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**CONSTITUTION AND BY-LAWS
OF
ALPHA BAPTIST CHURCH, INC.
WILLINGBORO, NEW JERSEY**

PREAMBLE

We, the members of the Alpha Baptist Church, in order to provide uniformity in the process of administration of normal business affairs, promote the general welfare of this Church, and to provide an atmosphere of Christian unity and tranquility, through its mission and ministries, do adopt this as our Constitution and By-Laws for guidance and governance of our Church.

[Use of terms such as he, him, she, her, etc., are to be understood to refer to both genders except when reference is made to persons of the Holy Trinity.]

ARTICLE I –NAME

The name of this church shall be the Alpha Baptist Church of Christ (Progressive National Baptist Convention) hereafter known as Alpha Baptist. (By vote of the church in 1984 it became a part of the American Baptist Churches.

The name of this church shall be the Alpha Baptist Church, Inc., located at 15 Rose Street, Willingboro, New Jersey 08046.

[Rationale: This change corrects the name of the church and adds its location.]

ARTICLE XII –Incorporation

This church shall be incorporated under the laws of the state of New Jersey.

ARTICLE II. INCORPORATION

This Church is incorporated as a non-profit religious corporation under the laws of the State of New Jersey.

[Rationale: This change clarifies the intent for establishment of the Church for tax-exempt purposes and renumbers the Article.]

ARTICLE II –Purpose of NJ and USA

The purpose of this church shall be the advancement of the Kingdom of Jesus Christ on this earth. It shall seek to attain this end through the public worship of God, the preaching of the Gospel, consistent Christian living by its members, personal evangelism, missionary endeavor, Christian education and all other programs it may deem necessary.

ARTICLE III. PURPOSE

Our foundation for ministry is based on five biblical purposes found in the New Testament: the Great Commandment (Matt: 22:37-40) and the Great Commission (Matt: 28:19-20). Alpha Baptist Church exists to encourage the members to Connect with other Christians, to Adore God, to Reach out to non-believers, to

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Equip the local body and to Serve others to the glory of God. Our process for implementing these purposes of God are to bring people in, give them a healthy place to truly worship God, encourage them to tell someone else about the Good News of Jesus, train them to apply God's Word to their lives and prepare them to do ministry.

This corporation shall not engage in any form of propaganda, or otherwise attempt to influence legislation except as otherwise provided by Section 501(h) of the Internal Revenue Code. This corporation shall not participate in, or otherwise intervene in any political campaign on behalf of, or in opposition to, any candidate for public office including the publishing or distribution of statements.

Notwithstanding any other provisions of this Constitution, this corporation shall not carry on any activities not permitted to be carried on (a) by a corporation exempt from federal income tax under Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code, or (b) by a corporation, contributions to which are deductible under Section 170(c)(2) of the Internal Revenue Code.

[Rationale: This change reflects the new vision for and mission of the Church; adds language required to ensure tax-exempt qualifications are met and rennumbers the Article.]

ARTICLE IV. III –POLITY

This Church shall be independent in the regulation of its own affairs. Its government shall be vested in the body which composes is comprised of its membership. The control of its affairs shall be consistent with this Constitution and any By-Laws and/or standing resolutions that may be enacted. It shall, maintain affiliation and cooperation with the American Baptist Churches, USA (ABC-USA), American Baptist Churches-New Jersey (ABC-NJ), and the Greater Delaware Valley Association of American Baptist Churches (GDVA-ABC-NJ). New Jersey Convention of Progressive Baptists and the Progressive National Baptist Convention, Inc. (where applicable)

[Rationale: This change adds current organizational affiliations, deletes affiliations no longer maintained and changes the Article number.]

ARTICLE V. IV –DOCTRINE

This Church accepts receives the New Testament as the sole authority as an all sufficient basis of doctrine and practice. As a summary of principles for Christian conduct among its members, it adopts the following church covenant.

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 engage, 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 oppressed and the spread of the Gospel at home and abroad.

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We will also strive to maintain family and secret devotions; to teach our children ~~the~~ Christian truths; to seek the salvation of our kindred and acquaintances; to watch over one another in agape love; to remember each other in prayer; to aid each other in sickness and distress; to cultivate Christian sympathy in feeling and courtesy in speech; and that through all of life, we will ~~humbly~~ ~~humble~~ and earnestly seek to live the glory of Him who has called us out of darkness into His marvelous light.

We moreover engage that when we remove from this place, we will as soon as possible unite with some other church ~~where~~ ~~were~~ we can carry out the spirit of this covenant and the principle of God's word.

[Rationale: New Testament was changed to Bible as the Bible characterizes both the Old and New Testaments, which promote doctrine and practice. These changes also correct spelling and grammar, and correct the Article number.]

ARTICLE VI. ~~V~~—MEMBERSHIP

Section 1. Membership Admission of Members. Persons may be received into membership by any of the following methods. ~~, subject in each case to the recommendation of the diaconate board.~~

- A. By Believer's Baptism. Any person who confesses Jesus Christ as ~~Lord and Savior~~ ~~Savior and Lord~~ and adopts substantially the views of faith and principles of this Church may be received into the fellowship of the Church.
- B. By Letter. A person who is in substantial accord with the view of faith and the principles of this Church may be received by letter from any other evangelical Church.
- C. By Christian Experience. A believer of worthy character ~~and who has been~~ ~~who has formerly been~~ a member of another evangelical Church but who, for sufficient reason, cannot present a letter from that Church but who, is in substantial accord with the view of faith and principles of this Church may be received upon statement of Christian experience.
- D. By Restoration. Any person who has lost his membership for any reason may be restored to membership upon recommendation of the Diaconate board.
- E. ~~By Watch-Care Membership.~~ Watch-care membership is available to those persons who are temporarily in this geographical area and who do not wish to move their membership from another Church. A watch-care member shall be entitled to the same privileges of membership as a regular member, except a watch-care member may not serve as Deacon or Trustee.

ARTICLE VIII —ELECTIONS

- F. Associate Members: This church, from time to time, may grant associate membership to any persons who meets substantially all the requirements of membership but who may be a member of another congregation. In such instances, no voice or vote is extended. Such person may participate in special programs of the church and be counted as part of the extended Alpha Baptist Family. Marriage and

All candidates for membership must first complete the new members class unless waived by the diaconate board upon recommendation of the pastor.

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The Church shall accept all persons seeking membership hereunder into full membership upon being presented to the Church by the Pastor and a favorable vote thereafter at the time of presentation.

All members are encouraged to complete the New Members Orientation Training. Upon its completion, they will receive the Right Hand of Fellowship. New members will be baptized as needed.

[Rationale: Sec.1. Clarifies language, corrects grammar, and updates to current procedures. Substitutes watch-care membership for Associate Members. Extends right to full participation of Watch-Care members excluding right to serve as Deacon or Trustee. Eliminates mandatory participation in new member's class. Corrects Article number.]

Section 2. Termination of Membership. Dismissal of Members. (Persons may be removed from membership by any of the following reasons with the approval of the Diaconate Board.)

