges and Responsibilities

1. In accordance with these bylaws, every member of the church shall be entitled to vote in all elections and on all questions submitted to the church body in a duly called church business conference.

2. Every member shall be eligible for consideration by the membership as a candidate for all elective offices in the church and its organizations, in accordance with these bylaws.
3. Every member of the church may participate in the observance of the Lord's Supper.
4. Every member shall be encouraged to be faithful in all the responsibilities of the Christian life, to regularly attend all church services, to financially support the church and its ministries through tithes and offerings, and to share in its organized work through a commitment of time, talents, and spiritual gifts.

Section D. Removal or Dismissal from Membership

A member of this church may be dismissed or removed from the roll

1. Upon the death of the member
2. Upon the member affiliating with another church or with another religion
3. Upon the written request of the member to be removed
4. Upon disciplinary action (see Article I Section E)
5. Upon the church having no record of the member's attendance in a Missional Community and no record of the member giving to the support of the church for two years

Section E. Discipline

1. Should any grievance arise among members, the aggrieved member shall follow, in a redemptive spirit, the rules given by our Lord in Matthew 18:15-19.
2. Should any case involving gross breach of Christian conduct or public scandal occur, the Elders shall seek reconciliation in the matter; if this effort fails, the Elders shall report the case to the church for a congregational decision.
3. All such disciplinary actions shall be pervaded by a spirit of Christian kindness and forbearance; however, if there is no repentance, the Elder Council should proceed to admonish the offender and declare him or her to be no longer in the membership of the church.
4. Any person whose membership has been terminated for an offense may be restored by the church upon the recommendation of the Elder Council after the Council has received acceptable evidence of repentance and reformation.
5. Membership shall be restored by a simple majority of the members voting in a church business conference.

ARTICLE II. CHURCH MEETINGS

Section A. Worship Services

The church shall meet together regularly. The Elder Council shall determine the days and times of such church meetings. The Lead Pastor or an Executive Ministerial Staff member may discontinue any regularly scheduled service or, in case of severe weather or emergency, cancel a specific service.

Section B. Special Services and Meetings

Special services and any other church meetings deemed appropriate in the promotion of the objectives of the church may be scheduled as a part of the life and ministry of the church.

Section C. Church Business Conferences

1. Church business conferences shall be held regularly as scheduled by the Elder Council. The Elder Council may authorize a change of the date and time of such a meeting as long as the change is communicated to members at least one week prior to the new date and/or time.
2. The Lead Pastor and/or Elder Council are authorized to call additional church business conferences to consider matters of a special nature or significance. At least a two-week notice stating the agenda must be given for these called church business conferences unless extreme urgency renders such notice impracticable. Notice must be given in such a way that all members have opportunity to know of the meeting. Only items stated in the agenda may be discussed at the meeting.
3. The moderator shall be the Chair of the Elder Council, or in his absence, the Vice-Chair of the Elder Council, or another designated Congregational Elder.
4. The Elder Council shall designate a church member to serve as Parliamentarian for church business conferences.
5. The Church Clerk will be responsible for recording minutes of all church business conferences.
6. A quorum consists of those who attend the church business conference.
7. Members who wish to vote on matters to be decided in a church business conference but who are unable to attend because of physical infirmity, absence from the city, or employment responsibilities may vote by registering in writing at the church office and there submitting an absentee ballot prior to the church business conference.

8. In circumstances which render these rules impractical, the Elder Council has the authority to modify church meeting procedures.
9. Biblical principles and *Robert's Rules of Order* (latest revised edition) are the authorities for parliamentary rules of procedure for all church business conferences.

