

Constitution and By-Laws of  
**THE CHURCH AT CANE BAY**  
Berkeley County, South Carolina

**PREAMBLE**

*“And this Gospel of the Kingdom will be preached in the whole world as a testimony to all nations, and then the end will come.”  
-Jesus Christ (Matthew 24:14)*

**ARTICLE 1: NAME & IDENTIFICATION**

The name of the Corporation is THE CHURCH AT CANE BAY, INC. The Corporation will be further referred to in the bylaws as the “Church.” The Church post office box is 205 St. James Ave. Suite 2-185, Goose Creek, SC 29445. The Church website is [www.canebay.org](http://www.canebay.org). The Elder Team of the Church has full power and authority to change the principle address and website when necessary.

**ARTICLE 2: MISSION & VALUES**

**MISSION STATEMENT:**

The mission of The Church at Cane Bay is to be a church community that loves God because of the Gospel, loves people toward the Gospel, and restores the nations with the Gospel.

**CORE VALUE:**

Our one and only core value is the **GOSPEL** of Jesus Christ. We believe everything starts and ends with the transforming work of Jesus who redeems the world, (*Matt. 24:14; Acts 20:24; Romans 1:16*). Therefore, every successive action of the church will be envisioned through the lens of the Gospel and conducted with the Gospel as its ultimate purpose.

If, at any time, the leadership of the Church refuses, rejects, maligns, or changes this core value, the church will cease to exist, (*1 Corinthians 9:16; 2 Corinthians 11:4; Galatians 1:6-9*).

**GOSPEL-CENTERED ACTIONS:**

*We believe our Core Value necessitates the following actions of the Church:*

- **WORSHIP:** We believe the purpose of the Church is to worship Jesus Christ. We will do this corporately by gathering together weekly. And we will live a life-style of worship daily. (*Romans 12:1-2*)
  
- **COMMUNITY:** We believe the people of God grow to become mature disciples of Christ by sharing life with other believers. Small groups will meet together regularly to share life’s burdens and victories, pray with one another, keep accountable to one another and devote themselves to the Scriptures. (*Acts 2:42-47*)

- **MISSION:** We believe the people of God should be at work within their community and the world. Loving, touching, working and caring. We will be responsible for our community so that every man, woman and child will be able to hear and see the Gospel multiple times. We will also be responsible to reach an unreached people group in an international context. Whether domestic or international, the Church will make it our ultimate priority to consistently plant new churches as a means to propagate the Gospel. *(Jeremiah 29:7; Matthew 28:19-20)*

### **GOSPEL-CENTERED THREADS:**

*Much like simple threads hold a garment together, we believe there are three essential threads that hold the Church together:*

- **SCRIPTURE:** We believe the Word of God is our authoritative guide for belief, doctrine, and life. At every level of organization of the church, the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments will be treasured and used as our primary resource for principles and practice. *(2 Timothy 3:16)*
- **PRAYER:** We believe our other primary mode of communion with God is through prayer. Our goal will always be for prayer to precede every action of the church and for our actions to proceed from the evidence of God's leadership in any direction. Prayer will be our source of power for the ministry of the Gospel to our community and the nations. *(Acts 6:4)*
- **DISCIPLESHIP:** We believe the mission of the church is to make disciples. The Church will be determined to make new disciples of those that are lost and build mature disciples of the redeemed. Every practice of the Church will be an effort to find new disciples and allow Christians to grow in their walk with Christ. *(Matthew 28:19-20)*

## **ARTICLE 3: PRIMARY STATEMENTS OF FAITH**

*The Following are adapted from The Baptist Faith and Message 2000.*

### **I. THE SCRIPTURES**

The Holy Bible was written by men divinely inspired and is God's revelation of Himself to man. It is a perfect treasure of divine instruction. It has God for its author, salvation for its end, and truth, without any mixture of error, for its matter. Therefore, all Scripture is totally true and trustworthy. It reveals the principles by which God judges us, and therefore is, and will remain to the end of the world, the true center of Christian union, and the supreme standard by which all human conduct, creeds, and religious opinions should be tried. All Scripture is a testimony to Christ, who is Himself the focus of divine revelation.