- A. By Death. Proof of death shall be reason for automatic removal of members.
- B. By Letter. Any member in good standing who desires a letter of **dismissal and** recommendation to any other Church may receive it upon written request. **from the designated church.** The name of the Church to which membership is requested shall be **stated** **named** in the request and the letter shall be sent to the Pastor or clerk of that Church. Such letter shall be valid for only three months after its date even if no acknowledgement is received, and this restriction shall be stated in the letter. **Report of persons dismissed shall be given to the congregation at each quarterly business meeting.**
- C. By Inactivity. The **Diaconate Board** shall **quarterly** prepare, **from time to time,** a list of those members who have **for** a period of three or more months failed to participate in the services of worship or financial support of the Church and the reason for the same. Where the reason is within the member's control, the **Diaconate board** **may** **shall** present to the Church a recommendation that **those** **these** inactive members be removed from the membership roll. **Should the Church take such action** **Upon such action being taken by the church,** said member shall thereafter cease to be a member of this Church, **should the vote to remove the member be approved.**
- D. **By Conduct.** Any member may be removed from membership **consistent with Church discipline in accordance with Article X,** when it has been determined that he is in **basic** non-compliance with the views and policies of this Church.

[Rationale: Sec.2. Corrects grammar, spelling and improves language. Clarifies reasons for removing membership based on conduct]

ARTICLE VII. PASTORAL LEADERSHIP VI –The Pastor and Officers

All **leaders** **elected officers** shall be Church members in good standing.

Section 1. Pastor.

- A. Qualifications.** The Pastor of this Church shall possess a degree in theological studies from a fully accredited college or university. The Pastor shall meet scriptural qualifications in I Timothy 3:1-7 and Titus 1:6-9, be a person of God and a confirmed ordained Baptist minister whose credentials are recognized by the American Baptist Churches, USA or who agrees to go through the American Baptist

Church's Ordination Process. He should demonstrate strong leadership skills and a commitment to leading Church membership in Christian education, community outreach and to salvation. This church shall seek the service of a trained (a minimum of full accredited college & seminary) and dedicated person of God to lead it whose title shall be Pastor.

ARTICLE VIII –ELECTIONS

A. Pastor: The call to pastorship shall come before the church after it has been approved by the diaconate board. The diaconate board must, within one month, of the knowledge of the pending pulpit vacancy or or two weeks after the vacancy call a meeting to create a search Task Force charged with the nomination of a new pastor. Such a Task Force must be presented to the church in a special meeting within one month after selection for approval. The church shall then direct the search Task Force to cooperate with the office of the American Baptist Church Professional Ministries in their efforts to secure a list of candidates. The choice shall be made as expeditiously as possible. Other requirements for the pastor shall be determined by the church.

A two-third vote of the membership is required for successful selection

B. Selection of Pastor. When a vacancy in the Pastoral Office arises, the Chair of the Diaconate Board shall form a Search Committee as stated in the By Laws. The Search Committee shall submit the name of any pastoral candidate to the Church. A three-fourth (3/4) vote of the members present and qualified to vote at a called business meeting of the Church shall be required to elect a Pastor provided a quorum is present. Notice of the election must be announced on two consecutive Sundays preceding a vote by ballot. (See Licensing and Ordination procedure in By-Laws.)

ARTICLE XI –Term of Office

A. Pastor: At the pleasure of church and paster, termination may be accomplished as follows:

- a. Self: Ninety day written notice.
- b. Church: Ninety day written notice, upon approval of majority of diaconate board and two-third of church membership.

C. Termination of Pastor. The term of office of any Pastor referred to in this Article may be ended upon giving thirty (30) days written notice either on the part of the Pastor or on the part of the Church. Termination of a Pastor's services on the initiative of the Church shall be voted on at a regular or special meeting in accordance with the terms and conditions set forth in the written employment agreement between the parties.

A Pastor shall be dismissed only when he fails to perform his/her duties, lives in an ungodly manner, or practices that which does not become a Christian minister.

[Rationale: Sec.1. Establishes detailed qualifications for Pastor; updates committee titles, i.e. task force to Search Committee; increases vote needed to elect a Pastor from 2/3 to 3/4 . Also decreases the number of days' notice to be given for termination of the Pastor and states sole reason for termination.]

Section 2. Assistant and Associate Pastors and Ministers

A. Assistant Pastor (s)

1. Qualifications. The Assistant Pastor of this Church shall possess a degree in theological studies from a fully accredited college or university or have equivalent educational preparation,

experience and ministerial training. The Assistant Pastor shall meet scriptural qualifications in I Timothy 3:1-7 and Titus 1:6-9, be a person of God and a confirmed licensed and ordained Baptist minister, or in the process of being ordained. He should demonstrate strong leadership skills and a commitment to leading Church membership in Christian education, community outreach and to salvation.

2. Selection. A Search Committee shall be appointed in accordance with provisions and requirements as set forth in the Church's By-Laws. A three-fourths (3/4) vote of the members present and qualified to vote at a called business meeting of the Church shall be required to elect an Assistant Pastor provided a quorum is present. Notice of the election must be announced on two consecutive Sundays preceding a vote by ballot. (See Licensing and Ordination procedure in By-Laws.)
3. Termination. The term of office may be ended upon giving thirty (30) days written notice either on the part of the Assistant Pastor or on the part of the Church as set forth in the By-Laws. Termination of an Assistant Pastor's services on the initiative of the Church shall be voted on at a regular or special meeting in accordance with the terms and conditions as set forth in the By-Laws.

B. Associate Pastor(s)

1. Qualifications. The Associate Pastor of this Church shall possess a degree in theological studies from a fully accredited college or university or have equivalent educational preparation, experience and ministerial training. The Associate Pastor shall be a person of God and a confirmed licensed and ordained Baptist minister. He should demonstrate strong leadership skills and a commitment to leading Church membership in Christian education, community outreach and to salvation.
2. Selection. A Search Committee shall be appointed in accordance with provisions and requirements as set forth in the Church's By-Laws. A three-fourths (3/4) vote of the members present and qualified to vote at a called business meeting of the Church shall be required to elect an Associate Pastor provided a quorum is present. Notice of the election must be announced on two consecutive Sundays preceding a vote by ballot. (See Licensing and Ordination procedure in By-Laws.)
3. Termination. The term of office may be ended upon giving thirty (30) days written notice either on the part of the Associate Pastor or on the part of the Church as set forth in the By-Laws. Termination of an Associate Pastor's services on the initiative of the Church shall be voted on at a regular or special meeting in accordance with the terms and conditions as set forth in the By-Laws.

C. Associate Ministers

1. Qualifications. An Associate Minister of this Church shall be licensed or in the process of licensure from an accredited Church and shall have served under the supervision of the Pastor of Alpha Baptist Church and the observation of the congregation for a period of one (1) year. It is preferable, if the minister is new to Alpha, that he submit a letter of transfer indicating departure from his/her previous Church or institution in good standing.

2. Selection. A three-fourths (3/4) vote of the members present and qualified to vote at a called business meeting of the Church shall be required to elect an Associate Minister provided a quorum is present. Notice of the election must be announced on two consecutive Sundays preceding a vote by ballot. (See Licensing and Ordination procedure in the By-Laws.)
3. Termination. The term of office may be ended upon giving thirty (30) days written notice either on the part of the Associate Minister or on the part of the Church as set forth in the By-Laws. Termination of an Associate Minister's services on the initiative of the Church shall be voted on at a regular or special meeting in accordance with the terms and conditions as set forth in the By-Laws.

