

BYLAWS

MERIDIAN AVENUE BAPTIST CHURCH, WICHITA, KANSAS

God desires all men, women, boys, and girls to be saved and come to know The Truth (1 Timothy 2: 4). In order to serve our stated mission to “make disciples” (Matthew 28:19) and to honor provisions set forth in its constitution, Meridian Avenue Baptist Church adopts the following Bylaws:

Article I: Membership

Section 1. Reception of Members. Those persons who have made a commitment to Christ and wish to deepen their relationship with Christ and this church are invited to become fully participating members of the church. The basic qualification for membership in this church shall be one’s personal faith in Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord, which shall be symbolized by the immersion (baptism) of the believer. Persons presenting themselves for membership may become members through three methods.

- a. By Baptism. Any person upon confession of faith in the Lord Jesus Christ may be received as a member following baptism by immersion. Should any person be physically unable to be immersed, he/she will be received into full membership upon their profession of faith in Christ and recommendation by the pastor or one member of the Leadership Team.
- b. By Letter. Members of other American Baptist churches, having been baptized by immersion following their confession of faith in the Lord Jesus Christ may be received by letter of recommendation and dismissal from their respective churches, upon recommendation by the pastor or one member of the Leadership Team.
- c. By Statement. Those who have been baptized by immersion following their confession of faith may be received upon statement of their Christian experience and faith upon recommendation of the pastor or one member of the Leadership Team.

Section 2. Removal of Members.

- a. By Letter. Members may be removed by requesting a letter to unite with another church, provided their names appear on the active or inactive roll of our church.
- b. By Erasure. When a member has been taken into another church and proper notice has been received, his/her name shall then be removed from our roll.
- c. By Death. When a member dies, his/her name shall be removed from our roll.
- d. Inactive Roll. Members who, to a reasonable degree, do not identify with the church (taking their circumstances into consideration) in any given twelve (12) month period may be dropped from the active roll and placed on the inactive roll. After one year on the inactive roll efforts to re-enlist should be made. If there is no indication that the inactive member desires to become active, they may be dropped from the roll completely.

ARTICLE II: Leadership Team

Section 1. Leadership Team Purpose and Function

- a. The Leadership Team shall prayerfully oversee all spiritual and administrative affairs of the church according to the will of God. It is intended that all church business shall be coordinated, directed, and decided by the Leadership Team. This may be accomplished by direct decision-making, approval of delegated matters or specific authorization.
- b. The Leadership Team shall consist of eight (8) voting members: the Chair of the Leadership Team, the Vice-Chair of the Leadership Team, the Church Clerk, the Lead Pastor and four (4) elected lay members of the church.
- c. The Leadership Team shall coordinate and oversee the five (5) standing committees. (Membership, Property Management, Stewardship, Evangelism & Missions, Ministries) The Leadership Team may also create and retire any special committee tasked with specific purposes.
- d. The Leadership Team members shall make every effort to prayerfully consider every issue before them and act in unanimity whenever possible. All decisions of the Leadership Team, at regular or special meetings, shall require approval of at least two-thirds (2/3) of the voting Leadership Team members present.
- e. A majority of the Leadership Team must be present (in person and/or electronically) at any meeting in order to constitute a quorum. Each member of the Leadership Team shall receive appropriate notice of all meetings. Minutes shall reflect efforts taken to provide notice in the case of a specially called meeting in which not all members are participating.
- f. Each Leadership Team member shall act as advisor, helper, and prayer partner to the Lead Pastor, assisting him or her to fulfill the vision and goals God has given for the church.
- g. Each Leadership Team member shall promote goodwill in the congregation and shall strengthen the people's confidence in the Pastoral Staff and their leadership.

Section 2. Officers of the Leadership Team. Officers of the Leadership Team shall be the Chair of the Leadership Team, the Vice Chair, and the Church Clerk. The Lead Pastor may not serve as an officer of the Leadership Team.