*Exodus 24:4; Deuteronomy 4:1-2; 17:19; Joshua 8:34; Psalms 19:7-10; 119:11,89,105,140; Isaiah 34:16; 40:8; Jeremiah 15:16; 36:1-32; Matthew 5:17-18; 22:29; Luke 21:33; 24:44-46; John 5:39; 16:13-15; 17:17,.; 17:11; Romans 15:4; 16:25-26; 2 Timothy 3:15-17; Hebrews 1:1-2; 4:12; 1 Peter 1:25; 2 Peter 1:19-21.*

### **II. GOD**

There is one and only one living and true God. He is an intelligent, spiritual, and personal Being, the Creator, Redeemer, Preserver, and Ruler of the universe. God is infinite in holiness and all other perfections. God is all powerful and all knowing; and His perfect knowledge extends to all things, past,

present, and future, including the future decisions of His free creatures. To Him we owe the highest love, reverence, and obedience. The eternal triune God reveals Himself to us as Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, with distinct personal attributes, but without division of nature, essence, or being.

### **A. God the Father**

God as Father reigns with providential care over His universe, His creatures, and the flow of the stream of human history according to the purposes of His grace. He is all powerful, all knowing, all loving, and all wise. God is Father in truth to those who become children of God through faith in Jesus Christ. He is fatherly in His attitude toward all men.

*Genesis 1:1; 2:7; Exodus 3:14; 6:2-3; 15:11ff.; 20:1ff.; Leviticus 22:2; Deuteronomy 6:4; 32:6; 1 Chronicles 29:10; Psalm 19:1-3; Isaiah 43:3,15; 64:8; Jeremiah 10:10; 17:13; Matthew 6:9ff.; 7:11; 23:9; 28:19; Mark 1:9-11; John 4:24; 5:26; 14:6-13; 17:1-8; Acts 1:7; Romans 8:14-15; 1 Corinthians 8:6; Galatians 4:6; Ephesians 4:6; Colossians 1:15; 1 Timothy 1:17; Hebrews 11:6; 12:9; 1 Peter 1:17; 1 John 5:7.*

### **B. God the Son**

Christ is the eternal Son of God. In His incarnation as Jesus Christ He was conceived of the Holy Spirit and born of the virgin Mary. Jesus perfectly revealed and did the will of God, taking upon Himself human nature with its demands and necessities and identifying Himself completely with mankind yet without sin. He honored the divine law by His personal obedience, and in His substitutionary death on the cross He made provision for the redemption of men from sin. He was raised from the dead with a glorified body and appeared to His disciples as the person who was with them before His crucifixion. He ascended into heaven and is now exalted at the right hand of God where He is the One Mediator, fully God, fully man, in whose Person is effected the reconciliation between God and man. He will return in power and glory to judge the world and to consummate His redemptive mission. He now dwells in all believers as the living and ever present Lord.

*Genesis 18:1ff.; Psalms 2:7ff.; 110:1ff.; Isaiah 7:14; 53; Matthew 1:18-23; 3:17; 8:29; 11:27; 14:33; 16:16,27; 17:5; 27; 28:1-6,19; Mark 1:1; 3:11; Luke 1:35; 4:41; 22:70; 24:46; John 1:1-18,29; 10:30,38; 11:25-27; 12:44-50; 14:7-11; 16:15-16,28; 17:1-5, 21-22; 20:1-20,28; Acts 1:9; 2:22-24; 7:55-56; 9:4-5,20; Romans 1:3-4; 3:23-26; 5:6-21; 8:1-3,34; 10:4; 1 Corinthians 1:30; 2:2; 8:6; 15:1-8,24-28; 2 Corinthians 5:19-21; 8:9; Galatians 4:4-5; Ephesians 1:20; 3:11; 4:7-10; Philippians 2:5-11; Colossians 1:13-22; 2:9; 1 Thessalonians 4:14-18; 1 Timothy 2:5-6; 3:16; Titus 2:13-14; Hebrews 1:1-3; 4:14-15; 7:14-28; 9:12-15,24-28; 12:2; 13:8; 1 Peter 2:21-25; 3:22; 1 John 1:7-9; 3:2; 4:14-15; 5:9; 2 John 7-9; Revelation 1:13-16; 5:9-14; 12:10-11; 13:8; 19:16.*

### **C. God the Holy Spirit**

The Holy Spirit is the Spirit of God, fully divine. He inspired holy men of old to write the Scriptures. Through illumination He enables men to understand truth. He exalts Christ. He convicts men of sin, of righteousness, and of judgment. He calls men to the Saviour, and effects regeneration. At the moment of regeneration He baptizes every believer into the Body of Christ. He cultivates Christian character, comforts believers, and bestows the spiritual gifts by which they serve God through His church. He seals the believer unto the day of final redemption. His presence in the Christian is the guarantee that God will bring the believer into the fullness of the stature of Christ. He enlightens and empowers the believer and the church in worship, evangelism, and service.