D. Youth Minister

1. Qualifications. The Youth Minister of this Church shall possess a degree in theological studies from a fully accredited college or university or have equivalent educational preparation, experience, ministerial training and a demonstrated ability to work effectively with youth plus successful passage of a criminal background check. The Youth Minister shall be a person of God and a confirmed licensed and ordained Baptist minister or in the process of being ordained. He should demonstrate strong leadership skills, and a commitment to leading Church membership in Christian education, community outreach and to salvation.
2. Selection. A three-fourths (3/4) vote of the members present and qualified to vote at a called business meeting of the Church shall be required to elect a Youth Pastor provided a quorum is present. Notice of such an election must be announced on two consecutive Sundays preceding a vote by ballot.
3. Termination. The term of office may be ended upon giving thirty (30) days written notice either on the part of the Youth Minister or on the part of the Church as set forth in the By-Laws. Termination of the Youth Minister's services on the initiative of the Church shall be voted on at a regular or special meeting in accordance with the terms and conditions as set forth in the By-Laws.

[Rationale: Section 2. Updates Pastoral leadership by adding current Pastor and minister titles, their qualifications, selection process and termination procedures. It also adds the title for a Youth Pastor.]

ARTICLE VIII. OFFICERS

An officer shall hold no more than one office at a time and shall be selected in accordance with the provisions and requirements for the office as set forth in the Church By-Laws.

Section 1. President, Secretary, and Treasurer.

These officers shall perform the duties prescribed in the By-Laws. For legal purposes, the Pastor shall act as President of the corporation, the Clerk shall act as Secretary and a member elected from the Church membership shall fill the office of Treasurer.

The President, Secretary and Treasurer shall be reconfirmed annually until their terms expire. Terms are defined in the By-Laws. All officers shall serve their elected terms or until their successors are elected. Terms of office shall begin in January following the election.

[Rationale: Section 1. Adds and associates current Officer titles with legal corporate titles. States terms of office.]

Section 2. Diaconate Board

ARTICLE VII – Board(s) The work of the church shall be administered through boards and taskforces.

There shall be a diaconate board consisting of all persons who have been ordained as deacons or had their ordination recognized by Alpha Baptist. All matters of importance shall be considered by it before being presented to the church. Other categories of deacons may be recognized.

ARTICLE XI –Term of Office

A. Task Force Administrators and Deacons: one year or until their successor is named. Pastor makes the replacement with board approval.

B. Task Force Administrators, Deacons and Deacons in Training: Until confirmation or removed.

- A. There shall be a Diaconate Board, which shall be reconfirmed by the Church at each annual meeting. The Deacons shall be selected and ordained as prescribed in the By-Laws. Ordained Deacons may serve on the Diaconate Board upon the recommendation of the Pastor, Diaconate Board and by Church vote. Only Deacons who have been ordained shall serve as full members of the Diaconate Board. Deacons in training shall serve on the Diaconate Board in limited roles based on Board and Church guidelines.
- B. The Board shall annually choose a Chairperson and Vice Chairperson and shall meet monthly. Special meetings may be called by the Chairperson. The Church Clerk will serve as Diaconate Board Secretary. The Chairperson of the Diaconate Board will serve as its Chaplain. The Chairperson shall preside over all meetings of the Diaconate Board and shall be considered the official head of the Church whenever a vacancy occurs in the Pulpit until a new Pastor is installed. The Vice Chairperson shall act in the absence of the Chairperson. Elected officers may serve only three consecutive terms in the same office, after which they may serve in any office other than the one vacated. After a year out of office of the vacated position, these officers are eligible to be nominated for the vacated office.
- C. The Chairperson or the Secretary, who shall notify the other members, may call special meetings. A majority of the members shall constitute a quorum. The Board shall in every way assist the Pastor in his/her work and perform other services as stated in the Church By-Laws. The Board shall promote Christian instruction and ministry to the Church membership.
- D. Any Deacon who for a period of time fails to perform the duties of his office faithfully automatically vacates the same. Deacons in good standing may request a leave of absence for extenuating circumstances with the intention of rejoining the Diaconate Board at a future date as their conditions allow. The Church may, for good and sufficient cause, remove any Deacon from office.

*[Rationale: Section 2. Brings Alpha in line with modern service of Deacons. Establishes Board and Officer terms limits. States Board organizational structure, function and procedures. Support is found in: **The Work of the Deacon and Diaconess**. (Nichols, 1984) "Much can be said in favor of rotation. If persons prove to be worthy of continued service as deacons, an occasional mandatory year of inactivity will not be serious. Practice affords the opportunity for younger persons to be added to the board." In **Deacons in Today's Black Baptist Church** (Mickle, 2010) "In the twenty-first century, many black Baptist Churches have abandoned the idea of life terms for deacons. The important distinction is the added accountability offered by required re-election. This model for length of service offers the benefit of mandated Sabbath for the hard-working deacon and of greater opportunity for new candidates for the office." **The New Hiscox Guide for Baptist Churches** (Goodwin, 1995). "Although we may imagine there was no limit of service time for deacons in the apostolic era, modern deacons should generally serve a specified term of office. This practice will prevent diaconal burnout and will also encourage others to extend their gifts and abilities in this service."]*

Section 3. Trustee Board

- A. There shall be a Trustee Board. The Board shall annually elect from its members a Chairperson, Vice Chairperson, Secretary and Chaplain and shall meet monthly. The Chairperson shall preside over all meetings of the Board. Elected officers may serve only three consecutive years in the same office, after which they may serve in any office other than the one vacated. After a year out of office of the vacated position, these individuals are eligible to be nominated for the vacated office. Special meetings may be called by the chair or by the secretary, who shall notify the other members. A majority of the members shall constitute a quorum.
- B. A vacancy on the Board of Trustees may be filled by the trustees making their recommendation to the Diaconate Board and subsequently to the Church body at a quarterly meeting for approval.
- C. The Board shall hold in trust all property belonging to the Church and shall take all necessary measures for its protection, management, and upkeep. It shall designate the bank where the funds of the Church shall be deposited, and shall transact all legal matters on behalf of the Church.

[Rationale: Section 3. Renames Trustee Task Force to Trustee Board. States its function, organizational structure, officers and terms of office.]

ARTICLE VI—The Pastor and Officers

Section 2. Task Forces and Administrators. (This church may create Task Forces as needed)

Task forces may be created from time to time by the diaconate board, upon recommendation of pastor and approval of the church, when there is a task force to be performed and dismantled in the manner when the task is completed. The task force administrators are to have full supervision of their respective task forces, in consultation with the pastor and assistance of members appointed to it and members in training. The work of the task force must be approved by the church and carried out in accordance with approved guidelines.

All task force administrators shall be regular members or members in training of the diaconate board. The present task forces are approved by Alpha Baptist.

- a. Spiritual Life
- b. Christian Education
- c. Hospitality
- d. Building, Ground, Equipment

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- e. Music
- f. Ecumenical Relations and Denomination Support
- g. Youth Work
- h. Records
- i. Outreach
- j. Trustee (This Task Force approved in 1984)
(The Trustee Task Force has responsibility for all matters that are material within the state of New Jersey.)

ARTICLE IX. MINISTRIES

Section 1. The work and ministry of Alpha Baptist Church shall be carried out chiefly through ministries task forces. New ministries may be initiated from time to time upon the recommendation of the Pastor and approval of the Diaconate Board and the Church.

