

# Constitution & By-Laws

## CONSTITUTION OF CONNECT BAPTIST CHURCH

## DBA CONNECT CHURCH

DECATUR, GEORGIA PREAMBLE

We declare and establish this constitution to preserve and secure the principles of our faith and to govern the church in an orderly manner. This constitution will preserve the liberties of each church member and the freedom of action of this church in relation to any other church or organization.

# ARTICLE I NAME

The name of this corporation is CONNECT BAPTIST CHURCH, DBA CONNECT CHURCH and shall be called CONNECT CHURCH.

# ARTICLE II BIBLICAL

# MISSION

To connect people to a Greater God which will produce a Greater Community and a Greater overall Life through the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

# ARTICLE III STATEMENTS

## OF FAITH

We affirm that we have a relationship with God through Jesus Christ. Our lives are empowered by the Holy Spirit. God is Tri-personal for He is Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. Our relationship with God is through Jesus Christ by the power of the Holy Spirit. The Bible and its original manuscripts are inspired and authoritative for our lives. We voluntarily come together as a body of baptized followers of Jesus Christ, each personally committed to Spiritual Disciplines (i.e. Bible Study, Worship, Giving, Prayer, Evangelism, Fasting, etc...). Our ordained forms of worship are Believers, Baptism, and the Lord's Supper. We strive to worship the Lord in Spirit and in Truth.

# ARTICLE IV MEMBERSHIP

CONNECT CHURCH will receive as members those who present themselves having professed faith in Jesus Christ as their Lord and Savior and whom affirm the commitments for church membership (See the WHAT'S NEXT Manual).

The membership reserves the exclusive right to determine who will be members of this church, and the condition of such membership as delineated in the WHAT'S NEXT Manual.

# ARTICLE V CHURCH

# COVENANT

We believe that we have been led by the Holy Spirit to receive the Lord Jesus Christ as our personal Lord and Savior. Upon our profession of faith, we have been baptized in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. We joyfully enter into this covenant relationship with one another as one body in Christ. We are to love one another, serve one another, encourage one another, pray for one another, and help one another. We take seriously the teaching of God's Word that we belong to one another in Christ. CONNECTED TO GOD, CONNECTED TO EACH OTHER, and CONNECTED TO MINISTRY

## **ARTICLE VI AFFILIATION**

We are autonomous and maintain the right to govern our own affairs independent of any denominational control. Recognizing, however, the benefits of cooperation with other churches, we voluntarily affiliate with the Southern Baptist Convention (DBA-Great Commission Baptists) and other familial Baptist entities as we find beneficial.

# ARTICLE VII

## AMENDMENTS

Amendments to the Constitution may be made by the Leadership Team which consist of the Lead Pastor, Elders/Ministerial Leaders, Deacons, and one member of the Financial Leadership team. Notice must be given to this team, and they have 90 days to respond with action or non-action. Updates on matters are given at an annual Church meeting.

# ARTICLE VIII

## DISSOLUTION

In the event of the dissolution of CONNECT CHURCH, all assets, after liabilities have been cared for, shall be distributed by the officers of the corporation to another 501(c)3 or other organization with a similar purpose as stated in Article II. If there are no officers to see to the distribution or if no distribution is made, all assets shall go to a 501(c)3 at the Lead Pastor's discretion that is disconnected from himself or and blood related relative(s).

# BYLAWS OF CONNECT CHURCH

DECATUR, GEORGIA

ARTICLE I MEMBERSHIP AND DECISION-MAKING

## **Section 1. Church Membership**

Each person presenting himself/herself for membership must give satisfactory testimony of a conversion experience as stated in Scripture, such as in John 3:16, Ephesians 2:8-9, and Romans 5-8; and agree to accept and receive church discipline in appropriate circumstances as more particularly described in the WHAT'S NEXT Manual. Full qualifications for membership, including how to become a member, and how membership is terminated, are detailed in the WHAT'S NEXT Manual.