*Genesis 1:2; Judges 14:6; Job 26:13; Psalms 51:11; 139:7ff.; Isaiah 61:1-3; Joel 2:28-32; Matthew 1:18; 3:16; 4:1; 12:28-32; 28:19; Mark 1:10,12; Luke 1:35; 4:1,18-19; 11:13; 12:12; 24:49; John 4:24; 14:16-17,26; 15:26; 16:7-14; Acts 1:8; 2:1-4,38; 4:31; 5:3; 6:3; 7:55; 8:17,39; 10:44; 13:2; 15:28; 16:6; 19:1-6; Romans 8:9-11,14-16,26-27; 1 Corinthians 2:10-14; 3:16; 12:3-11,13; Galatians 4:6; Ephesians 1:13-14; 4:30; 5:18; 1 Thessalonians 5:19; 1 Timothy 3:16; 4:1; 2 Timothy 1:14; 3:16; Hebrews 9:8,14; 2 Peter 1:21; 1 John 4:13; 5:6-7; Revelation 1:10; 22:17.*

## **III. MAN**

Man is the special creation of God, made in His own image. He created them male and female as the crowning work of His creation. The gift of gender is thus part of the goodness of God's creation. In the beginning man was innocent of sin and was endowed by his Creator with freedom of choice. By his free choice man sinned against God and brought sin into the human race. Through the temptation of Satan

man transgressed the command of God, and fell from his original innocence whereby his posterity inherit a nature and an environment inclined toward sin. Therefore, as soon as they are capable of moral action, they become transgressors and are under condemnation. Only the grace of God can bring man into His holy fellowship and enable man to fulfill the creative purpose of God. The sacredness of human personality is evident in that God created man in His own image, and in that Christ died for man; therefore, every person of every race possesses full dignity and is worthy of respect and Christian love.

*Genesis 1:26-30; 2:5,7,18-22; 3; 9:6; Psalms 1; 8:3-6; 32:1-5; 51:5; Isaiah 6:5; Jeremiah 17:5; Matthew 16:26; Acts 17:26-31; Romans 1:19-32; 3:10-18,23; 5:6,12,19; 6:6; 7:14-25; 8:14-18,29; 1 Corinthians 1:21-31; 15:19,21-22; Ephesians 2:1-22; Colossians 1:21-22; 3:9-11.*

#### **IV. SALVATION**

Salvation involves the redemption of the whole man, and is offered freely to all who accept Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior, who by His own blood obtained eternal redemption for the believer. In its broadest sense salvation includes regeneration, justification, sanctification, and glorification. There is no salvation apart from personal faith in Jesus Christ as Lord.

- A. *Regeneration*, or the new birth, is a work of God's grace whereby believers become new creatures in Christ Jesus. It is a change of heart wrought by the Holy Spirit through conviction of sin, to which the sinner responds in repentance toward God and faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. Repentance and faith are inseparable experiences of grace. Repentance is a genuine turning from sin toward God. Faith is the acceptance of Jesus Christ and commitment of the entire personality to Him as Lord and Savior.
- B. *Justification* is God's gracious and full acquittal upon principles of His righteousness of all sinners who repent and believe in Christ. Justification brings the believer unto a relationship of peace and favor with God.
- C. *Sanctification* is the experience, beginning in regeneration, by which the believer is set apart to God's purposes, and is enabled to progress toward moral and spiritual maturity through the presence and power of the Holy Spirit dwelling in him. Growth in grace should continue throughout the regenerate person's life.
- D. *Glorification* is the culmination of salvation and is the final blessed and abiding state of the redeemed.