ARTICLE III. CONGREGATIONAL RULE

In submission to the authority of Christ, the membership of the church is the final authority at Wedgwood Baptist Church. This authority is normally exercised through elected representatives (e.g., the Elder Council, Deacons and ministers) in accordance with these bylaws; however, a vote of the membership of the church at a properly called church business conference, as defined in these bylaws, shall be required to effect the following:

1. Approve the call of the Lead Pastor and other Ministerial Staff
2. Approve Congregational Elders and Deacons
3. Dismiss Elders or Deacons from office
4. Dismiss the Lead Pastor from this role within the church
5. Approve the licensing and ordaining of individuals for ministry
6. Approve annual budgets of the church
7. Approve any annual budget overrun that exceeds 2% (e.g., if an annual budget were \$1MM, church approval would be necessary before budget expenditures could exceed \$1,020,000)
8. Approve any transactions regarding real property
9. Approve budget amendments
10. Adopt, amend or repeal the Constitution or Bylaws of this church
11. Admit members into the church
12. Approve standing committee members
13. Approve messengers to represent the church at meetings of the Southern Baptist Convention, the Baptist General Convention of Texas and the Southern Baptists of Texas Convention at which the church's messengers are eligible to cast votes

14. Approve adoption of or changes to the Policies of the Elder Council and standing committees
15. Accept, reject or otherwise dispose of any matter submitted to the membership of the church by the Elder Council or raised by motion at a church business conference.

ARTICLE IV. ELDER COUNCIL

Section A. General

The Elder Council, led by the Lead Pastor, is responsible for leading the church in all matters of direction, doctrine and discipline. The Council is responsible for overseeing and evaluating the direction of all ministries and stewardship of the church. In addition to certain standing committees (see Article VIII), the Council may establish committees and other groups to assist them in any of their duties. The Council may delegate authority to individuals or groups as they deem fit.

Section B. Number and Members

1. The Elder Council shall consist of the Executive Ministerial Staff as defined in the job descriptions and Congregational Elders, that is, non-staff members.
2. The number of Congregational Elders shall always be at least one more than the number of members of the Executive Ministerial Staff.
3. The Lead Pastor gives direction and leadership to the Elder Council but has only one vote within the council.

Section C. Qualifications

All Elder Council members shall be men who exhibit the qualities outlined in 1 Timothy 3:1–7, Titus 1:5–9, and 1 Peter 5:1–3.

Section D. Election

1. Recommendations for Congregational Elders will be submitted confidentially by church members at the appointed time. Individuals may request to be considered for a position on the Council (cf. 1 Timothy 3:1) if they meet the qualifications referred to in Section C of this Article.
2. Each recommended candidate will be examined by the existing Elder Council to determine that the candidate meets the prescribed scriptural qualifications and that no current life situation may make his service as an Elder untenable. If a negative determination is reached on either account, the Elder Council will remove the candidate from consideration.

3. The congregation must be given at least a two-week notification of the recommended candidate(s) prior to a vote of affirmation.
4. The congregation will affirm the candidate(s) by a three-fourths majority of those members voting during a church business conference.
5. In the case that there are more affirmed candidates than positions available for the Elder Council, under the Spirit's guidance, the candidate(s) will be selected through impartial means (e.g., casting lots, Acts 1:21-26) in the presence of the congregation.

Section E. Officers

The Elder Council shall have the following officers: Chair, Vice-Chair, and Secretary. The Lead Pastor will serve as Chair. The Council will determine who serves as Vice-Chair and Secretary. The Vice-Chair must be a Congregational Elder; the Secretary may be any other Elder Council member.

The Congregational Elders will serve as the church's trustees, that is, as the legal representatives of Wedgwood Baptist Church in matters approved by the congregation. The Secretary will be responsible for recording minutes of all Elder Council meetings.

Section F. Term of Office: Congregational Elders

1. Congregational Elders shall serve a four-year term after which
 - a. they may rotate off for a minimum of two years before becoming eligible for nomination again, or,
 - b. upon the membership's approval, their term may be extended by one year
 - i. An extension is approved by a three-fourth majority of members voting in a church business meeting.
 - ii. The two-year break in eligibility also applies to any Elder who has had his initial term extended.
2. Should a Congregational Elder not be able to complete a full term, he may resign. The Elder Council will determine how or if the remainder of the term will be filled and present their decision to the church for affirmation. An affirmative vote to adopt the recommended process to address the vacancy will be a simple majority of those members voting during a church business conference.