# **Section 2. Church**

# **Decision-Making Process**



Only the Leadership Team through a majority vote of those members present and voting shall have the authority to call a Lead Pastor, approve the annual ministry budget, sale or purchase real estate property, incur indebtedness, and revise the constitution and bylaws. All other decisions will be the responsibility of the Lead Pastor or whomever he designates.

# **ARTICLE II CHURCH**

# **LEADERSHIP**

## **Section 1. Spiritual Leadership**

## **1. Lead Pastor and Other Ministers**

The Lead Pastor will be called by the Leadership Team of the church for an indefinite period of time, and the Leadership Team will approve his compensations. Lead Pastor will hire his own staff and set salaries in accordance with the approved budget. The Lead Pastor will be hired by the Leadership Team; however, a new hire Lead Pastor should be in mutual agreement with over 50% of the church's members.

All other ministers are responsible to the Lead Pastor. The Lead Pastor may assign a lead staff member(s) to oversee other ministers as he deems appropriate.

In the event the church is without a Lead Pastor, the Leadership Team may appoint a lead staff member to fulfill the administrative functions of the Lead Pastor. The Leadership Team may also employ an Interim Pastor.

Duties, job description, and qualifications for the Lead Pastor and other ministers will be established by the Lead Pastor in consultation with the Leadership Team. Any CONNECT CHURCH member can review duties or job descriptions upon office request.

## **B. Deacons**

The deacons are duly ordained individuals in the church authorized in God's Word to be servants of the New Testament church. The qualifications and responsibilities of the deacons are described in the WHAT'S NEXT Manual.

# Section 2. Ministry

## Leadership

Each ministry and organization of the church will be staffed and organized in accordance with the WHAT'S NEXT Manual. The terms and responsibilities along with the description will be defined in the WHAT'S NEXT Manual. All ministry leaders must;

- Take What's Next
- Be a consistent Giver (Matthew 6:21)
- Be Active & On Time

# Section 3. Administrative Leadership

## 1. Corporate Officers and Trustees

The corporate officers will have no authority outside of their duties as described in the Bylaws, or WHAT'S NEXT Manual. They serve as defined by the State of Georgia and in accordance with the guidelines established for a 501(c)3. Each year, the desire is that the people in the following positions would serve as the corporate officers:

1. Lead Pastor
2. Financial Administrator (1)
3. Deacons
4. Elders or Ministerial Leader

In the event that any of the above-named positions are not filled, have been abolished, or the person is not willing to serve as a corporate officer the Leadership Team will select those who will serve as corporate officers.

The corporate officers will act as trustees of the church. They will hold the property of the church in trust and act as legal representatives of the church. Trustees will represent the church in legal transactions involving the sale, purchase, transfer, mortgaging, or rental of property.

They will have no power to purchase or sell real estate property without the approval of the Leadership Team. It is the function of the Lead Pastor to affix his signature, along with the corporate seal, to any legal document in concert with the Leadership Team.

# **B. Church Administrator**

The Church Administrator will be responsible for keeping the records of the church. He/she will keep minutes of all annual meetings and place a copy of all minutes in the office. The church administrator will be appointed by the Lead Pastor and function in accordance with the WHAT'S NEXT Manual.

# **C. Finance Administrator**

The Finance Administrator is responsible to report the finances to the church and serve as a member of the Leadership Team. He/she will periodically review the records of the church to assure the true report is given. He/she will work with the office personnel to ensure the procedures for receiving and disbursing funds are handled in accordance with the proper accounting procedures. The Finance Administrator will be appointed by the Leadership Team and function in accordance with the WHAT'S NEXT Manual.

## D. Moderator

The Lead Pastor, or his designee, will serve as moderator of the church.

When the church is without a Lead Pastor, the Leadership Team shall appoint a person to serve.



# ARTICLE III

## MINISTRY AND PROGRAM ORGANIZATIONS

### **Section 1. General**

In fulfillment of our mission, the church will maintain ministries and initiatives to meet the needs of the congregation and community. All organizations related to the church will be under church control through the authority and process of the Leadership Team. All ministry activities are subject to church coordination and approval. The church will provide the human, physical, and financial resources for the priority advancement of these ministries.