*Genesis 3:15; Exodus 3:14-17; 6:2-8; Matthew 1:21; 4:17; 16:21-26; 27:22-28:6; Luke 1:68-69; 2:28-32; John 1:11-14,29; 3:3-21,36; 5:24; 10:9,28-29; 15:1-16; 17:17; Acts 2:21; 4:12; 15:11; 16:30-31; 17:30-31; 20:32; Romans 1:16-18; 2:4; 3:23-25; 4:3ff.; 5:8-10; 6:1-23; 8:1-18,29-39; 10:9-10,13; 13:11-14; 1 Corinthians 1:18,30; 6:19-20; 15:10; 2 Corinthians 5:17-20; Galatians 2:20; 3:13; 5:22-25; 6:15; Ephesians 1:7; 2:8-22; 4:11-16; Philippians 2:12-13; Colossians 1:9-22; 3:1ff.; 1 Thessalonians 5:23-24; 2 Timothy 1:12; Titus 2:11-14; Hebrews 2:1-3; 5:8-9; 9:24-28; 11:1-12:8,14; James 2:14-26; 1 Peter 1:2-23; 1 John 1:6-2:11; Revelation 3:20; 21:1-22:5.*

#### **V. GOD'S PURPOSE OF GRACE**

Election is the gracious purpose of God, according to which He regenerates, justifies, sanctifies, and glorifies sinners. It is consistent with the free agency of man, and comprehends all the means in connection with the end. It is the glorious display of God's sovereign goodness, and is infinitely wise, holy, and unchangeable. It excludes boasting and promotes humility.

All true believers endure to the end. Those whom God has accepted in Christ, and sanctified by His Spirit, will never fall away from the state of grace, but shall persevere to the end. Believers may fall into sin through neglect and temptation, whereby they grieve the Spirit, impair their graces and comforts, and bring reproach on the cause of Christ and temporal judgments on themselves; yet they shall be kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation.

*Genesis 12:1-3; Exodus 19:5-8; 1 Samuel 8:4-7,19-22; Isaiah 5:1-7; Jeremiah 31:31ff.; Matthew 16:18-19; 21:28-45; 24:22,31; 25:34; Luke 1:68-79; 2:29-32; 19:41-44; 24:44-48; John 1:12-14; 3:16; 5:24; 6:44-45,65; 10:27-29; 15:16; 17:6,12,17-18; Acts 20:32; Romans 5:9-10; 8:28-39; 10:12-15; 11:5-7,26-36; 1 Corinthians 1:1-2; 15:24-28; Ephesians 1:4-23; 2:1-10; 3:1-11; Colossians 1:12-14; 2 Thessalonians 2:13-14; 2 Timothy 1:12; 2:10,19; Hebrews 11:39-12:2; James 1:12; 1 Peter 1:2-5,13; 2:4-10; 1 John 1:7-9; 2:19; 3:2.*

## **VI. THE CHURCH**

A New Testament church of the Lord Jesus Christ is an autonomous local congregation of baptized believers, associated by covenant in the faith and fellowship of the gospel; observing the two ordinances of Christ, governed by His laws, exercising the gifts, rights, and privileges invested in them by His Word, and seeking to extend the gospel to the ends of the earth. Each congregation operates under the Lordship of Christ through the leadership of the ordained plurality of pastors/elders. In such a congregation each member is responsible and accountable to Christ as Lord. Its scriptural officers are pastors/elders and deacons. While both men and women are gifted for service in the church, the office of pastor/elder is limited to men as qualified by Scripture.

The New Testament speaks also of the church as the Body of Christ which includes all of the redeemed of all the ages, believers from every tribe, and tongue, and people, and nation.

*Matthew 16:15-19; 18:15-20; Acts 2:41-42,47; 5:11-14; 6:3-6; 13:1-3; 14:23,27; 15:1-30; 16:5; 20:28; Romans 1:7; 1 Corinthians 1:2; 3:16; 5:4-5; 7:17; 9:13-14; 12; Ephesians 1:22-23; 2:19-22; 3:8-11,21; 5:22-32; Philippians 1:1; Colossians 1:18; 1 Timothy 2:9-14; 3:1-15; 4:14; Hebrews 11:39-40; 1 Peter 5:1-4; Revelation 2-3; 21:2-3.*

## **VII. BAPTISM AND THE LORD'S SUPPER**

Christian baptism is the immersion of a believer in water in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. It is an act of obedience symbolizing the believer's faith in a crucified, buried, and risen Savior, the believer's death to sin, the burial of the old life, and the resurrection to walk in newness of life in Christ Jesus. It is a testimony to his faith in the final resurrection of the dead. Being a church ordinance, it is prerequisite to the privileges of church membership and to 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 the fruit of the vine, memorialize the death of the Redeemer and anticipate His second coming.