- a. Chair of the Leadership Team. The Chair of the Leadership Team shall be elected by a majority vote of the members of the church at the annual business meeting to serve a term of three years. He/she shall chair the church business meetings and the Leadership Team meetings. He/she shall serve as legal head of the corporation and may serve as signatory on documents.
- b. Vice Chair. The Vice Chair shall be elected by a majority vote of the members of the church at the annual business meeting to serve a term of three years. He/she shall perform all the duties of the Chair in the Chair's absence. He/she may serve as a legal representative of the corporation and a signatory on documents.
- c. Church Clerk. The Church Clerk shall be elected by a majority vote of the membership of the Church at the annual business meeting to serve a term of three years. He/she shall serve as clerical officer of both the church business meetings and the Leadership Team

and shall maintain minutes of their official meetings. The Church Clerk shall arrange for the safe keeping of those records, arrange for the keeping of an updated register of names of members and other office holders and a record of baptisms. He/she shall issue letters of dismissal voted on by the church, preserve on file all communications and written official reports, and give proper notice of all meetings where notice is necessary as indicated by these Bylaws. The Church Clerk shall also oversee the filing of all necessary documents with any local, state, or federal agency. All church records are church property and shall be filed in the church office. He/she shall oversee any other clerical work necessary to the proper discharge of his/her duties. The Church Clerk shall be the custodian of all legal documents. He/she may serve as a legal representative of the corporation and a signatory on documents. If he/she is designated to be a signatory on documents, he/she should be able to be bonded, if necessary.

Section 3. Qualifications. All those considered for office on the Leadership Team shall:

- a. Commit to serving as shepherds and servants of this “flock,” be eager to serve, be an example of a disciple of Jesus and willing to be all that God wants for them, in the spirit of 1 Peter 5: 1-4.
- b. Decide in their heart to make a financial commitment and cheerfully support the church in every way in the spirit of 2 Corinthians 9: 6-8.
- c. Be an active member of Meridian Avenue Baptist Church.

Section 4. Election of Leadership Team

- a. The members of the church shall elect the Lay Members of the Leadership Team. All such elections shall be by simple majority, by secret ballot, at the annual business meeting.
- b. There shall be seven (7) elected Leadership Team lay members: the Chair of the Leadership Team, the Vice Chair, the Church Clerk and four lay members of the church.
- c. The term of the elected Leadership Team members shall be for three (3) years from the time of election. Each Leadership Team member may serve two (2) elected terms after which he/she must remain out of office for at least one (1) year. The seven (7) Leadership Team seats shall be staggered so that only two or three are elected in any given year

Section 5. Vacancies

- a. If the Leadership Team, after due examination, determines that a Team member no longer fulfills the requirements of the Leadership Team, the powers vested in the remainder of the Team members present can ask for the resignation of the Team member at any of its regular or special meetings by a unanimous vote. If such resignation is refused, the office shall not be considered vacant until the Leadership Team’s decision has been confirmed by a majority vote of the Church at a meeting called for that purpose. Removal of a member from the Leadership Team does not require removal from church membership.

- b. In the event of a vacancy on the Leadership Team, whether caused by resignation, removal or death, the Nominating Committee shall nominate a member to fill the unexpired term on the Leadership Team. A special business meeting shall be called to ratify the nomination. Ratification shall be by majority vote of the members present and the new member shall complete the original term of the preceding member.

ARTICLE III- Lead Pastor and Staff

Section 1. Lead Pastor.

- a. Duties. The Lead Pastor shall serve as the spiritual leader of the Church in functioning as a New Testament Church. The basic qualifications for the Lead Pastor are set forth in 1 Peter 5: 1-3, to shepherd this “flock” by watching over them, leading them to be all that God desires for them, to be eager to serve and to be an example of a disciple of Jesus Christ. The Lead Pastor shall also be the administrator of the day-to-day business of the church. It shall be the duty of the pastor to conduct or provide worship services for the church; to preach the Gospel, administer the Ordinances, lead the church in fulfilling its mission and vision and perform all other duties of the office. The Lead Pastor shall be a member of the Leadership Team and the Nominating Committee.
- b. Selection. The Church shall elect a Lead Pastor upon the recommendation of the Pastoral Search Committee (Article V Section 3), provided, however, that the church’s call of a Lead Pastor shall require the support of not less than seventy-five percent (75%) of the active present members voting. The Lead Pastor shall be elected by the membership from the recommendation submitted by the Pastoral Search Committee. Notice of such meeting must be announced on two (2) consecutive Sundays and sent by mail to the membership. The selection of the Lead Pastor shall be by secret ballot. The Lead Pastor shall be elected for an indefinite period.

Section 2. Staff. The Leadership Team may employ additional staff, as it deems necessary, in accomplishing the church’s mission. The Leadership Team, with the advice of the appropriate standing committee and the Stewardship Committee, shall define each staff member’s job description, shall assign the title to the position, and shall fix salary and other benefits at least annually. All hired staff will be expected to set an example by living a lifestyle that reflects the morals and ethics of the Bible. A background check is required of all paid staff and employees.

