

CONSTITUTION

Preamble

We the Christian members of Deaf Liberty Baptist Church do ordain and establish this Constitution for the Deaf Liberty Baptist Church in order to form a church for the deaf, secure the blessings of liberty to ourselves and our posterity through Jesus Christ, and to serve and worship Him according to II Corinthians 3:17. Our goal is to promote the prosperity of the abilities bestowed by God through Jesus Christ for ourselves and our posterity to do the works of God. The authority in all matters of faith and practice, the doctrinal foundation for Deaf Liberty Baptist Church is found only in the Word of God. This Constitution and the following statement of faith serve to establish our understanding of those doctrines as found in the Word of God.

Article 1 – Name

Section 1 - Name

This organization is presently known as the Deaf Liberty Baptist Church of Kansas City, Jackson County, Missouri.

Section 2 - Organization

The church was organized on January 20, 1980, at Whatsoever Circle Community House at 1201 Ewing in Kansas City, Missouri. It was incorporated in the State of Missouri on May 23, 1980.

Article 2 – Purpose

Section 1 - Mission

The objective purpose of this church body will be to accomplish the divine mission of a New Testament Church and to carry out the Great Commission as stated in Matthew 28:19-20. The church will be non-political and exclusively religious in character. The purpose includes preaching the Word of God to the intent of making disciples of Jesus Christ.

Section 2 - Accomplishment of Mission

In order to accomplish this purpose, the church will open a place of worship to learn God's Word and fellowship with other Christians in prayer and worship. Also, the church will assemble together to exhort and comfort one another in spiritual growth. To accomplish this purpose, the church may own or lease buildings, properties, equipment, vehicles, supplies and materials. If the Lord should lead this church to form additional ministries, then all of these ministries will support and further the stated purpose of the church.

Article 3 – Membership

Section 1 - Membership

A. Criteria shall be as follows: any person giving evidence of repentance from sin, faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, and in obedience to the Lord's command submitting to the ordinance of baptism by immersion under the authority of this church, may be received as member by the vote of the congregation then present.

B. A person whom has been baptized and has been recommended by their former church may be received by a vote of the congregation then present.

Section 2 – Discipline, termination and dismissal

A. Church Discipline is described in Matthew 18:15-17 and I Corinthians 5:1-13. This process is to have three steps as outlined in those passages. The first step should consist of individuals working to solve problems between themselves. If this is not successful, the second step is for one or more other individuals to be involved in the process. The third and final step is for the problem to be presented to the pastor and leadership of the church. If the pastor and leadership of the church determine that an individual or individuals are at fault and they refuse to make amends, they may be dismissed from the church membership. That person(s) may confess their wrongs and seek restoration upon confession and amends being made. Galatians 6:1 should be noted in this instance, as Church discipline is designed not to judge or punish but to restore fellowship and righteousness.

B. Church membership may be terminated due to inactivity. This inactivity will be viewed as refusal to be in faithful attendance and/or failure to contribute to the support of the church for a period of not less than six months.

C. Church membership may also be terminated by proper formal written request from a church of like faith and practice.

D. Church membership may also be terminated due to any act that brings reproach to the church or any one of the members as determined by the pastor and the board of deacons. The reasons may include the following:

1. Unchristian conduct in consistent violation of the church statement of faith.
2. Holding or teaching doctrines subversive of those held and preached by this church
3. Calling, holding or participating in secret or unauthorized meetings with another member or other members of the church.
4. Giving expression to sentiments likely to cause division or dissension in the membership

5. Active opposition to the policy or leadership of the church.

Article 4 – Church Officers

Section 1 - Pastor

Definition – Bishop (overseer), Elder (man who rules), and Pastor (shepherd) are all words which are used within the construct of the Bible and which determine the responsibilities of the Pastor.

Qualification – The qualification for a pastor is found in 1 Timothy 3:1-7 and Titus 1:5-9. The position of pastor at Deaf Liberty Baptist Church is a position which should be filled by man, above reproach, the husband of one wife, not quick-tempered, self-controlled, serious, of good behavior, hospitable, a capable teacher, not a drinker, not violent, not greedy, gentle, not quarrelsome, not covetous, just, holy, not arrogant, one who rules his own house well, not a recent convert, and firm in his faith and sound in his understanding of the Scripture.

