

BYLAWS

PROVISION CHURCH OF UNION COUNTY, INC

PREAMBLE

For the purpose of preserving and making secure the principles of our faith and to the end that this body may be governed in an orderly manner, consistent with the accepted beliefs of missionary Baptist churches affiliated with the Baptist State Convention of North Carolina, the Southern Baptist Convention, and for the purpose of preserving the liberties inherent in each individual member of the church, and to set forth the relationship of this body to other bodies of the same faith, we do declare and establish these Bylaws.

ARTICLE I – NAME

Section A.

The name of the corporation is Provision Church of Union County, Inc., herein referred to as “the church” and/or “the corporation.”

Section B.

Whenever it is desirable to abbreviate the name of this organization, the name Provision Church shall be considered in every way the legal name of the church corporation.

Section C.

Whenever the word “church” is used in these Bylaws or their amendments or other official action of the church corporation, it shall signify the legal organization of this church as established in the Articles of Incorporation and herein. References to votes of the church shall have reference to a vote of the members of this church corporation.

ARTICLE II – PURPOSE

Section A.

Provision Church is organized for the purpose of providing regular opportunities for public worship, to sustain the ordinances, doctrines, and ethics set forth in the New Testament for the Church of our Lord Jesus Christ, and to do the work committed the Church by Jesus, our Lord and Savior. Every organization and group within the church shall seek to promote the spiritual life and growth of the community and to so exemplify the Spirit of Christ and his teachings that the unsaved may be won to Christ and his Gospel preached everywhere through a world mission program. Anything contrary to this spirit and purpose should be eliminated from within our church.

Section B.

No part of the net earnings of the corporation shall inure to the benefit of or be distributable to its members, trustees, officers, or other private persons, except to pay reasonable compensation for services rendered and to make payments and distributions in furtherance of the purpose as set forth in the Articles.

ARTICLE III – THE CHURCH COVENANT

Section A.

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.

Section B.

As covenant members of Provision Church, we promise to strive to live according to the following biblical imperatives:

- The development and practice of personal and family spiritual disciplines.
- Consistent participation in corporate worship.
- Maintaining a lifestyle that is consistent with Scripture.
- Ongoing accountable relationships with other believers for the purpose of discipleship and mutual growth.
- The preservation of church unity in matters of non-essential beliefs or preferences.
- Submission to the biblical leadership of the church and support of the church's leaders in prayer.
- A willingness to pursue opportunities to serve in and through Provision Church, especially in the use of one's spiritual gifts.
- Active participation in and support of worldwide church planting efforts.
- Giving generously and consistently to the support of the church in a manner that reflects the generosity shown to us in the Gospel.

Section C.

This covenant is a promise to watch over one another in love according to all that the Bible commands; to pray for one another in all circumstances while coming to one another's aid in sin and distress; to rejoice in our mutual salvation and gifts received from God; to love and serve one another, being slow to take offense, always ready to forgive and reconcile, following the example and teachings of Christ our Lord.

ARTICLE IV – GOVERNMENT

Section A.

The government of this church shall be congregational in nature, and the final authority for the operation and management of the affairs of this corporation, spiritual and temporal, shall be vested in the membership of the corporation, which authority shall be exercised in the manner set forth in the Bylaws.

Section B.

This church is an independent, autonomous church with full and final authority to determine solely within itself all matters related to the life of this church including but not limited to its financial affairs, affiliations, ownership and uses of property, and pastoral leadership.