Section G. Dismissal

An Elder Council member may be removed if unable to fulfill the qualifications outlined in Section C of this Article or for other valid cause. A two-thirds majority vote of the Elder Council (excluding the member under consideration) may suspend the member from the Council until the membership votes at a church business conference to retain or dismiss the member permanently from the Council by a

simple majority. His position will remain vacant until a suitable replacement is selected as outlined in Section F, Para 2 of this Article.

Section H. Responsibilities

The fundamental responsibility of the Elder Council is to devote themselves to prayer and the Word. The Elder Council is responsible for leading the church, safeguarding the teaching of the Word, and shepherding the church.

1. The responsibilities of the Elder Council shall include the following: examining candidates for the Council and Ministerial Staff, ensuring that finances are managed properly, ensuring the doctrinal integrity of the church, and overseeing personnel issues such as employment, supervision, evaluation, and dismissal. The Elder Council exercises leadership over areas that are not specifically handled by the congregation as a whole. Procedures will be put in place to address conflicts of interest.
2. In the temporary absence of a Lead Pastor, the Elder Council shall ensure that his preaching duties are fulfilled. The Council shall also ensure that the church's mission and ministries are kept intact and functioning, and that the attendance and finances are properly promoted while the church is without a Lead Pastor.
3. In the case of the resignation or dismissal of the Lead Pastor or other Ministerial Staff, the Elder Council will engage interim staff as deemed necessary.
4. The Congregational Elders are not expected to oversee specific projects or ministry areas in their capacity. The Elder Council does not determine programming. This responsibility falls to the Ministerial Staff.
5. Each year the Elder Council shall present to the church an itemized budget. This budget shall be presented for discussion at a regularly scheduled church business conference and called up for a vote at a following church business conference.
6. Each year the Elder Council will present to the membership for approval at a church business meeting messengers to the meetings of the Southern Baptist Convention, Baptist General Convention of Texas and the Southern Baptists of Texas Convention at which the church's messengers are eligible to cast votes.
7. In the case that a church member disagrees with a decision of the Elder Council, he or she should first address the Council to seek resolution. If an agreement cannot be reached, a church business conference may be called by members to bring any decision of the Elder Council under review, specifying the issue to be addressed and obtaining the signatures of 100 members. Upon presentation of a signed petition, the petition shall serve as the meeting agenda.

Section I. Meetings

The Elder Council will meet regularly as determined by the Council. Special meetings of the Elder Council may be called only if the majority of the Executive Ministerial Staff and the majority of the Congregational Elders are available. A quorum for the transaction of business consists of at least one-half of the Executive Ministerial Staff and at least one-half of the Congregational Elders.

Consensus will be the Council's primary means of making decisions. When a consensus cannot be reached after a reasonable time, then a three-fourths majority is required to adopt a proposal (except for matters expressly outlined elsewhere in these bylaws).

ARTICLE V. CHURCH STAFF

Section A. General

The church shall call or employ such staff as the church may authorize. The Elder Council shall be responsible for preparing a job description for each staff member.

Section B. Lead Pastor

Christ is the head over His body, the Church, and is Chief Shepherd of the flock. Wedgwood Baptist Church believes that men are called and led by the Holy Spirit to be pastors of local churches. Such pastors are undershepherds and overseers of the local church, who teach and apply God's Word in order to nourish, strengthen, and guide the church as it follows its Lord.

1. Qualifications

The Lead Pastor must exhibit the qualities outlined in 1 Timothy 3:1–7, Titus 1:5–9, and 1 Peter 5:1–3.