*Matthew 3:13-17; 26:26-30; 28:19-20; Mark 1:9-11; 14:22-26; Luke 3:21-22; 22:19-20; John 3:23; Acts 2:41-42; 8:35-39; 16:30-33; 20:7; Romans 6:3-5; 1 Corinthians 10:16,21; 11:23-29; Colossians 2:12.*

## **VIII. THE KINGDOM**

The Kingdom of God includes both His general sovereignty over the universe and His particular kingship over men who willfully acknowledge Him as King. Particularly the Kingdom is the realm of salvation into which men enter by trustful, childlike commitment to Jesus Christ. Christians ought to pray and to labor that the Kingdom may come and God's will be done on earth. The full consummation of the Kingdom awaits the return of Jesus Christ and the end of this age.

*Genesis 1:1; Isaiah 9:6-7; Jeremiah 23:5-6; Matthew 3:2; 4:8-10,23; 12:25-28; 13:1-52; 25:31-46; 26:29; Mark 1:14-15; 9:1; Luke 4:43; 8:1; 9:2; 12:31-32; 17:20-21; 23:42; John 3:3; 18:36; Acts 1:6-7; 17:22-31; Romans 5:17; 8:19; 1 Corinthians 15:24-28; Colossians 1:13; Hebrews 11:10,16; 12:28; 1 Peter 2:4-10; 4:13; Revelation 1:6,9; 5:10; 11:15; 21-22.*

## **IX. LAST THINGS**

God, in His own time and in His own way, will bring the world to its appropriate end. According to His promise, Jesus Christ will return personally and visibly in glory to the earth; the dead will be raised; and Christ will judge all men in righteousness. The unrighteous will be consigned to Hell, the place of everlasting punishment. The righteous in their resurrected and glorified bodies will receive their reward and will dwell forever in Heaven with the Lord.

*Isaiah 2:4; 11:9; Matthew 16:27; 18:8-9; 19:28; 24:27,30,36,44; 25:31-46; 26:64; Mark 8:38; 9:43-48; Luke 12:40,48; 16:19-26; 17:22-37; 21:27-28; John 14:1-3; Acts 1:11; 17:31; Romans 14:10; 1 Corinthians 4:5; 15:24-28,35-58; 2 Corinthians 5:10; Philippians 3:20-21; Colossians 1:5; 3:4; 1 Thessalonians 4:14-18; 5:1ff.; 2 Thessalonians 1:7ff.; 2; 1 Timothy 6:14; 2 Timothy 4:1,8; Titus 2:13; Hebrews 9:27-28; James 5:8; 2 Peter 3:7ff.; 1 John 2:28; 3:2; Jude 14; Revelation 1:18; 3:11; 20:1-22:13.*

## **ARTICLE 4: PARTNERSHIP**

### **1. GENERAL**

- We use the word “partner” instead of “member” for its active context. Although “member” is suitable and can be used interchangeably, we desire to be a church that is actively on mission for God.
- Partners hold exclusive rights to self govern as an autonomous church body.
- Partners of the Church assist in leadership by supporting and implementing the God-given direction handed down and exemplified by the Elder team.

### **2. QUALIFICATIONS FOR PARTNERSHIP:**

- A personal commitment of faith in Jesus Christ for salvation.
- Believer’s baptism by immersion as a testimony of salvation.
- Completion of the Church’s partnership process.
- Partner Interview with designated leaders to assess the candidate’s basic understanding of Gospel transformation and commitment to the Church.
  - *Gospel transformation can indeed happen at a young age and we encourage children to come to a saving knowledge of Christ early in life. However, care should be taken that children desiring baptism should be able to articulate the basic fundamentals of their own salvation unprompted by parents before they are baptized.*
- A commitment to abide by the partnership covenant that will be reaffirmed annually.
  - *All partners will re-covenant every year with the Church to maintain validity of the body of Christ. Partners do not need to go through the partnership process again to re-covenant. The elder team has the ability to withhold partnership with Biblical cause.*
- Public affirmation of New Partners before the Congregation.