ARTICLE VIII –ELECTIONS

D. Task Force Administrators in Training. Selected by pastor.

B. These persons must first be elected as deacons at a service planned by the pastor. They are then selected by the pastor, upon the approval of the diaconate board.

Rationale: Since 1998 Task Force members have been appointed amongst persons who were not Ordained, but made members of the Diaconate Board to maintain the spirit of the Constitution.

Section 2. All ministry officers shall be regular members in good standing and in regular study. The present ministries “organized” under the C.A.R.E.S. acronym are approved by the Pastor, Diaconate Board, and by Alpha Baptist Church members. Each ministry, exclusive of ministries led by co-ordinators, shall annually elect a President, Vice President, Secretary and Chaplain. Each officer may only serve for three consecutive years in the same office, after which they may serve in any office other than the one vacated. After a year out of office of the vacated position, these individuals are eligible to be nominated for the vacated office.

- A. Connect (Fellowship)
- B. Adore (Worship)
- C. Reach (Evangelism)
- D. Equip (Discipleship)
- E. Serve (Ministry)

[Rationale: States current ministries at Alpha, and requirements for ministry leaders. Deletes task forces no longer in service.]

ARTICLE X. CHURCH DISCIPLINE

Section 1. There shall be a Discipline Committee consisting of the Pastor and the Diaconate Board. The committee shall have sole authority in determining deviation from the statement of faith and violations of the Church Covenant. If the Pastor or a Deacon is the subject of a disciplinary matter, that individual shall not sit as a member of the Discipline Committee. The Deacon Board Chair will take the place of the Pastor when

discipline pertains to the Pastor. In either case, the individual shall be entitled to the same steps as other Church members and be subject to the same discipline.

Section 2. Members are expected to demonstrate special loyalty and concern for one another. When a member becomes aware of an offense of such magnitude that it hinders spiritual growth and testimony, he is to seek reconciliation according to Church discipline procedures outlined in the Church By-Laws.

Section 3. In order to promote purity and maintain peace, the Church has the scriptural responsibility to prayerfully and lovingly restore errant members. Members whose behavior continues in violation of scriptural commands are to be disciplined. The primary goals of Church discipline are to seek the restoration of a sinning believer and the protection of the Church.

[Rationale: Establishes Church discipline and expectations of members.]

ARTICLE XI. BY-LAWS AND STANDING RESOLUTIONS

Section 1. By-Laws

Written By-Laws which are not in conflict with this Constitution, shall govern the functioning bodies of this Church and may be adopted or amended at any regular or special business meeting of the Church by a two-thirds (2/3) affirmative vote of the members present and qualified to vote, providing a quorum is present.

Section 2. Standing Resolutions

Standing resolutions shall have the controlling status of By-Laws and shall be used to govern interim or temporary situations involving the functioning bodies of the Church. All standing resolutions must be written and may be initiated, changed, or canceled by a simple majority vote of a quorum at a regular or special business meeting, provided, however, no such standing resolution shall be in conflict with any current By-Law or any provision of this Constitution. In the event that any standing resolutions conflict with one another, that which is enacted later in point of time shall control.

[Rationale: States rules by which the Church will function and how the rules may be amended and adopted by the membership. States the status and effect of resolutions and how they are to be presented.]

ARTICLE XII. FINANCIAL

Section 1. The mission/purpose of the Church shall be supported through member tithes and offerings.

Section 2. Contributions designated by a contributor for a specific purpose shall impose a “trust” obligation upon the Church to use the funds for that purpose only.

Section 3. The Church shall receive, maintain and administer a fund or funds of real or personal property, or both, and subject to the restrictions and limitations stated herein, to use exclusively to carry on and implement the objectives of the Church for its religious purposes, either directly or by contributions to organizations that qualify as exempt or charitable organizations.

Section 4. No Board member, officer, employee of the Church, or other person shall receive at any time any of the net earnings or monetary profit from the operation of the Church. This, however, shall not prevent the payment to any such persons reasonable compensation for services rendered to the Church in accordance with this Constitution, the By-Laws or applicable law, and no such persons shall be entitled to share in the

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distribution of any of the corporate assets upon the dissolution, liquidation or winding up of the affairs of the Church.

Section 5. No funds of the Church shall be loaned to any Board member, officer or employee of the Church, or to any other entity in which a member of the Board or officer holds a substantial financial interest. Neither shall any loans be made to any individual or organization.

[Rationale: Sections 1-5 describes how the Church will be financially supported, assets that may be acquired and prohibits receipt of Church monies by board members, officers and employees, per IRS regulations.]

ARTICLE XIV – Church Year

The church shall be the calendar year.

Section 6. The Church fiscal year shall be the calendar year, January 1 – December 31.

[Rationale: Section 6. Corrects grammar and defines the calendar year.]

Section 7. The Church shall use and retain a Certified Public Accountant to make a triennial examination of the financial accounts and provide a report to the Trustee Board.

Section 8. The Church shall provide Bonding for members who handle Church funds. Special Bonding shall be provided for Trustees who have check writing authority.

[Rationale: Sections 7-8. Requires using a CPA to examine financial records and bonding for members who handle Church funds.]

ARTICLE XIII. DISSOLUTION

Upon dissolution of the corporation the Trustee Board shall, after paying or making provision for the payment of all liabilities of the corporation, dispose of the remaining assets of the corporation exclusively for one or more exempt purposes, within the meaning of Section 501 (c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1954 (or the corresponding provision of any future Federal Code), or shall distribute the same to the Federal Government, or to a state or local government for a public purpose. Any such assets not so disposed of shall be disposed of by order of the Superior Court of the State of New Jersey in the judicial district where the principal office of the corporation is then located, exclusively for such purpose or to such organizations organized and operated exclusively for such purposes, as said court shall determine.

[Rationale: IRS requirement. Previously approved by the membership on April 23, 2007.]

ARTICLE XIV. AMENDMENTS

This constitution may be amended at any regular or called meeting of the church provided such proposed amendment(s) has been approved by the diaconate board and circulated in writing at least one quarterly meeting prior to action by the church. Two readings are required in lieu of quarterly meeting.

This Constitution may be amended at any regular or special business meeting of the Church by a three-fourth (3/4) affirmative vote by ballot of the members present and qualified to vote providing a quorum is

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present, after having first given notice to the Church by posting same for two consecutive Sundays immediately preceding the dates of the meeting.

[Rationale: Substitutes wording “special business meeting” for called meeting, reduces the notice period, establishes vote needed for passage and corrects grammar.]

Ratified by action of the Church in its business meeting on (day/date)

Article I.

Article II.

President: _____

Church Clerk: _____

BY-LAWS OF ALPHA BAPTIST CHURCH, INC.

ARTICLE I. MEMBERSHIP

Section 1. Responsibility of Members. Members are to be faithful in all spiritual duties essential to the Christian life, to attend regularly the meetings and services of this Church, to give systematically for its support and benevolences, and to share in its organized work and outreach.

Section 2. Membership Status. New members shall be extended the Right Hand of Fellowship in recognition of their admission to all the rights, privileges and responsibilities of membership in this Church.

Section 3. Membership Standing. A member is in good standing when the member regularly attends the services of this Church, gives systematically for its support and benevolences and participates and shares in its organized work and outreach.