2. Responsibilities

The Lead Pastor leads the church in the ministry of the Word, in preserving the church's sanctity, in caring for the church's needs and in directing the church's ministry of outreach.

3. Pastor Selection Procedure

- a. The Elder Council shall initiate a process to select a pastoral candidate.
- b. The selection process will include input from a wide spectrum of the church.
- c. The Council's recommendation of a Lead Pastor will constitute a nomination in a church business conference called for the purpose of calling the Lead Pastor, with at least a one-week notice communicated to the members of the church.
- d. The election shall take place by secret ballot. An affirmative vote of ninety percent of the members voting shall be necessary to issue a call.

- e. Should the candidate recommended by the Council fail to receive a ninety-percent vote, the Council will initiate a process again to seek out another candidate for Lead Pastor.
4. Release from Service
- The Lead Pastor shall be called for an indefinite period. He shall serve until he resigns or is dismissed by the membership of the church.
- a. Resignation or Retirement
- The Lead Pastor may resign or retire from his duty to the church, giving at least a two-week notice to the Elder Council before terminating responsibilities.
- b. Dismissal by the Church
- The church should view releasing the Lead Pastor only as a last resort after every attempt to reconcile differences has been made. The Elder Council shall be responsible to see that the spirit of this bylaw is followed. The Elder Council must make a recommendation to dismiss the Lead Pastor to the church in writing at least two weeks prior to a vote in a church business conference. During this time, the Council may also suspend the Lead Pastor from serving on the Council (see Article IV, Section G). A simple majority of the members voting is required to dismiss the Lead Pastor from his service to the church. This vote is to be by secret ballot.
5. Interim Lead Pastor (see Article IV, Section H, Para 3)

Section C. Ministerial Staff (full-time and part-time)

The Ministerial Staff is to serve with the Lead Pastor in the function of the church. The Ministerial Staff is not to replace the work of individual church members but is to facilitate and give guidance to their work.

- 1. Responsibilities
- The Elder Council shall be responsible for identifying the church's staff needs in order to determine the number and responsibilities of ministerial staff positions.
- 2. Selection Procedure
- a. The selection of a ministerial staff member shall be accomplished in the same manner as prescribed for a Lead Pastor (see Article V, Section B, Para 3(a) and (b)).
 - b. The Council's recommendation of a ministerial staff candidate will constitute a nomination in a church business conference, with at least a one-week notice communicated to the members of the congregation.
 - c. The election shall take place by secret ballot. An affirmative vote of three-fourths majority of the members voting shall be necessary to issue a call.
 - d. Should the candidate recommended by the Council fail to receive a three-fourths majority vote, the Council will initiate the process again to seek out another candidate for the position.

3. Release from Service

The ministerial staff member shall serve until he or she resigns or is dismissed by the Elder Council.

- a. The ministerial staff member shall give at least a two-week notice at the time of his or her resignation or retirement before terminating responsibilities.
- b. The dismissal of a ministerial staff member shall occur when a two-thirds majority of the Elder Council (excluding the staff member, if the member serves as part of the Council) votes to do so.

4. Interim Ministerial Staff (see Article IV, Section H, Para 3)

Section D. Support Staff (Permanent or Interim)

The Elder Council shall be responsible for identifying the church's staff needs in order to determine the number and responsibilities of support staff positions. The Elder Council is responsible for employing, overseeing, and releasing support staff.

ARTICLE VI. DEACONS

Section A. General

The Deacons of the church are those individuals whom the members elect to serve as co-laborers with the Elder Council in implementing the church's function of ministry as caring servants of the flock.

Section B. Responsibilities

In accordance with the practice in the New Testament, Deacons are to be faithful servants of the church. They assist the Elder Council in meeting the physical and spiritual needs of the congregation. They also serve the Elder Council as a trusted source of wisdom and advice.

Section C. Qualifications

A Deacon of the church must be an individual of good character, spiritual maturity, and a true servant of God who meets the qualifications for Deacons listed in 1 Timothy 3:8-13.