Section C. Membership

1. Covenant Membership

a. The membership of this church shall be composed of persons who have given testimony of regeneration, who have been baptized by immersion as believers in Jesus Christ, having completed a new members class, who agree with the Articles of Incorporation and Bylaws of this church, and who have expressed the desire to enter into and live according to the Church Covenant of Provision Church.

b. Members (immersed) of other churches of like faith and order may be received by the church upon a letter of transfer from that church and upon completion of Provision Church membership requirements.

c. Anyone who has once been a member of a church of like faith and order, and in consequence of peculiar circumstances has no regular letter of transfer, may be received into our fellowship upon a statement satisfactory to the church and completion of Provision Church membership requirements.

d. Letters of transfer shall be granted to any church of like faith and order for members in good standing. When letters are granted, membership in this church will be terminated.

e. When a member of this church joins a church of different faith and order, membership in this church will be terminated.

f. In considering the rights involved, members and members only may act and vote in the transactions of the church. A member for voting purposes will be an individual aged 13 or older and whose name appears on the membership role.

2. Termination of Membership: Membership may be terminated in any of the following ways:

a. Personal request of the member.

b. Transfer of letter to another church.

c. When it is verified that the person has united with another church.

d. Members who for one year or longer do not contribute to the church's support or participate in a small group or other Provision Church ministry shall be contacted to determine the reason for their lack of participation in the life of the church. Unless good cause for such neglect can be shown, they shall be removed from church membership. If said members are unable to be contacted by phone, mail, or email, or if they fail to respond to contact attempts for a period of 90 days, they shall be removed from membership.

e. Removal for cause on biblical grounds as a result of church discipline.

f. Death of member.

Section D. Church Government

1. Provision Church is to be recognized as a Jesus ruled, elder led, and congregationally accountable church in accordance with the principles laid down in the New Testament.

2. The Directional Elder Board (Elder Board or Board), in cooperation with the Lead Pastor, is responsible for leading the church in all matters of direction, doctrine, and discipline. The Board is responsible to oversee and evaluate the direction of all ministries and stewardship of the church. The Board along with the Lead Pastor may hire or remove church staff as necessary. The Board may establish teams and other boards to assist them in any of their duties. They may delegate authority to qualified individuals or teams as they deem fit.

3. The Congregation is responsible for carrying out the mission of Provision Church. They are also responsible for ensuring Provision Church remains faithful to its mission as given by Jesus Christ and to its doctrines as laid out in Holy Scripture. This church accepts as its Articles of Faith, The Baptist Faith and Message, 2000ed. A congregational vote will be required for any of the following decisions: (1) selling or buying real estate; (2) borrowing money; (3) approving the call of a new Lead Pastor; (4) approving the annual operating budget; (5) removing members from membership through church discipline; (6) making changes to these Bylaws. The congregation may also bring any decision of the Directional Elders under review by following the procedure established in these Bylaws.

Section E. Meetings and Voting

1. Voting: Congregational votes may be held using any means deemed appropriate by the Directional Elders to allow maximum congregation participation while ensuring the integrity of the vote. Any recommendation requiring a congregational vote must be communicated to the congregation no less than fourteen days prior to the vote, during which time the Directional Elders will ensure that opportunities for the congregation to ask questions and become educated on the recommendation will be readily available.

2. A church business meeting may be called at any time by the Lead Pastor or Chairman of the Elder Board after due notice has been given to the membership no less than fourteen days before the meeting. In unusual circumstances or matters of great urgency, this notice provision may be waived.

3. In the case that a church member disagrees with a decision of the Directional Elder Board, they should first address the Elder Board to seek resolution. If an agreement cannot be reached, a church business meeting may be called by members to bring any decision of the Directional Elders under review by creating a written petition, specifying the issue to be addressed, and obtaining the signatures of either 10 percent of the membership or 150 members, whichever is less.

4. Quorum: A quorum of fifty-one percent of the church membership must be present for all church business meetings.

Section F. Church Officers

The officers of this church shall be the Lead Pastor, the members of the Directional Elder Board, the Trustees, the Church Clerk, and the Chief Financial Officer.