## **Section 2. Marriage**

Among the first words of the Bible are God's design and definition for marriage: "For this reason a man shall leave his father and mother, and be joined to his wife; and they shall become one flesh" (Genesis 2.24 NASB). In keeping with the teachings of God's Word, the word "marriage" means only a legal union between one man and one woman as husband and wife, and the word "spouse" refers only to a person of the opposite sex who is a husband or wife.

Church facilities and church ministers of CONNECT CHURCH may be used only for Scriptural marriages as defined above.

# ARTICLE IV

# TEAMS & MINISTRIES

## **Section 1. General**

1. Unless specified in the Constitution or Bylaws, team purposes, job descriptions, organizations, and responsibilities will be included in the WHAT'S NEXT
2. All team leaders and sub-team leaders must be church members, must agree to comply with eligibility and Christian standards of conduct as more described in the WHAT'S NEXT Manual, and will be selected and serve in accordance to the WHAT'S NEXT They must: Attend What's Next, Be a consistent Giver (Matthew 6:21), and Be Active & On Time.
3. Teams will have the authority to act within their area of responsibilities defined by the Constitution, Bylaws, or job description with respect to policies, actions and financial expenditures.
4. Teams are directly responsible to the Lead Pastor.
5. Teams will organize and set meeting times appropriate for their purpose in coordination with the Leadership Team.
6. The Lead Pastor can call team
7. The Lead Pastor will be ex-officio of all ministry teams. The Lead Pastor may appoint a staff member to be responsible for any team as ex-officio.

# Section 2. Leadership

## Team

1. The Leadership Team will be active church members composed of the Lead Pastor, Elders/Ministerial Leaders, Deacons, and one member of Financial Leadership team.
  - The Lead Pastor is chosen by the Leadership Team in concert of an above 50% vote from Connect Church members.
  - The Elder/Ministerial Leaders are chosen by the Lead Pastor in concert of an above 50% vote from Connect Church members.
  - The Deacons are chosen by the Lead Pastor in concert of an above 50% vote from Connect Church members.
  - The Financial Leadership team is invited to participate in all meetings of the leadership team. However, only one member is designated as a voting member of the Leadership Team.
  - A married couple may not concurrently serve as voting members of the Leadership Team. When discussing personnel topics, all non-voting staff members and their family members will be excused from the Leadership Team Meeting. The Lead Pastor shall serve as the Leadership Team Leader unless an executive session is called by a majority the leadership team in concert with an above 50% vote from Connect Church members. The purpose is solely to discuss the employment status of the Lead Pastor. If this were to occur, the Leadership Team shall select a Team Leader for that specific executive session ONLY. The Lead Pastor will be allowed the opportunity to attend the meeting after discussing any concerns that might

2. The functions of the Leadership Team are:
  1. To ensure the alignment of all ministries, initiatives, systems, and budget of the church around the strategic plans and future direction of the church as defined in the WHAT'S NEXT Manual.
  2. To assist the Lead Pastor in fulfilling his ministry with the
  3. To coordinate with all Teams/Ministries, Lead Pastor, and Ministerial Staff to provide the culture and systems that will produce the ability to provide needed ministries and
  4. To evaluate all ministries and initiatives of the church in relation to the *Decision Filter*, "Will this decision better position us to Connect disciples to our Great God, to each other, or to their ministry? Will this produce a greater community and a greater life for our local church and community?"
  5. To make all decisions concerning the church and her ministries and initiatives except the call of a Lead Pastor, the appointment and election of Leadership, the sale or purchase of real estate property, the commitment to indebtedness and the revision of the constitution and bylaws which only the Leadership Team can execute. These decisions will be the majority of the Leadership Team vote to call a Lead Pastor and a 50% majority vote needed for the revision of the Constitution and

## Section 4. Special Teams

Special Teams, which have a specific purpose and cease to exist upon completion of their task, may be appointed and staffed by the Lead Pastor.