### **3. RESPONSIBILITIES OF PARTNERS:**

Responsibilities of a Church partner are outlined in the Church Covenant:

- I, \_\_\_\_\_, as a baptized believer in Jesus Christ, covenant with my God, my Family, and The Church at Cane Bay to:
  - Live a life transformed by the Gospel evidenced by daily Bible study, prayer, repentance of sin, and a pursuit of holiness.
  - Participate in the weekly worship gathering of the Church
  - Be involved in a Gospel Community group because I recognize the need for accountability and sharing life with other believers.
  - Receive from those appointed over me accountability, counsel, and/or correction for my actions that do not reflect a life transformed by Jesus prescribed in the Bible.
  - Become responsible for those in my influence to share and show the Gospel.
  - Support the mission, vision and leadership of the Church.
  - Give generously of my finances to the Church.
  - Serve faithfully with the time and giftedness that God has blessed me with so the Gospel may be extended to the world.

#### **4. VOTING RIGHTS OF PARTNERS:**

- For purposes of unity and integrity there are a few circumstances that will necessitate a Democratic vote of the covenant partners. Votes will occur only at specified times with ample time for discussion:
  - The incurring of indebtedness for acquisition of property
  - The calling of the Lead Pastor
  - The Dissolution of the Church
  
- The elder team may send issues to the partners for a vote at their discretion.
- Only partners who have a current, signed covenant will be allowed to vote.
- When voting takes place, a 2/3 majority is required. If the elder team deems it necessary to raise the majority level needed to pass an item, they may do so.

#### **5. TERMINATION OF PARTNERSHIP:**

A partner may leave the church at any time through various means:

- Not renewing his/her covenant
- Transfer of partnership to another church
- Written letter of discipline or expulsion (See section 6)

#### **6. DISCIPLINE**

- Redemption rather than punishment should be the guiding attitude of discipline.
- Correction will first come from their small group or immediate leader over the individual.
- If action is not corrected, the second phase of discipline would be taken by the elder-team.
- Final decision will be delivered by the elder team.
- If the individual is not willing to repent, the elder team has the authority to dismiss the individual from partnership. The goal of church discipline is always to bring about repentance of obvious sin and then restore the individual back into the body of the church.

### **ARTICLE 5: MEETINGS**

#### **1. GENERAL**

The church will hold regular meetings of worship, teaching, training, outreach and fellowship. Weekly worship gatherings will be held at the place designated by the Elder team and may be changed, delayed or canceled as needed.

#### **2. ANNUAL FAMILY MEETING**

There will be a special annual family meeting held every January/February at such a time determined by the staff. The purpose of this meeting will be to pray for the church body, give a report on the previous year, give explanation to the new year's budget and cast vision for future ministry.

#### **3. SPECIAL FAMILY MEETING**

The elder team may call special business/family meetings at any time for any purpose by giving ample notice to the partners. All family meetings will be conducted in an orderly fashion by the Lead Pastor or designated elder. If needed, the elder team can introduce an open discussion,

however new business or amendments to the business at hand can only be made by the elder team.

## **ARTICLE 6: CHURCH LEADERSHIP**

### **ELDERS (PASTORS)**

#### **GENERAL**

- Jesus Christ alone is the head of The Church at Cane Bay. Yet for the purpose of order, and in accordance with the teaching of the Bible, certain individuals will be called to lead the church through the role of Elder. In this fashion, it is best to understand the Church as an *elder-led* church, not an *elder-ruled* church.
- Elder qualification is in full conformity to the standards found in Scripture, (John 21:16; Heb. 13:17; 1 Tim 3:1-7; 1 Peter 5:1-3 and Titus 1:5-9). These men will serve with distinction and accordance with the eligibility given by the Scripture and the Church.
- This office is to be filled by men only as prescribed in the New Testament. (1 Tim. 2:12; 3:2)
- The words “Elder” and “Pastor” are synonymous in Scripture. We will use the word “elder” to differentiate from the cultural misunderstanding that only paid staff members are pastors.

#### **ELDER RESPONSIBILITIES**

- He will clearly live out the principles and responsibilities of a church partner.
- He will be responsible to manage and administrate the Church.
- He will be a guardian of the Truth and doctrine of the church.
- He will care for the partners of the church in every area.
- He will understand, articulate and promote the mission of the church.
- He will provide insight and vision to the elder team.
- He will hold fast to the Scriptures and be able to teach them in all life situations.
- He will be able to humbly accept reprove from others in effort toward sanctification.
- He will graciously give discipline to partners who are in sin and look for restoration.
- He will be accountable to the elder team as well as provide accountability for the team.