ARTICLE VIII. -ELECTIONS

E. Regular Members: Voting membership is opened to anyone under the provision Article V of this constitution.

Section 4. Rights of Membership. Members in good standing may act and vote on business matters of the Church. Members eighteen (18) and over can vote in all matters before the Church.

Section 5. Personal Disputes. Members agree, should a personal dispute arise, to resolve the matter in a biblically based Christian process according to I Corinthians 6:1-4. If such matters cannot be resolved, members also agree to submit the matter to their assigned Deacons and be bound by the Deacon's decision.

ARTICLE VII – Board(s) The work of the church shall be administered through boards and taskforces.

Original is black. Proposed revisions are in red. Deletions are in blue and highlighted.

Where there is a person or a group of members who do not feel that their voice is being heard on the diaconate board, such persons or group may address the Pastor regarding the same. If not satisfied, petition the Board directly for a hearing on the matter. Board decision is final.

Section 6. Members Recourse. Members with a legitimate concern or question should address their concerns with their sheepfold leader or Chairperson of the Diaconate Board. Such persons or group may also address the Pastor regarding the same.

[Rationale: Outlines responsibilities and rights of membership]

ARTICLE II. OFFICERS

The pastor shall preach the Gospel, be chief executive officer of the church, administer, with assistance from the diaconate board, the ordinances, watch over the membership, have in his charge the spiritual welfare of the congregation and the stated services of public worship. He shall coordinate the work of the diaconate board, preside over meetings and be an ex-officio member of all recognized task forces in the church. (of Board and Church)

Section 1. Pastor. The Pastor shall be the leader of the Church in all of its activities and shall preach the gospel, administer the ordinances of the Lord's Supper and Baptism, watch over the membership, promote spiritual interest in the Church, have charge of the stated services of public worship, and direct the spiritual welfare of the Church. The Pastor shall serve in an ex-officio capacity as advisor to all boards, committees, and ministries of the Church. The Pastor is to serve as administrative officer, to have responsibility over all affairs of the Church. The Pastor shall be the Moderator and may preside at all business meetings of the Church except when pertinent matters related directly to Pastor dictates otherwise or when matters related to the Pastor's status or employment are of concern. The Chairman of the Diaconate Board or his designee will preside over the business meeting when the subject pertains to the Pastor's status or employment. The Pastor shall perform annual performance evaluations of the Church Administrator, the Minister of Music, the Sexton and the Chief of Security.

[Rationale: States the duties of the Pastor.]

Section 2. Assistant Pastor. The Assistant Pastor shall assist the Pastor in all areas of the Church, make hospital visits, assist the Pastor in coordinating pastoral care, maintain communications with the congregation, assist in worship services and be the key point of contact for Church ministries. He shall also promote relationship development and discipleship, attend most Church functions and activities and stand in for the Pastor as necessary. He should work regularly with pastoral and lay staff and key volunteer leaders to integrate opportunities for ministries and carry out duties as assigned by the Pastor.

[Rationale: States the duties of the Assistant Pastor.]

Section 3. Clerk/Secretary. The clerk shall take minutes and keep a fair and complete record of all proceedings of the Church at its Business and Executive Council meetings; have charge of all those records and make announcements of significant Church events and activities during both Church services. Upon leaving office, all documents and records shall be delivered to the successor in office on the oath of the preceding secretary.

[Rationale: States the duties of the secretary including legal requirements.]

Original is black. Proposed revisions are in red. Deletions are in blue and highlighted.

Section 4. Treasurer. The Treasurer shall be the custodian of all monies of the Church and shall prepare checks as authorized by the Church. All checks will require two authorized signatures. The Treasurer shall keep a true and itemized record of accounts and shall make a monthly, quarterly and annual full written report to the Church. The Treasurer's report shall be audited annually by an auditing committee, appointed by the Trustee Board. Triennially, an audit shall be conducted by a Certified Public Accountant.

The Treasurer shall function at the direction of the Trustee Board Chair on all financial matters concerning Alpha Baptist Church. The Treasurer shall utilize generally accepted accounting practices.

The Treasurer should be a member of Alpha Baptist Church in good standing for at least one year. When there is no qualified member available, the Church shall consider non-members. Upon leaving office, all of the books, accounts, vouchers and documents in the hands of the Treasurer belonging to the Church shall be delivered to the successor in office.

[Rationale: States the duties of the Treasurer including legal requirements.]

ARTICLE VII – Board(s) The work of the church shall be administered through boards and taskforces.

This board shall, through the pastor, coordinate and administer the work and ministry of the church including the development of church programs and long range planning. It shall approve all plans and programs of the task force and, where necessary, present the same to the church.

It shall be the only official board in the church. All persons in the membership shall be represented on this board through their task force which is required for continued active membership in the church on a voting basis. (All other groups shall be known as Task Forces.)

Section 5. Deacons.

- A. Deacons are officially recognized servants in the Church (Acts 6:1-7) The primary duty of the Deacon is to exercise ministry and to care for the sick and needy among the membership, prepare and distribute the elements of The Lord's Supper; cooperate with and assist the Pastor, as he may require; care for the outward needs of the Pastor and membership; encourage new members to complete the New Members Class in coordination with class coordinators, assist the spiritual unity and growth of the flock, be aware of and contact absent sheepfold members, promote fellowship and service among members, welcome strangers and visitors at Church services, promote Christian instructions and ministry to the Church membership, and when appropriate assist the Pastor and other ministers in advancing the spiritual welfare of the Church.

[Rationale: States the role and duties of Deacons.]

ARTICLE IX – Meetings

Diaconate Board: The diaconate board shall meet monthly and at the call of the pastor.

- B. The Diaconate Board shall meet monthly on the second Saturday of the month and at the call of the Chairman of the Board and/or the Pastor. One-half of the membership, plus one shall constitute a quorum.

ARTICLE X –Quorum

A. Diaconate Board – One-half of membership, plus one.

C. Members absent from three (3) consecutive meetings without a just cause or proper notification may be dismissed from the Board by mutual consent of the Board members. A member unwilling to participate in the responsibilities of the Board may be dismissed from the Board by mutual consent of the members of the Board.

D. Families will be equally divided among Deacons. As the need arises, additional Deacons may be ordained upon the recommendation from the Pastor, Diaconate Board and Church vote.

[Rationale: States frequency of meetings, expectations of Deacons, consequences of non-participation, and sheepfold size.]

ARTICLE VIII –ELECTIONS

Deacons in Training. Selected by pastor.

E. **Deacons in Training.** Nominees must be in good standing for at least two (2) years, meet the scriptural qualifications in I Timothy 3:8-13, and concur with the doctrinal positions and directional goals of the Church and pastoral staff. Previously ordained Deacons must be in good standing for one (1) year. As the need arises, members of the Church will have the opportunity to nominate individuals from the membership to serve as Deacons. Nominees will be evaluated by the Diaconate Board and Pastor who will then recommend qualified candidates to the membership. Appointment to the Diaconate Board will be affirmed by a two-thirds (2/3) vote of members present and voting at a business meeting.

F. The Diaconate Board makes recommendations of new Deacons. Diaconate Board members receive the names of nominees from Church members and also submits the names of individuals to be considered as new members to the Diaconate Board Chair. The names of nominees are vetted during a meeting with the Pastor and Board members to insure that the person is in study and possesses the positive feedback which would be beneficial to the Diaconate Board. The vote shall be taken on the name of each individual, one by one, from the Diaconate Board members. The names of the individuals who received the highest vote totals, who made the cutoff, which was predetermined, would be considered as new Deacons. Those individuals would be contacted by the Diaconate Board Chair to find out if they would consider being a Deacon. The names of interested persons would be voted on by the Diaconate Board, who would subsequently make its recommendations to the congregation for its approval and vote.