Duties – According to 1 Timothy 4:12-16, 2 Timothy 4:5, and 1 Peter 5:1-3, the pastor shows the proof of his ministry and performs the example to his flock. He preaches and teaches the Word of God and reproveth, rebukes and exhorts the flock according to the Bible.

Duration – The pastor is called for an indefinite period of time.

Authority – The pastor shall accept and have full responsibility before God for every church member, activity, work, and function of this church. He shall have the sole responsibility of necessary appointments, and the hiring and dismissing of all paid staff members. He shall also be the moderator of all business meetings. In his absence, a moderator may be appointed. Without the presence of the pastor or his appointed moderator, any decision or agreement will be null and void. The pastor will also be an ex-officio member of all boards, groups and committees, and may call such groups together at any time. The pastor may also call the church together at any time for special business. The pastor may appoint a committee head to report to him.

Termination –

1. The pastor's resignation

The termination of the pastor's duties will be given with a written resignation by the pastor with at least a thirty (30) day notice.

2. The dismissal of the pastor

In the event of a negative report, or clear misconduct of the pastor, the leadership team will meet to discuss the course of action to be taken. Clear Scriptural principles should be followed to protect the integrity of all parties. (1 Tim. 3:1-7, 1 Tim. 5:1, 17-19, Titus 1:7-9) The leadership team is responsible to dismiss the pastor if he has clearly disqualified himself from his office.

3. The pastor being determined to be unfit

Should the pastor's health or mental status fail, the leadership team may meet to discuss further action. If the pastor is not able to fulfill his duties, the leadership team should dismiss him from his office.

Pastor's Call –

Deacons –

Upon the vacancy of the Pastoral office, the deacons of the church will form a pulpit committee. This committee will be comprised of 2 deacons and 2 church members. The 2 church members will be chosen and voted upon by the church members. Deacons will be responsible to care for church business and divide responsibilities accordingly. Assistant Pastors may be called upon to preach but power and authority will be held by the deacons during the process. A schedule should be made for clarity.

Pulpit Committee –

Contact churches that are similar to ours to ask for names of prospective candidates. PRAY together and determine that the committee will be led by God and that it will not be divided or compromised by outside parties. If a member of our church is willing and able to pastor the church, he should make his intentions known to the deacons and should be excluded from the pulpit committee. He should be treated like any other candidate and the pulpit committee should not feel obligated to but should feel free to consider him as a prospect. When the pulpit committee determines a reasonable candidate he may be presented to the church. The church will then vote upon that candidate. A simple ballot of approve or disapprove shall be provided to the church within one week of the candidates visit. Two-thirds (2/3) vote is required to instate the new pastor. The associate and assistant pastors must be informed of the new pastor's instatement and the new pastor shall have the prerogative to hire his own associates or assistants.

Section 2 - Deacons

- Definition – Deacon means “servant” and should be men selected to serve in capacities as designated by the Pastor. (Acts 6:3)
- Qualification – The qualifications for a deacon can be found in Acts 6:1-7 and 1 Timothy 3:8-13. A deacon should be respectful, not hypocritical, not a drinker, not greedy, committed to the faith, a proven servant, blameless, the husband of one wife, one who rules his own house well. His wife (if he has one) should be respectful,, not a slanderer, temperate, and faithful in all things.
- Responsibilities – Deacons should serve the body in any capacity to aid the Pastor. These responsibilities include visiting, oversight of benevolent needs, and maintenance of business that pertains to the plant and properties of the church.
- Nomination – Nominations shall be named by the members of the church by secret ballot. The pastor and deacons shall review the names nominated as to their qualifications and desire to serve.
- Selection – A ballot shall be established by the Pastor and Deacons and submitted to the church. A simple majority of members present and voting is sufficient for passage. Each deacon serves under the authority and leadership of the Pastor. Nomination and Selection shall take place every fall. The pastor will determine one of the deacons to be the head deacon.
- Number – The number of deacons will be determined by appropriate men qualifying and will be determined by the pastor. As the church grows and the needs increase, so too, the number of Deacons should increase.
- Duration – A Deacon will serve for one year and by good service may again be installed.
- Termination – A Deacon may be relieved of his position by the Pastor with the approval of the deacon board for activity unbecoming of the position.