1. Lead Pastor

- a. The Lead Pastor shall be recognized as the spiritual leader of the church. He must meet the qualifications laid out in 1 Timothy 3 and Titus 1. The Lead Pastor shall be in charge of all worship and other public services of the church. He shall direct the work of the church staff in cooperation with the Directional Elder Board.
- b. At least thirty days' notice shall be given of termination of the relationship with the Lead Pastor unless otherwise mutually agreed upon, with both Lead Pastor and church seeking to follow the will of God and the leadership of the Holy Spirit. The church may dissolve the lead pastoral relationship, by secret ballot, by a three-fourths vote of the membership present at a church business meeting provided notice of such proposed action shall have been given at least two weeks in advance at all weekend worship services.
- c. In the event a Lead Pastor vacancy occurs, the Elder Board is responsible for recommending a permanent Lead Pastor for the church. The church shall have an opportunity to hear the recommended candidate on a specific weekend at all weekend worship services. Election shall require an affirmative vote of three-fourths of members voting to constitute a call. Should the one recommended by the team fail to receive a three-fourths vote, the Directional Elders will seek out another candidate for Lead Pastor.

2. Directional Elder Board

- a. The Directional Elder Board shall consist of the Lead Pastor and one man for every 100 members; however, the Board is not to exceed ten nor have less than three men in total. At least half of the Elder Board shall be Congregational Elders, non-staff members selected from the congregation at large. The remaining half shall consist of the Lead Pastor and Staff Elders, selected by the Lead Pastor from the pastoral staff.
- b. New Congregational Elders are appointed by the existing Elder Board. They must meet the qualifications laid out in 1 Timothy 3 and Titus 1. The names of new candidates for the Directional Elder Board will be shared with the congregation at least one month prior to joining the Elder Board. If any member of the congregation has cause to believe the candidate is unqualified to serve, they should bring this concern to the attention of the Directional Elder Board during this 30 day period.
- c. Congregational Elders on the Directional Elder Board shall serve terms of 3 years, at the end of which they may be re-appointed for a second term. A Congregational Elder shall be allowed to serve two consecutive

terms, after which there shall be a lapse of one year before they may be considered for re-appointment unless the Directional Elder Board decides an immediate term extension is needed and beneficial. Terms shall be staggered such that no more than half of the Congregational Elders terms end in any one year.

d. The Staff Elders on the Directional Board are selected and appointed by the Lead Pastor with the consent of the Directional Elder Board. There is no limitation on the length of service for Staff Elders on the Directional Elder Board.

e. The Elder Board shall select a Chairman from the Congregational Elders on the Board. The Board shall also select one of the Congregational Elders to serve as Moderator at church business meetings.

f. In the event of a vacancy among the Congregational Elders, the Elder Board shall appoint a qualified individual to fill the vacancy for the remainder of the term, in accordance with the process for appointing new Congregational Elders. If the term to be filled is less than 18 months, the Elder shall be eligible to serve up to two additional consecutive terms.

g. In the absence of a Lead Pastor, the Elder Board shall ensure that someone preaches every week at all services. They shall also ensure that the church mission and ministries are kept intact and functioning and that the attendance and finances are properly promoted while the church is without a Lead Pastor.

h. The Elder Board shall work with the Chief Financial Officer in managing the financial affairs of the church. They shall ensure that an annual budget and an annual ministry report are prepared and made available to the congregation.

i. The Elder Board shall make recommendations to the congregation for its approval any and all proposed changes or amendments to these Bylaws.

3. Other Elders

a. In addition to those who serve on the Directional Elder Board, others may serve as Elders of Provision Church, both as Congregational and Staff Elders. Except for service on the Directional Elder Board, terms of service do not apply to Elders. Elders of the church shall be considered Pastors of the congregation. All Elders shall be men who are scripturally qualified and who have been ordained by this or another church of like faith and order.

b. In order to serve as a Congregational Elder, one must have been a member of the church for no less than 18 months.

c. An Elder may be removed by resignation or by dismissal. Any two members with reason to believe that an Elder should be dismissed should express such concern to the Directional Elders and, if need be, to the congregation. Any such action shall be done in accordance with the instructions of our Lord in Matthew 18:15-17 and 1 Timothy 5:17-21.