[Rationale: Establishes criteria for and evaluation of Deacons in training, the procedure for selection and vote required to elect.]

Section 6. Trustees.

- A. The Trustees shall determine the use of the Church building by outside groups, and shall determine suitable charges to be made for such use. It shall secure the services of a Sexton and/or Assistant Sexton to maintain the building at such a salary as is authorized by the Church and supervise these services.
- B. Trustee shall transact all legal matters on behalf of the Church, which includes all contracts, purchases and services. All such documents shall be signed for on behalf of the Church by the Trustee Board Chair or a person designated by the Trustee Chair. The trustees shall have the responsibility of recommending all salaried, non-salaried and contracted individuals for services rendered to the Church. The Trustees shall be responsible for negotiating contracts between the Church and outside parties. All deeds, contracts and other instruments shall be executed in the name of the Church.
- C. Trustees must prepare and present a yearly budget at the Annual Church Business Meeting. The Trustee Board will review with the other Boards and approved Ministries their planned budgetary expenditures for the upcoming year and incorporate them into the budget.
- D. Any action regarding disposition of Church real estate shall be presented to the congregation.
- E. The Board may appoint temporary committees as the Board warrants. The Board shall hold monthly meetings. A member absent from three (3) consecutive meetings without a just cause or proper notification may be dismissed from the Board by mutual consent of the Board members. A special meeting of the Trustee Board may be called at any time by the Pastor, the Chairperson and any three members of the Board. One-half of the trustee Board plus one shall constitute a Trustee quorum. A member unwilling to participate in the responsibilities of the Board may be dismissed from the Board by mutual consent of the Board.
- F. The Trustee Chair will present financial statements and recommendations on significant events during the monthly Diaconate Board meeting.
- G. The Trustee Board makes recommendations of new Trustees. Trustee Board members submit the names of individuals to be considered as new members to the Trustee Board Chair. The names of nominees are vetted during a meeting with the Pastor and Board members to insure that the person is in study and possess the positive feedback which would be beneficial to the Trustee Board. Trustee Board members shall vote on the name of each individual one by one. The names of the individuals who receive the highest vote totals after meeting a predetermined cutoff would be considered Trustee Board nominee. Those individuals shall be contacted by the Trustee Board Chair to find out if they would consider being a member of the Trustee Board. The individual will be asked to agree to submit the results of a credit check to the Trustee Board. The minimum acceptable credit score is 650. The names of interested persons would be voted on by the Trustee Board, who would subsequently make recommendations to the Diaconate Board. The Diaconate Board would subsequently make its recommendations to the congregation for its approval and vote.

[Rationale: Sets forth duties of Trustees, meeting requirements, officers and terms of office.]

ARTICLE III. JOINT BOARD

Section 1. The governing leadership body shall be The Joint Board. The Joint Board shall include the Pastor, members of the Diaconate Board and members of the Trustee Board.

*[Rationale: Current By-Laws are based on the single Board Church. Alpha currently operates as a multi-board Church. This addition corrects the organizational structure to support the current Board structure by providing a means and forum for effective and efficient communications and co-ordination between all officers, key leaders and members concerning all aspects of Church life. It also provides the ability for business to be conducted on behalf of the members between quarterly and special meetings. It is supported by: **The New Hiscox Guide for Baptist Churches-** (Goodwin, 1995) “An effective church organizational structure should accomplish its programs and missions in a cooperative manner by providing effective coordination for its officers, boards and committees. Such coordination should provide effective stewardship of the resources of leadership, energies, and commitments of the church... assist the Pastor by encouraging effective communications between all aspects of Church life, coordinating the priorities and work of the groups and organizations represented and developing cooperative arrangements where it may assist the accomplishment of goals...help in leading the Church to envision and develop long-range plans then monitoring such plans”. **Deacons in Today’s Black Baptist Church-** (Mickle, 2010) “Deacons should have some involvement in shaping the policies of the congregation. This usually occurs when deacons serve with other congregational leaders in the context of a joint board, general board, or executive committee.” Another reference was the **Transformation Ministries-Local Church Multi Board By-Laws Outline.**]*

Section 2. The Joint Board shall assist the Pastor by encouraging effective communications between all aspects of Church life, coordinating the priorities and work of the groups and ministries represented, reviewing items to come before the congregation for approval and making recommendations regarding the effectiveness or priority of such recommendations.

[Rationale: Section 2. Describes general duties of the Joint Board.]

Section 3. The Joint Board shall control, formulate policy for and administer the affairs during the periods between the meetings of the Church. It will also function as Church governance on behalf of the congregation between meetings of the congregation. It will also represent the congregation on any matter affecting the Church as a whole, on overall policies or its general welfare. It is subject to any restrictions imposed by action of the congregation or by the Church Constitution. The Joint Board oversees all aspects of the corporate life of the Church on behalf of the congregation. It will continuously examine the total program of the Church, including the coordination of the activities and the goals of the Church Boards. The Joint Board will review and resolve any questions concerning the Pastor’s duties and responsibilities.

[Rationale: Section 3. Establishes authority of the Joint Board.]

Section 4. Meetings. The Joint Board shall meet on a monthly basis or as required. The Pastor or any three members of the Joint Board may call a special meeting of the Board at any time. All Board meetings are open to the congregation for observation and input, except when it is in Executive Session. Voting is restricted to Board members.

Section 5. Quorum. A majority of the Joint Board membership shall constitute a voting quorum.

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Section 6. Any member of the Church may appeal, in person or in writing, the action or decision of the Pastor, Assistant Pastor, any officer, Deacon or committees to the Joint Board. The decision of the Board is final.

[Rationale: Section 6. Establishes procedure for members to appeal decisions.]

Section 7. Members and Ministries may also provide input to the Board by written submissions or through their assigned Deacon Ministry Liaison, sheepfold leader or the Pastor.

ARTICLE IV. PROFESSIONAL STAFF

The employment of professional staff shall be the responsibility of the Trustee Board. All employees shall be evaluated annually.

Section 1. Office Manager. The Office Manager will coordinate and assist all ministries as well as provide personal assistance to the Pastor. The Manager will also perform office duties, including, but not limited to typing, answering phone calls, maintaining the Church calendar, sorting the Church's mail, screening of visitors to see the Pastor and preparing the weekly Church Bulletin. The Manager will also assist the Pastor in the preparation of weddings, funerals, baptisms and special events. The Office Manager will write Letters of Dismissal as required and handle the Church's correspondence. Upon leaving office, all documents and records shall be delivered to the successor in office on the oath of the preceding Manager.

Section 2. Minister of Music. The Minister of Music is responsible to the Church for cultivating the worship life of the Church body by providing an environment of worship through music. The Minister will also lead in enlisting and training worship and music ministry volunteers. The Minister of Music will assist the Pastor in planning all worship services, arrange and provide music for weddings, funerals, special projects, ministries and other Church related activities. The Minister of Music prepares an annual music ministry budget for approval and administers the approved budget.