Section 3 – Other Officers

The Bible reflects two offices as being designated for the spiritual organization of the church. In addition to these two offices, the offices of Secretary and Treasurer shall also be filled in order to accommodate the legal relationships outside the church. The Secretary and Treasurer shall be nominated by the Pastor and approved by a two-thirds (2/3) majority of the members present. The treasurer will act as head of the finance

committee. These officers may be relieved of their positions by failure to discharge their duties, failure to comply with proper leadership, removal of church membership, death, or by their own choice to relinquish the position. Treasurer and Secretary Positions may be filled by a deacon, but may not be the head deacon.

Article 5 – Staff Members

Section 1 – Position

Each prospective staff member shall be approved by the leadership team by a majority vote and all positions should be approved by the congregation by a majority vote. A staff member must be a member in good standing or willing to become a member within 30 days after taking up his duties.

Section 2 – Authority

All staff members are under the authority of the Senior Pastor and may be dismissed by the Senior Pastor after consulting with the Leadership Team. A staff member is a paid employee.

Article 6 – Meetings

Section 1 – Worship

There shall be a regular schedule of meetings for the church body to assemble for Bible study, worship, fellowships, etc. As the spiritual leader, the Pastor will preside over all services.

Section 2 – Business meetings

Business meetings shall be conducted at the time the Pastor deems best, preferably at a regularly scheduled church service. All meetings are within the framework of these documents; therefore, all secret meetings are invalid. A quorum of ten members will be required for a business meeting to take place.

Section 3 – Annual Business meeting

Previously called the Antioch conference, this annual business meeting will take place no later than the last day of each January.

Section 4 – Conduct

All business meetings shall be conducted with Christian conduct. Any person exhibiting behavior contrary to these principles will be asked to change such behavior or leave the meeting. Any outburst will not be tolerated for worship or church business.

Section 5 – Moderator

The Pastor should moderate all business meetings. He should appoint a substitute moderator if there is a scheduled meeting in his absence. If the church is at any point without a pastor, the deacons should provide a moderator for business.

Section 6 – Leadership meetings

Leadership meetings will be established by the Pastor. The leadership team will consist of Pastor, assistant pastor(s), deacon(s), secretary, treasurer, and committee heads. Others may be invited or allowed by the pastor, but they will not have a voice nor a vote in such meetings.

Article 7 – Affiliation

Deaf Liberty Baptist Church is and should remain a fundamental, independent Baptist Church. This means independence of affiliation with any group, council, convention, denomination, or any other form of church union. The church may fellowship with other churches but will not enter into any union or association with them that makes their actions binding upon this local church.

Article 8 – Articles of Faith

The Articles of Faith are contained in a separate document known by that name and containing clearly defined statement as to the beliefs and doctrines of this church. No individual can hold any office in this church without being in full agreement with all of the Articles of Faith contained in said document.

Article 9 – Dissolution

In the event of dissolution, the assets of the Deaf Liberty Baptist Church shall be distributed in accordance with a plan of distribution adopted by the Pastor and the Deacons to one or more religious, charitable, or educational organizations which are not for profit and are non-political, and which are engaged in affairs similar to those of Deaf Liberty Baptist Church. This article of the constitution cannot be removed from this constitution and cannot ever be amended or changed.

Article 10 – Amendments

Except for the articles and sections in this constitution which include notations stating that they cannot be amended or changed, this constitution may be amended. Amendments to the constitution may be presented by the Pastor, the Deacons, or by any ten (10) active, in good standing members. Amendments must be submitted in writing to the Pastor and Deacons thirty (30) days before the meeting in which it is to be considered and/or ratified. It must be read from the pulpit on two (2) Sundays

immediately preceding the meeting in which it is to be considered or ratified. Amendments must be ratified by a three-fourths (3/4) vote of the active, in good standing, members present. The vote must be by secret ballot. The ballots must be counted by the deacons or Pastoral appointees together and in full view of the entire voting congregation and recorded immediately as ratified or not unless there is good reason for a recount.

Article 11 – Redrafting of Constitution

This constitution may be redrafted by the Pastor and deacons; however, those items as notated as not being able to be changed or amended must remain in the subsequent drafting of future constitutions. The new drafts of the constitution should be presented to the deacons for approval, then to the Leadership team for approval. With a three-fourths (3/4) approval, the redrafting may be presented to the congregation and voted upon no less than thirty (30) days after. A three-fourths (3/4) ratification by the active, in good standing, members present must be achieved to pass the redrafting of the Constitution. The process should be followed identically to the amendment process.