4. Trustees

The Trustees shall constitute the body politic and corporate by the name of the "Trustees of Provision Church of Union County, Inc.," and shall hold in trust all property, effects, etc. for the benefit and subject to the direction of the church. They shall be the legal representatives of the church as required by the laws of the State of North Carolina. Power is vested in the Trustees to further delegate legal representation of the church with regard to execution of contracts in the normal course of business, other than those actions requiring approval by a vote of the congregation. Written consent or signatures by at least two of the Trustees is required to take any action on behalf of the church on all matters requiring a congregational vote. The members of the Directional Elder Board, the Church Clerk, and the Chief Financial Officer will act as Trustees for the church.

5. Church Clerk

The Church Clerk shall keep a complete and accurate record of all church business meetings and votes of the church. The Church Clerk is appointed by the Directional Elders.

6. Chief Financial Officer

The Chief Financial Officer (CFO) or any individual or team he/she designates to assist him/her, shall receive and deposit in the name of the church in a bank in the State of North Carolina (said bank having been designated by the Elder Board as the depository) all monies received through all channels and pay all expenses incurred by the church. The CFO shall keep an orderly set of books of all financial transactions, exhibiting with clarity all receipts and disbursements. The CFO shall also be responsible for preparing quarterly, semi-annual, or annual Record of Contributions to all contributing members. The CFO may designate a team or individuals to assist him/her in any of the above duties as he/she deems necessary. The CFO is appointed by the Elder Board.

7. Deacons

a. Directional Elders shall appoint the number of Deacons required to meet permanent and short-term needs of the Church, selecting only those who meet the qualifications specified in 1 Timothy 3:8-13.

b. The responsibility of the Deacons is not explicit within the biblical text. The overall responsibility of the diaconate is to assist the Elders in their service and equipping functions.

The role of Deacons at the Church is explained and substantiated in the Church's deacon guidelines. This resource provides additional explanation but shall not be incorporated into these Bylaws by reference, nor shall it replace the text of this **F.7**. In the event of any disagreement of the linked document with these Bylaws, the Bylaws shall prevail.

c. The Congregation will recommend names to the Directional Elder Board for consideration. The Directional Elder Board shall present Deacons to the congregation for affirmation no less than twenty-one (21) days prior to affirmation. Comments received from the Church will be considered on a case-by-case basis. Confirmation of Deacons will be at the final discretion of the Directional Elders.

d. Any Deacon may be removed from office for valid cause. A written notice of proposed removal of any Deacon shall be given to the Directional Elders at least ten (10) days prior to the meeting at which an action to affect such removal is to be taken to ensure that the Deacon is given a reasonable opportunity for defense. The Deacon shall have the opportunity to answer the charges in the presence of the accusers, but shall not be present during the discussion and vote on removal. The removal of a Deacon requires a decision of the Directional Elders. If a Deacon is removed from service, either voluntarily or involuntarily, the appointment of a successor Deacon is under the sole authority and discretion of the Directional Elders.

e. Vacancies in the Deacons of the Church by reason of death, resignation or otherwise, shall be filled in accordance with **F.7.c** above.

Section G. Rules of Procedure

1. Moderator

a. A member of the Elder Board shall preside at all church business meetings.

b. The Moderator shall preserve order, state and put all questions, take the vote, and cast the deciding vote in case of a tie.

c. In all cases of order the Moderator shall decide, but an appeal may be made to the church and a majority of two-thirds may reverse the decision.

2. All questions shall be brought before the church by motion and seconded before they shall be discussed and voted upon.

3. All motions, resolutions, and reports shall be submitted in writing.

4. Only one member shall speak at a time, and preference shall be given to the members first addressing the Moderator.

5. Every member wishing to speak shall rise from their seat and respectfully address the Moderator.

6. No member may speak more than once upon the same subject until every member wishing to speak shall have the liberty to do so, nor more than twice without the consent of the church.