No church ministerial staff member or active Congregational Elder will be eligible to serve concurrently as a member of the deacon body.

Section D. Election

Recommendation for Deacons will be confidentially submitted by church members at the appointed time. Recommendations will be taken into consideration by the

existing deacon body in a way that they see fit. If it is found that the individual does not meet the prescribed qualifications for a Deacon, the deacon body or Elder Council has the authority to disqualify the candidate.

The congregation must be given at least a two-week notification of the recommended candidate(s) prior to a vote. Each church member may vote by secret ballot on the number of persons equal to additional Deacons needed. The nominees receiving the highest number of votes, if at least a majority of the members voting, shall be elected.

If additional Deacons are needed in the course of the year, the deacon body shall bring suitable candidates before the church body for consideration in a regular church business conference. Voting procedures will follow the same guidelines as those noted in the previous paragraph.

Section E. Term of Service

The office of Deacon is a lifetime responsibility, elected by the church, as stated in these bylaws, terminated only by death or removal from office.

The deacon body and the Elder Council have the authority to determine the number of Deacons and the terms of their active service in order to meet the church's requirements.

Section F. Meetings and Officers

The Deacons shall arrange for meetings and elect a Chair and such other officers and committees as are necessary for the discharge of their duties. The Elder Council or the Chair of the Deacons may call the Deacons into special session whenever the need arises.

ARTICLE VII. LICENSE AND ORDINATION OF MINISTERS

The Elder Council is authorized to present to the church a person to be licensed or ordained. The Council may determine the best procedure to evaluate the person's calling and preparation for the ministry to which they desire to be licensed or ordained. If the Council presents the person to the congregation as a candidate for licensure or ordination, the church may authorize licensing or ordination of the person with two-thirds majority of the members voting.

ARTICLE VIII. CHURCH COMMITTEES

Section A. General

Church committees assist the Elder Council in providing leadership for the church. The Elder Council shall authorize such committees as are necessary to carry out the

church's mission, in addition to the standing committees (see Section B of this Article). The Elder Council shall determine the number and responsibilities of the church committees based upon the congregation's needs.

The purpose of the committees is to research, evaluate, and make recommendations to the Elder Council concerning the program, personnel, and financial needs of the church within the guidelines established by the Elder Council for their direction. Elder Council members cannot serve as members of committees.

The Elder Council may appoint a staff member and/or a Congregational Elder to serve as a liaison to any committee.

Section B. Standing Committees

The following five committees shall remain standing committees (the committee members' term of service shall be specified in their respective Policies and Procedures): Budget and Finance Committee, Human Resources Committee, Missions Committee, Women's Advisory Committee, and Nominating Committee.

1. The Budget and Finance Committee focuses on the preparation of the annual church budget and the disbursement of the church's funds.
2. The Human Resources Committee focuses on the administration of employed personnel.
3. The Missions Committee focuses on Wedgwood's mission efforts whether supporting an existing work or starting a new one, whether local, regional, national or international.
4. The Women's Advisory Committee focuses on women's concerns and presents such concerns to the Elder Council as it deems necessary and appropriate.
5. The Nominating Committee focuses on nominating candidates to represent the congregation in serving on church committees. The Nominating Committee will also annually nominate a Church Clerk.

Section C. Special Committees

The Elder Council shall establish such ad hoc committees as shall be needed for purposes not covered by standing committees.

ARTICLE IX. AMENDMENTS

1. Proposed amendments to these bylaws may be provided in writing by any member of Wedgwood Baptist Church to the Elder Council.

2. Recommendations for approval of proposed amendments shall be provided to the church by the Elder Council in a generally available print form.
3. A vote will be taken on any proposed amendment at a church business conference at least thirty days after it is provided to the church. An affirmative vote of a two-thirds majority of the members voting shall approve the amendment.