Section 3. Security Personnel. The Security Guard, one of which shall be designated as the Chief of Security, is responsible for monitoring the activities of the Church including the flow of individuals in and out of the Church; periodically checking on the identification of persons entering the building that appear to be not interested in Church activities taking place and/or participating in questionable conduct or actions; provide assistance when feasible; reporting all matters which involve safety and/or security to the appropriate authorities and will contact emergency personnel as necessary based upon the conditions and situation; detect and report suspicious activities to appropriate personnel; and maintain a log of activities as directed; remain alert to detect and monitor unusual activities that may take place within the confines of the Church. The Guard will insure all buildings and related doors are secured at the end of the day's activities.

Security personnel must be a member of Alpha Baptist Church in good standing and must successfully complete a Background Investigation.

Section 4. Sexton. The Sexton supports and supervises all areas of building maintenance and custodial care. Responsibilities include in part: working directly with office staff for set up of Church events and building operations; regular inspection of Church premises for areas of need or concern; supporting ministry goals through the application of expertise primarily in areas including custodial care and maintenance, building operations, and mechanical systems; contacting applicable outside vendors to facilitate repairs, responding to office and ministry service and maintenance requests; supervision of other building employees to ensure proper set up and tear down for Church events, which may include some evenings and weekend hours; coordination of

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the maintenance of plumbing, electrical and mechanical systems including minor repairs and the coordination of volunteer or outside vendors for major repairs or replacements.

The Sexton takes directions from and reports to the Pastor. In addition, this position also reports to the Trustee Board Chair regarding buildings and grounds, mechanical systems and related items.

The Sexton must be a member of Alpha Baptist Church in good standing and must successfully complete a Background Investigation.

Section 5. Assistant Sexton. The Assistant Sexton will support the Sexton in all areas of building maintenance and custodial care. The individual is responsible for maintaining the Church building in good physical condition with a clean and neat appearance. The Assistant Sexton assists the Sexton in cleaning and preparing the Sanctuary for worship services and events. Regular inspection of the Church premises for possible need or concern are carried out by this person. The Assistant Sexton performs all types of custodial duties, such as cleaning and stocking restrooms, dusting and polishing furniture, vacuuming and replacing light bulbs. This person also handles minor repairs as deemed necessary.

Section 6. Church Office Assistant. The Church Office Assistant is responsible for providing added secretarial/administrative support to the Senior Pastor, Pastoral staff and the various ministries. This individual normally works in conjunction with the Church Office Manager. The Assistant helps schedule ministry meetings, sets up counseling sessions as directed and schedules Church events, organizes, creates and distributes meeting agendas, processes incoming mail and creates, prints and maintains the Sunday bulletin as directed. The Office Assistant types and prepares correspondence, prepares forms and works with the Pastoral staff, Trustees and other Church personnel as the need arises. This individual orders and maintains office supplies, equipment and its inventory. The Office Assistant works with appropriate ministry personnel on projects and assignments as directed. Scheduling and coordination with the Sexton is accomplished to insure reception, office areas, the Sanctuary and Fellowship Hall are maintained in a neat, clean and orderly manner.

Section 7. Treasurer. The Treasurer is responsible for the receipt, accounting and disbursement of Church funds within the policies established by the Church for adequate financial control. The Treasurer works with the Trustee Board in the proper handling of Church finances and maintains the accounting system which helps provide adequate internal controls to protect all funds. The Treasurer is responsible for the weekly pick up of bank deposits and reconciles bank statements to accounts and makes appropriate corrections. Employee payroll records and files are established and maintained by this individual. This person checks and audits timekeeping records for compliance with established standards. The Treasurer assists in the financial planning of the annual Church budget. This individual shall keep a true and itemized record of accounts and shall make a monthly, quarterly and annual full written report to the Church.

Section 8. Drummer. The Drummer works under the supervision of the Minister of Music and is responsible for accompanying other musicians to enhance the worship experience to the glory of God. The Drummer works as part of the musician team and must work effectively with the other musicians. The Drummer is responsible for keeping the beat steady and consistent during musical selections. This person basically sets the tone for the other musicians.

Section 9. Assistant Minister of Music. The Assistant Minister of Music will assist in the planning and

development of all aspects of the music ministry. This individual develops, nurtures and directs designated choirs and music. The assistant conducts scheduled rehearsals, manages choir personnel issues and helps coordinate music and songs with the Minister of Music. This person directs and coordinates music and choral selections for special events, which take place at the Church. The Assistant Minister of Music works with the Minister of Music to plan appropriate music for holiday services. This individual will maintain a practice regiment to enhance vocal and instrumental skills. The person will also ensure the Church's musical instruments are properly maintained and repaired as may become necessary and serves as the backup to the Minister of Music during his/her absence.

[Rationale: States duties for Church Office Manager, Church Office Assistant, Chief of Security, Security Guards, Minister of Music, Assistant Minister of Music, Drummer, Treasurer, Sexton and Assistant Sexton,]

ARTICLE V. LICENSING AND ORDINATION

Section 1. Licensing and Ordination of Candidates for the Gospel Ministry

Any member who feels they have been called to ministry shall approach the Pastor and inquire about the procedure to become a licensed minister.

Upon the request for local Church ordination of any of its licensed ministers, the Pastor shall call a Council for examining qualified candidates. Upon approval by the Council, the candidate to be ordained shall require church approval and thereafter, the candidate, in consultation with the Pastor, shall set the date for the ordination service.

Upon the request of any of its licensed ministers for American Baptist Church ordination, the Pastor, in cooperation with the Ministers' Council of the American Baptist Churches of New Jersey, shall call a council for examining qualified candidates. Upon the approval by the Ministers' Council, the request of the candidate to be ordained in The American Baptist Church shall require Church approval, and thereafter, the candidate, in consultation with the Pastor, shall set the date for the ordination service.

[Rationale: Outlines steps to be taken by members who wish to become licensed ministers; and steps to be taken by licensed ministers who wish to become ordained by Alpha Baptist Church or also by American Baptist Churches-USA.]

ARTICLE VI. STANDING COMMITTEES

Section 1. Internal Auditing Committee: the Trustee Board shall appoint the Auditing Committee

Duties: To conduct an annual audit of the Unified Budget and financial transactions of the Church's activities. To provide a written report of the audit findings of the committee.

[Rationale: Section 2. Establishes auditing committees, associated duties and responsibilities.]

ARTICLE VII. OPTIONAL COMMITTEES

Committees shall be appointed as the need arises. Committees may include but are not limited to:

Section 1. Pastoral Search Committee: The Pastoral Search Committee shall be formed at the request of the Diaconate Board. The Diaconate Board shall provide two (2) members, one of which must be its Chairman, who will preside over this committee. The Trustee Board will provide two (2) members and the Search Committee shall appoint three (3) members from the Church at large.

Duties: To select a slate of no more than five candidates for the position of Pastor, to present candidates to the membership of the Church for consideration and calling to the Ministry, to seek guidance and assistance from the American Baptist Churches of New Jersey and to issue periodic progress reports to the congregation.

Section 2. Constitution and By-Laws Committee: The committee shall be a volunteer committee supported by each board and the general congregation, which has a minimum of five volunteers. The Constitution and By-Laws Committee shall report to the Diaconate Board.