7. All matters of parliamentary procedure not provided for shall be decided in accordance with Robert's Rules of Order.

ARTICLE V – AMENDMENT

These Bylaws with the exception of Article X may be amended, altered, or repealed by a three fourths vote of the members voting, provided that any proposed amendment, alteration, or repeal be provided in writing (digital or printed) to the congregation at least fourteen days in advance of the church vote, during which time the Directional Elders will ensure that opportunities for the congregation to ask questions and become educated on the recommendation will be readily available.

ARTICLE VI – DISSOLUTION

Upon the dissolution of the corporation, the officers shall, after paying or making provision for the payment of all the liabilities of the corporation, dispose of all of the assets of the corporation exclusively for the purposes of the corporation in such a manner or to such organization or organizations organized and operated exclusively for religious purposes as shall at the time qualify as an exempt organization or organizations under section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1954 (or the corresponding provision of any future U.S. Internal Revenue Law), as the Board of Directors shall determine. Any such assets not so disposed of shall be dispersed by the Superior Court of the county in which the principal office of the corporation is then located, exclusively for such purposes of such organization or organizations, as said court shall determine, which are organized and operated exclusively for such purposes.

ARTICLE VII – CHURCH FINANCES

Section A. Budget

The Chief Financial Officer shall prepare an annual operating budget for approval by the Directional Elders and for final approval by the congregation by church vote.

Section B. Fiscal Year

The fiscal year of the church shall be determined by the Chief Financial Officer in conjunction with the Elder Board.

Section C. Contributions

It shall be the duty of the members to contribute regularly for the expenses of the church and for its ongoing mission to glorify God and promote the Gospel here and throughout the world.

Section D. Solicitation

No person shall solicit or sell to the public in the name of the church or any of its organizations without the express consent of the Directional Elder Board.

Section E. Indebtedness

No motion to pay any money for indebtedness incurred in respect to this church shall be eligible nor will the church be responsible for any indebtedness incurred unless such indebtedness is incurred by a resolution of the church. Exception to this rule is made in respect to the Elder Board and the Trustees in the case of emergencies for which provision cannot be made.

ARTICLE VIII – RECORDS

The corporation shall keep 1) adequate and correct books and records of accounts, 2) written minutes of its business meetings, and 3) a record of each member's name and address.

ARTICLE IX – DISCIPLINE OF THE CHURCH

Method and Spirit

Any member having cause or complaint against another must first seek to remove it as directed in Matthew 18. If this is not sufficient, the complaint shall be brought to the attention and

counsel of the Elder Board, which may report its findings and may recommend to the church for appropriate action. All discipline shall be formulated and carried out in the Spirit of Christ with the goal being reconciliation to the Body of Christ.

ARTICLE X – CHURCH PROPERTY

Section A.

It is agreed by the present membership and all persons hereafter becoming a member of Provision Church of Union County, Inc. that the securing and maintaining of real, personal, and mixed property by this church shall be for the express purpose of providing facilities for public worship and the engagement upon the missionary education and benevolent interest of this church of the character and in the spirit of these Bylaws and Articles of Faith.

Section B.

If at any time this church shall determine to alter the quality of its beliefs, usages, and practices so as in any important respect to be at variance with the character described in these Bylaws and in these Articles of Faith, if the decision is by less than a two-thirds majority vote of those present at any church business meeting, it is understood and agreed that the title and all rights to the property of the church shall inhere in and remain vested in that part of the congregation which shall agree to continue to use the property for the purposes for which it was purchased and has been to that time maintained in accordance with these Bylaws and Articles of Faith.

Section C.

This article shall not be amended, altered, or repealed except by three-fourths vote of the membership present at a church business meeting and then only if such proposed amendment, alteration, or repeal has been given in writing to the Lead Pastor and Elder Board and has lain on the table for a period of 12 months; no consideration of such proposal shall be voted upon until the period aforementioned has elapsed and then at an announced church business meeting.