#### **THE ELDER TEAM**

- Elders may be paid by the Church vocationally or be lay-elders. Biblically and authoritatively there is no difference among the elders.
- The elder team will normally consist of no less than two men who satisfy the qualifications of elder.
  - *If needed, an outside group of wise pastors from other churches can serve as an advisory team if there happens to be only one elder.*
  - *In an effort to promote accountability through the early phases of the Church. The Elders will be subject to the guidance of the elder team of The Journey Church of Summerville. This will continue until a third elder is added to the Church at Cane Bay elder team.*
- Elder meetings will happen on a monthly basis or as needed.
- The elder team will function as the Church Trustees in all legal matters.



- There must be unanimity among the elder team to submit anything before the congregation for a vote.
- Elders will have primary responsibility for the employment, supervision, and evaluation of staff members. Some of this responsibility may be delegated to others by the elders.
- If a partner would like to make a request for the elder team's consideration, it should be put in writing and given ample time for prayer and consideration.
- Elders can serve two consecutive three-year terms before a one year sabbatical is required. The elder must be voted in unanimously by the members of the elder team at the start of every term.
  - The lead pastor is an elder, but does not follow this rotation schedule. He is an elder as long as he is in the lead pastor position.
- The elder team provides oversight, accountability, and evaluation of the lead pastor. Dismissal of the lead pastor will come directly from the elder team subject to a unanimous vote from the remaining elders.
- In the same way, an elder may be terminated by a unanimous vote by the elder team.
- Each elder will have a specified area of responsibility within the ministry of the church. However, each elder has broad authority over the whole church and can humbly speak with authority regarding any area of the Church.

#### **ELDER SELECTION PROCESS:**

- Any Church partner may submit a name for consideration of Elder. The nomination must be made by another partner other than the candidate himself or his spouse.
- The candidate will be subjected to an extensive self-evaluation based upon Scriptural teaching concerning elders.
- The candidate will then undertake a series of studies to educate himself about the doctrine and ministry of the Church.
- The elder team will then conduct several interviews of the candidate regarding an extensive set of issues to test his ability to serve in this office.
- The lead elder will conduct an in-depth interview of the candidate's spouse and children.
- Effort will also be made to contact those closest to the candidate, including friends, extended family, and colleagues.
- If the candidate meets all of the qualifications to this point, an announcement will be made to the congregation of his candidacy and ample time will be given for his reputation in the church and community to be revealed. Anyone may approach the elders with any concerns about the candidate's ability to serve as elder.
- The Elder team will need a unanimous vote to bring him onto the elder team.
- The new Elder will then be announced to the congregation and prayed for with a laying on of hands. (This will be considered the Church's way of "Ordination" as it pertains to legal matters of the state.)
- This process should take no less than 9 months to complete.

## **SERVANT LEADERS**

### **SERVANT TEAM LEADER (DEACON):**

- Servant team leaders in the Church are equated with Deacons in the New Testament. Because “Deacon” is often misunderstood in Southern Culture, we will refrain from using this term. However, Servant Leaders carry out the form and function of biblical deacons. (Acts 6:1-6; 1 Tim 3:8-13)
- Servant Leaders serve as a director of any ministry area appointed by the elder team.
- They are given the freedom and authority to lead in their area of ministry under the oversight of a ministerial staff member or the elder team.
- They will be expected to recruit, staff and delegate according to their needs. If the need arises for a Servant Leader to hire a paid staff member, their nomination will be the primary consideration, however ultimate authority to hire paid staff is done by the elder team.
- There is no set length of service, but each year there will be an evaluation to determine effectiveness.
- All ministerial staff are considered “Servant Leaders,” if they are not already an elder, and must abide by the principles laid out for deacons in the New Testament.

### **GOSPEL COMMUNITY (GC) LEADER:**

- A Gospel Community leader is an under-shepherd over a small group of individuals under the direction and accountability of a Servant Leader. The Qualifications of a GC leader are:
  - Be a covenant partner of the church in good standing with the mission, vision and core value of the church
  - Have been involved in a GC for at least one semester prior to leadership consideration.
  - Demonstrate an ability to rightly handle Scripture.