[Rationale: Establishes committees which may be appointed as the need arises and outlines their duties]

ARTICLE VIII. MEETINGS

Section 1. Worship Services

The Church shall maintain services for the public worship of God each Sunday morning, and on Wednesdays for Bible Study and Prayer Meeting. The Ordinance of the Lord's Supper shall be observed on the first Sunday of the month and on special occasions that are appropriate. Other services of worship may be held when necessary and deemed desirable by the Congregation, Pastor and/or Diaconate Board.

Section 2. Annual Business Meeting

The first quarterly meeting of the calendar year shall be designated as the Annual Business Meeting. The Pastor shall determine the date. The Treasurer must submit a written report covering the previous year's financial activities and the proposed Operating Budget, which will be submitted for approval by the members. Annual elections will be approved at this meeting.

[Rationale: State Statute requires an annual corporate meeting.]

ARTICLE IX – Meetings

Church Membership: Quarterly meetings terminated in 1984.

Section 3. Regular Business Meetings

The Church shall meet quarterly and at the call of the Pastor providing that, any special meeting is announced two consecutive weeks from the pulpit. At least one quarterly meeting must be designated as the Annual Meeting of the Church. All votes on matters pertaining to that which is material before the law of New Jersey must be cast by persons members 18 years old and older.

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Section 4. Special Business Meetings

A Special Church Business meeting may be called at any time during the year by the Pastor, the Diaconate Board, and the Trustee Board with two weeks' notice. Any meeting where the business to be transacted is the calling or dismissal of a Pastor must be announced in the Church bulletin and from the pulpit two consecutive Sundays preceding the date of the meeting.

[Rationale: Details procedure for calling special meetings.]

ARTICLE IX – Meetings

Task Forces: Task forces may meet as frequently as they desire, at least once monthly in order to make the required monthly report to the diaconate board.

Sub-Task Force Groups: Task forces may be subdivided as need arises and such groups may meet at will, but make regular reports to task force as required. Meetings of the Church and Diaconate Board may preempt all other meetings.

Section 5. Quorum

ARTICLE X – Quorum

E. Church – Twenty-one members

F. Task Forces – No quorum required.

Seven percent and one-half percent (7.5%) of the active members eligible to vote shall constitute a quorum at all Business meetings. A majority of those present and entitled to vote shall determine all questions except when the business to be transacted is the calling or dismissal of a Pastor, in which case a two-thirds (2/3) vote shall be required.

[Rationale: Section 5. Updates number of members constituting a quorum based on total membership, and the number of affirmative votes required to determine an issue.]

Section 6. Rules of Order

Generally accepted rules of parliamentary procedure shall be observed during all meetings of the Church, task forces, and sun-groups Church ministries, and committees. We shall use the current edition of Roberts Rules of Order Newly Revised as the parliamentary guide for the transaction of business. In all situations good sense and the Spirit of Jesus Christ will dictate ceremonies and observations. All ministry leaders shall receive training in parliamentary procedures.

[Rationale: Section 6. Establishes rules to be followed during meetings. Adds requirement that all ministry leaders receive training in parliamentary procedures.]

ARTICLE XVI – Voting

Voting shall be by yes or no or show of hands.

Section 7. Voting. Except for routine matters, all voting of the Church shall be by ballot or a show of hands.

[Rationale: Section 7. Provides a more accurate method of counting votes by removing voice votes and including voting by ballot.]

ARTICLE IX. ELECTIONS

Section 1. Each ministry, consistent with Constitution Article IX, Section 2., excluding those led by coordinators, shall during the first week in November make arrangements with the Pastor or his designee to attend the ministry's meeting for the election of officers.

A. The current President of the ministry shall conduct the election. Consent to serve must be given by all nominees.

B. The names of the officers elected and the position to which elected shall be transmitted to the administrative office prior to December 31st.

C. All elected officers must be approved by the membership during the Annual Meeting in January and if approved shall thereafter assume the duties of the office to which elected.

D. A majority vote of members present and voting at the Annual Meeting is required for approval unless specified otherwise in these Bylaws.

[Rationale: Establishes procedure for elections.]

ARTICLE X. CHURCH DISCIPLINE AND RECONCILIATION

Rationale: Discipline guidelines should provide (1) the steps for approaching an offending party with the goal of restoration; (2) a hearing before a discipline and restoration committee with a recommendation to the Church members which provides an ongoing opportunity for repentance and restoration; and (3) in the case of members who refuse to repent, a process for removal from Church membership. Removal must come before the Church. Offenses are inevitable and it is important that they be settled privately according to the Biblical pattern. Members are to seek reconciliation in a spirit of love when offenses occur, whether noticed by the offender or the offended person. No report of a derogatory nature against any member is to be communicated to others or before the Church in a business meeting. In every case of Church Discipline, the member who is being charged with a moral, doctrinal or personal offense will be notified of the time in which the Church will judge their case and be given reasonable opportunity to defend themselves against the charges being brought against them.

Section 1: Moral Offenses. For example, theft, drunkenness, deception, adultery, misrepresentation and inappropriate repetitive behavior. Prior to exercising Church Discipline, the Pastor and selected Deacons shall seek to restore the offending member through his repentance and confession of sin in harmony with the spirit of Galatians 6:1. If the offending member refuses to acknowledge his sin to the Church's delegate and seek the Church's forgiveness, the Church will after all other avenues have been exhausted, discipline him by removing his Church membership.

Section 2: Doctrinal Offenses. After all other avenues have been exhausted, the Church will through the Pastor and selected Deacons give the offending member two admonitions or warnings to abandon his divisive repetitive behavior, which is contrary to our Church doctrine and teachings. If after the second admonition, the member refuses to repent of his harmful and divisive behavior, the Church will remove his membership in accordance with Romans 16:17-18 and Titus 3:10.

Section 3: Personal Offenses. When a member of the Church commits a personal offense against another member of the Church, the Pastor and Deacons will not become involved in settling the issue between the members until after the steps as written in Matthew 18:15-17 are followed:

(a) The offended member must first go alone, if feasible, to the offending member and state the offense. If the offending member sees his fault and seeks forgiveness, the offended member is to forgive him, and the matter closed.

(b) If the offending member refuses to admit his fault, then the offended member is to seek out two or three other members of the Church, who know nothing about the offense, to witness his attempt to convince the offending member of his fault and to encourage the offending member to repent of his wrong. If the offending member sees his fault and seeks forgiveness, then the offended member is to forgive him and the matter ended.

(c) If the offending member refuses to admit his fault, then the offended member and the witnessing members are to bring the issue before the Diaconate Board so that the entire Board may hear the matter. If the Board judges the offending member to be at fault and admonishes him to repent and the offending member repents, the offended member and all other members are to forgive him and the matter ended. If, however, the offending member refuses to admit his wrong and repent of it, the Church is then to remove his membership.

[Rationale: Establishes procedure for disciplining members based on the type of offense.]

ARTICLE XI. AMENDMENTS

These By-Laws may be amended at any regular or special business meeting of the Church by a two-thirds (2/3) affirmative vote of the members present and qualified to vote, provided a quorum is present, after first giving notice to the Church by announcing the proposed amendments from the pulpit for two consecutive Sundays and posting the proposed amendments on the Church website for two (2) weeks. Copies of the amendments will be available for two consecutive Church services as may be necessary.

[Rationale: Establishes procedure and notice requirement for amending the By-Laws.]

Ratified: _____ Date

Article I.

Article II.

Article III. Etc.

President _____

Clerk _____