Section 3. Pastoral Staff, Ministerial Staff and Support Personnel.

- a. The Lead Pastor shall oversee the entire Pastoral Staff, Ministerial and Support Personnel. The Lead Pastor shall have authority to delegate duties and responsibilities to other persons, supervise their activities, and be ultimately responsible for their performance. All employees, including Pastoral Staff, shall report to the Lead Pastor in the discharge of their duties. The Leadership Team shall decide any hiring of Pastoral Staff or Support Staff or any employee. The name of any candidate for Pastoral Staff must be published in two (2) consecutive church bulletins before confirming his/her

employment. Dismissal of Pastoral Staff or Support Staff or any employee shall be decided by the Leadership Team.

- b. Pastoral Staff shall be defined as a duly ordained minister who is in good standing with American Baptist Churches, USA, or are willing to follow the procedures necessary for their ordination to be recognized by this denomination.
- c. Ministerial Staff shall be defined as a one who has the spiritual gifts to serve the church to accomplish the mission of this church.
- d. Support Personnel shall be defined as individuals which the church employs to provide necessary services to facilitate this church's ministry and care of the facilities of the church.

Section 4. Conflict Resolution

- a. Should difficulties between the Lead Pastor and Leadership Team members arise that appear to be unresolvable, counsel may be sought from the American Baptist Churches of the Central Region (ABCCR). That shall occur only after at least three of the lay members of the Leadership Team, at a regular or special meeting, have agreed to seek such counsel. If, after counsel with ABCCR problems remain irreconcilable then the Chairperson of the Leadership Team, together with the representative of ABCCR shall bring the matter before the church members in a business meeting for resolution. This shall be the only method and procedure to address problems of this nature.
- b. In the event the Lead Pastor has serious charges preferred against him/her, or his/her ministry has ceased to be effective, and no provision has been made for the termination of his/her ministry, power is vested in a majority vote of the laity of the Leadership Team to ask for the resignation of the Lead Pastor at any of its meetings. If such resignation is refused, the pastorate shall not be considered vacant until the action of the Leadership Team has been confirmed by a seventy-five percent (75%) vote of the quorum present and voting of the congregation at a meeting called for that purpose, such meetings to be presided over by the Chair of the Leadership Team. In this event, the pastor shall not fill the pulpit until the issue is resolved by the vote of the congregation.
- c. When a vacancy occurs, for whatever reason, the Lead Pastor shall be replaced pursuant to Article V, Section 3 of these Bylaws.

ARTICLE IV- Other Officers, Duties, and Policies

Section 1. Treasurer. The church shall elect a Treasurer as its financial officer for a three (3) year term at its annual business meeting. He/she may serve two (2) elected terms after which he/she must remain out of office for at least one (1) year. The spouse of a paid Ministry Staff person shall not be eligible to serve as Treasurer. He/she shall serve as a member of the church Stewardship Committee and as the Treasurer of the church corporation. It shall be the duty of the Treasurer to monitor the financial affairs of the church and report to the Stewardship Committee and the Leadership Team at all regular meetings. The Treasurer may not serve simultaneously on the Leadership Team. He/she shall receive, count, and prepare the contribution documents for data entry by the church Administrative Assistant; deposit all

monies in the designated bank accounts; establish a verification system; oversee the record keeping of income and expenses to the General fund, the Money Market Account, the Designated Fund and all future funds; order and distribute offering envelopes; generate and distribute annual giving records. The church Administrative Assistant will do all data entry. All funds will be distributed by checks or electronic transfers signed by the designated signatories. The Treasurer shall provide monthly reports to the Stewardship Committee and the Leadership Team. He/she shall be able to be bonded for not less than \$1000, the church will pay the premium.

Section 2. Assistant Treasurer. The Assistant Treasurer shall be elected by a majority vote of the members of the church at the annual business meeting to serve a term of three (3) years. The Assistant Treasurer may serve two (2) elected terms after which he/she must remain out of office for at least one (1) year. The Assistant Treasurer shall perform the duties of the Treasurer in the absence of the Treasurer and assist the Treasurer as necessary. The Assistant Treasurer shall serve as a member of the church Stewardship Committee and may not serve simultaneously on the Leadership Team. He/she shall be able to be bonded for not less than \$1000, the church will pay the premium.