### **STAFF MEMBERS:**

- Other staff members shall be hired as needed in accordance with the church’s ministries and annual budget, as well as the personnel and financial policies of the church. Such staff members shall be responsible to their immediate supervisors or designated staff persons.

## **ARTICLE 7: FISCAL RESPONSIBILITIES**

### **ACCOUNTS AND RECORDS**

- The financial year shall begin January 1 and end December 31 of each year.
- The ministry year shall begin January 1 and end December 31 of each year.

### **BUDGET MANAGEMENT**

- The budget is to be managed by the Church authorized leader of the ministry and the various staff persons according to their area of responsibility
- Modifications may be approved by the elder-team
- If extenuating circumstances in the life of the Church mandate such a change, for example, if a budgeted item is not needed, or if expenses in a particular area are less than expected, the elder team can reallocate those resources as needed.

- The budget should be a normative guide for the financial operation of the church.

### **INSPECTION OF RECORDS**

- Every partner (in good standing) shall have the absolute right, at any reasonable time, to inspect all records, reports and documentation of every kind with exception of personnel records, contribution records, confidential counseling session records, screened leadership reports, and any other sensitive records to reasonably protect the privacy of individuals.
- The elder-team may restrict and limit inspections or establish set timelines for such to be conducted. Inspection of personnel salaries may only come with consent by the elder team.
- A copy of the Incorporation, Bylaws, Policies and Procedures will be maintained in the church office for inspection by partners.

### **AUDITING PROCEDURES, FINANCIAL, AND SECURITY**

- The elder-team will establish an internal/external audit of all financial books on a annual basis to be reported at the Annual Family Meeting.
- All employees, leaders, and volunteers of children & youth under 18 years of age are to be properly screened at the time of enlistment and hiring, and that these records should be constantly and accurately maintained.

## **ARTICLE 8: AFFILIATIONS**

The church shall have full power and authority to associate itself with and participate in organizations in keeping with the character and purpose of the church as set forth in the Articles of Incorporation. The church is autonomous and maintains the right to govern its own affairs, independent of any denominational control.

Recognizing the benefits of cooperation with other churches in world and community missions, the Church voluntarily affiliates with the Southern Baptist Convention, The South Carolina Baptist Convention, and The Screven Baptist Association.

## **ARTICLE 9: AMENDMENTS**

### **GENERAL PRINCIPLES**

- The bylaws, policies and procedures will need to be reviewed at least bi-annually by the elder team. Any amendments, modifications, or changes should receive unanimous approval by the team empowered to administrate the document and unanimous approval by the elder team.

### **RESTRICTION**

- Any and all portions of the By-laws may be changed at the discretion of the elder team with the exception of the “Core Value” of the Gospel as central to the church. If at any point the church decides that the Gospel is not its core value, then it should move toward dissolution.

## **PRESENTATION**

- Once an amendment has been made, the elder team should present the amendments to those persons that are affected by the change. If the entire congregation is affected, then they should be notified as a whole.

## **ARTICLE 10: ARTICLE OF DISSOLUTION**

- If the Church should ever cease to be a body of believers and be dissolved, all of its assets remaining (after payment of all outstanding debts, obligations, costs and expenses of dissolution) shall be distributed to the Church Planting division of the South Carolina Baptist Convention a nonprofit organization, operating exclusively for religious purposes, as shall at the time qualify as an exempt organization under section 501 (c)(3) of IRC of 1986 or any regulations succeeding said section. Assets may be distributed only to organizations which agree with the church's doctrinal statements in Article 3.
- Partners of the Church in good standing at the time of dissolution shall in a called meeting, designate a different beneficiary as described above, to receive the assets of the church after dissolution.
- No assets of the church shall be distributed to any partner, officer, or staff of this church or any other individual.

## **ARTICLE 11: INDEMNIFICATION**

If a legal claim or criminal allegation is made against a person because he or she is or was an officer, employee, or agent of the church, the church may provide indemnification against liability and cost incurred in defending against the claim, if the elders determine that the person acted (a) in good faith, (b) with the care an ordinary, prudent person in a similar position would exercise under similar circumstances, (c) in a manner the person reasonably believed to be in the best interest of the church, and (d) the person had no reasonable cause to believe his or her conduct was unlawful. The church shall purchase appropriate insurance to meet these potential liabilities. At the discretion of the elders, the church also may indemnify any person who acted in good faith and who reasonably believed that his or her conduct was in the church's best interest and not unlawful.