# ARTICLE V MEETINGS

## **Section 1. Worship**

The church will meet each week for worship unless otherwise determined by the Lead Pastor in annual meeting with the Leadership Team. The Lead Pastor and ministerial staff will be responsible for the service(s).

# **Section 2. Special Services**

When approved by the Lead Pastor, additional services will be placed on the church calendar.

# **Section 3. Church Annual Meeting**

1. *Regular Annual Meeting*

1. The church shall have at least one Church annual meeting a year in accordance with the WHAT'S NEXT
2. The church shall be notified at least four Sundays before the Church Annual Meeting occurs. The notice shall include the date, time and location of the
3. The Leadership Team shall generate the agenda for the Church Annual Meeting that may include reports and recommendations that require church
4. Members may make recommendations from the floor that will be referred to the Leadership

1. All conferences will be conducted according to the most recent edition of Roberts Rules of
2. The Leadership Team and at least ten (10) members must be present to constitute a quorum unless there are less than 40 members remaining on the active church membership roll not including those on the shut-in roll. If that occurs, those members attending the church annual meeting after the required notice has been given will constitute a
3. Unless specified elsewhere in the Bylaws, Policies Manual, or the specific recommendation a simple majority of active church members present and voting is needed to pass a

2. *Called Annual Meetings*

1. The Lead Pastor or Leadership Team may call a church
2. The called meeting must be announced and included in church publications for at least two Sundays before the meeting is
3. The business of a called meeting will be limited to the announced



# Section 4. Messengers

- Messengers will be elected to serve as needed to various organizations as the church chooses to associate
- The church through the Leadership Team process and authority will elect messengers who will serve in accordance to the WHAT'S NEXT

## ARTICLE VI FINANCIAL

## MATTERS

## **Section 1. Offerings**

The work of the church will be supported with offerings and gifts in keeping with the teachings of the Bible on the doctrine of giving.

# **Section 2. Accounting Procedures**

The Financial Ministry will generate procedures for accounting for all funds received by the church and make recommendations to the Leadership Team. These procedures will become part of the WHAT'S NEXT Manual and/or the Financial Policies and Guidelines document.

# Section 3. Budget

The Financial team will work with the Lead Pastor to annually present a budget to the Leadership Team before the beginning of the financial year. They will receive recommendations from the ministerial leaders, deacons, and ministries. In addition, they will give consideration to all requests, but not be held to those requests.

The overall budget philosophy is;

# Section 4. Contracts

The Lead Pastor or the Leadership Team upon submission from the appropriate team or staff person is responsible for the approval of all contracts.

After the appropriate approval, a corporate officer or Leadership Team member as a representative of the church may sign the contract. The signature must include the name and position of the signer. If the staff member is not an officer of the church they must sign with their name, position, and a statement that they are an authorized agent of the church; i.e. John Smith, Pastor, authorized agent.

# **ARTICLE VII POLICIES**

# **MANUAL**

## **Section 1. General**

The WHAT'S NEXT Manual will be the operational manual for the church. It will offer specifics to the church, its beliefs, members, ministries/teams, and staff members.

## **Section 2. Contents**

The WHAT'S NEXT Manual will contain all team job descriptions and policies.

# Section 3. Availability

A copy of the WHAT'S NEXT Manual will be kept on the Connect Church shared drive and be made available to all church members.

# Section 4. Compliance

Compliance to the WHAT'S NEXT Manual is required.

# ARTICLE VIII

## AMENDMENTS TO

## BYLAWS

Amendments to the Constitution may be made by the Leadership Team which consists of the Lead Pastor, Elders/Ministerial Leaders, Deacons, and one member of Financial Leadership. Notice must be made to the Leadership Team. The notice must include the wording of the change. The Leadership Team has 90 days to respond. Changes must have 100% vote from Leadership Team.

# ARTICLE IX

## SOLE CONSTITUTIONAL AUTHORITY

All rules and regulations of this church, which are in conflict with this Constitution and Bylaws, are repealed, and this Constitution and Bylaws are the sole Constitution and Bylaws of this church.