Section 3. Assistant Clerk. The Assistant Clerk shall be elected by a majority vote of the members of the church at the annual business meeting to serve a term of three (3) years. The Assistant Clerk may serve two (2) elected terms after which he/she must remain out of office for at least one (1) year. The Assistant Clerk shall perform the duties of the Clerk in the absence of the Clerk with the exception that the Assistant Clerk will not have a vote on the Leadership Team. The Assistant Clerk will assist the Clerk as necessary.

Section 4. Policies.

- a. The Leadership Team shall in cooperation with the church Treasurer, adopt appropriate policies to ensure proper and secure handling of church funds and execution of legal documents and contracts.
- b. Matters Requiring Church Approval. Any matter involving the sale, purchase or leasing of real estate and improvements thereon or any matter involving expenditures in excess of ten thousand dollars (\$10,000) shall require advance approval by the members of the church at an appropriate church business meeting. The only exception would be an emergency situation wherein delay would cause further damage or significant cost increases. If an emergency action is taken it shall be reported to the church members for ratification or modification at a business meeting called as soon as possible under these bylaws.
- c. The only officers who may serve as signatories on checks are Chair of the Leadership Team, Treasurer, Assistant Treasurer, and the Chair of the Stewardship Committee.

ARTICLE V - Committees

Section 1. Standing Committees. The church shall have five (5) Standing Committees: Ministries, Property Management, Stewardship, Evangelism & Missions, and Membership. The

purpose of these Standing Committees is to provide advice and recommendations to the Leadership Team for action or decision. Each Standing Committee shall report, regularly or as requested, to the Leadership Team. They shall not have authority to decide church business or act on their own authority but may act based upon specifically delegated authority from the Leadership Team.

- A. The Standing Committees are defined as follows:
 - 1. Ministries. This committee shall consist of a Chair and a minimum of three (3) other persons and shall be responsible for overseeing all aspects of ministry within the body of the church.
 - 2. Property Management. This committee shall consist of a Chair and a minimum of three (3) other persons and shall be responsible for developing and maintaining the facilities and property that will adequately meet the needs of the church.
 - 3. Stewardship. This committee shall consist of a Chair and a minimum of three (3) other persons and shall be responsible for overseeing all financial matters of the church, including annual budgeting as well as church fundraising programs. The Treasurer and Assistant Treasurer will be members of this committee. This committee shall oversee the development and education of Christians in personal stewardship.
 - 4. Evangelism and Missions. This committee shall consist of a Chair and a minimum of three (3) other persons and shall be responsible for both home and foreign mission efforts and outreach in our local community. This committee shall administer the Communion Fund to meet the needs of the members of the congregation and others in our community. This committee shall promote participation in such efforts, together with special offerings and other mission fundraising.
 - 5. Membership. This committee shall consist of a Chair and a minimum of three (3) other persons, and shall oversee the care of the members, new members, and visitors, membership class, follow-up of visitors, publish the church directory, birthday and anniversary lists, weddings, funerals, and oversee hospitality ministry.
- B. Meetings. The Standing Committees shall meet as necessary to conduct their business or as requested by the Leadership Team but shall meet at least every other month. The Committees shall prayerfully seek God's direction on specific issues within their area of responsibility and shall advise and make recommendations and proposals to the Leadership Team for action or approval.
- C. Selection. The Chairs of the Standing Committees shall be presented by the Nominating Committee for election by the members. Each Standing Committee Chair shall be an active member of the congregation. No Chair of a Standing Committee shall also be a currently serving member of the Leadership Team. The term of the elected Standing Committee Chair shall be for three (3) years from the time of election. Each Standing Committee Chair may serve two (2) elected terms after which he/she must remain out of office for at least one (1) year. Each Standing Committee Chair will recruit the members of the Standing Committee.

Section 2. Special Committees. The Leadership Team may create any special committee it deems proper, determine the size of the committee, and define its assignment. The Standing Committees, with the approval of the Leadership Team, may create any special committees it deems proper, determine the size of the committee, and define its assignment. Unless otherwise specified in this Article or in the action creating a special committee, the Chair of the Leadership Team or Standing Committee shall appoint special committee members and designate the chair. A special committee may be short term or long term in existence. The term shall be determined by the originating body. Any special committee shall report to its originating body on a regular basis or as requested. Special committees shall prayerfully seek God's direction on specific issues within their area of responsibility and shall advise and make recommendations and proposals to their originating entity. They shall not have authority to decide church business or act on their own authority but only as specifically authorized by the Leadership Team.

Section 3. Pastoral Search Committee. When there is a need to search for a Lead Pastor, a Pastoral Search Committee of at least six members of the church shall be formed. The Leadership Team shall present the nominees for the Pastoral Search Committee to the members of the church to be elected at any regular or special business meeting. The members of the committee shall have been members in good standing for not less than one year. No more than two of the Pastoral Search Committee shall be currently serving on the Leadership Team. If there are any members of the Leadership Team serving on the Pastoral Search Committee, and their term on the Leadership Team expires, they shall continue to serve on the Pastoral Search Committee. No more than one member of an immediate family may serve on the Pastoral Search Committee.

The Pastoral Search shall be conducted within the guidelines of these bylaws. The Committee will collaborate with the representative appointed by the American Baptist Churches of the Central Region to aid in our search for a pastoral candidate.

When, by nearly unanimous support by the committee members, a pastoral candidate is selected, the committee will inform the Leadership Team. The Leadership Team, upon the recommendation of the Pastoral Search Committee, will work with the Ministries Committee to schedule a time to present the pastoral candidate to the church. A vote of seventy-five per cent (75%) of the church members present at the church Business Meeting is required to call a Lead Pastor.

Section 4. Nominating Committee. Each year in August the Leadership Team shall appoint a Nominating Committee of seven members consisting of: one member of the Leadership Team, five lay members and the Lead Pastor. No person, except the Lead Pastor, may serve more than three consecutive years on the Nominating Committee. The Nominating committee shall propose nominees from the active church members until three (3) weeks before the election date. Active members may also submit nominations to the Nominating Committee for their consideration. All such nominations must be submitted to the committee on official church nominating forms. The names of the nominees shall be announced and posted at least ten (10) days prior to the meeting where such elections are to be considered. Additional nominations

may not be submitted from the floor. If the church does not accept any nominee, then the Nominating Committee shall submit a new nominee at the soonest opportunity.

ARTICLE VI: Meetings

Section 1. Church Meetings. The church shall meet on the Lord's Day for worship at the time recommended by the Lead Pastor and the Leadership Team.

Section 2. Communion. The ordinance of Communion shall be observed at the time recommended by the Lead Pastor and the Leadership Team.

Section 3. Regular Business Meetings. The church shall have two regularly scheduled business meetings each year in May and November. The business meeting held in November shall include the election of officers, committee reports and approval of the financial budget. A quorum shall be required twenty (20) active participating members or twenty-five per cent (25%) of the total active participating members, whichever is larger, be present and in person to conduct business. Church business meetings shall be announced during worship services in each of the two preceding Sundays and shall be published in the worship service bulletins and church newsletter at least 10 days prior to the meeting.

Section 4. Special Meetings. Special meetings shall be called by the Lead Pastor or Chair of the Leadership Team. The purpose of the meeting shall be announced on the Sunday morning the week prior to the special meeting and notification and purpose given to the members by mail and/or email prior to the meeting. If a member desires a special meeting, they shall present such a request in writing to the Leadership Team. If the special meeting is called to amend the Constitution, the purpose of the meeting shall be announced at least one (1) month prior to the time of the action to be taken. Notice and purpose of the meeting shall be given to the members by mail and/or email prior to the meeting.

Section 5. Leadership Team Meetings. The Leadership Team shall meet at least once a month.

Section 6. Standing Committee Meetings. Standing Committees shall meet at least every other month.

Section 7. Special Committee Meetings. Special Committees shall meet as necessary or as requested by their originating body.

ARTICLE VII: Governing Procedures

Section 1. Quorum. A quorum shall be required of twenty (20) active participating members or twenty-five per cent (25%) of the total active participating members, whichever is larger, be present and in person to conduct business. A simple majority of fifty percent (50%) plus one (1) of a quorum present and voting shall be required to pass most measures. The exceptions are: The inauguration or dismissal of the Lead Pastor, or when amending the Constitution. These

matters require a seventy-five percent (75%) vote of the quorum present and voting. Changing the Bylaws shall require sixty percent (60%) vote of the quorum present and voting.

Section 2. Qualification of Voters. Voters must be members in good standing. Members in good standing are those who have regularly attended a weekly service. Any member in good standing may vote on all matters except those pertaining to the purchase, sale, or mortgaging of property. For this, members in good standing must be at least eighteen (18) years of age.

Section 3. In matters not specifically addressed in the Constitution and Bylaws, Robert's Rules of Order, Revised shall be the governing procedure.

Adopted September 25, 2022 to be enacted January 1, 2023