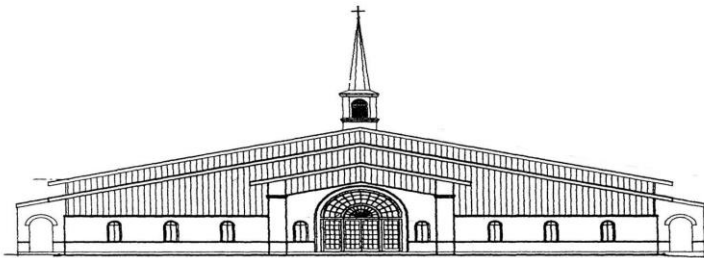


INDIAN CREEK BAPTIST CHURCH

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CONSTITUTION AND BYLAWS



Adopted October 17, 2007

CONSTITUTION AND BYLAWS
INDIAN CREEK BAPTIST CHURCH
MINERAL WELLS, TEXAS

ARTICLE I
NAME

The name of this church is Indian Creek Baptist Church (ICBC). ICBC is a not-for-profit organization duly registered and recognized by the State of Texas.

ARTICLE II
PURPOSE
(Why We Exist)

The purpose of Indian Creek Baptist Church is to glorify God through obedience to the Great Commandment and the Great Commission.

The Great Commandment

Matthew 22:37-39 *Jesus said to him, "You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind. This is the first and great commandment. And the second is like it: You shall love your neighbor as yourself."* (NKJV)

The Great Commission

Matthew 28:19-20 *Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age.* (NKJV)

The Great Commandment and the Great Commission are expressed in the acronym, **ICBC**:

Invite People into the Kingdom of God.

Matthew 22:9 *Therefore go into the highways, and as many as you find, invite to the wedding.* (NKJV)

Commit Ourselves to the Lordship of Christ.

Psalms 37:5 *Commit thy way unto the LORD; trust also in Him; and He shall bring it to pass.* (NKJV)

Bear One Another's Burdens.

Galatians 6:2 *Bear one another's burdens, and so fulfill the law of Christ.* (NKJV)

Celebrate God's Goodness

Psalms 145:7 *They will celebrate Your abundant goodness and joyfully sing of Your righteousness.* (NIV)

ARTICLE III
STATEMENT OF FAITH
(What We Believe)

Indian Creek Baptist Church is a self-governing church of which Jesus Christ is Lord.

His Word, the Bible, is the binding and final authority in all matters of faith and practice. The Bible is inspired by God, is inerrant and infallible in the original autographs, and is preserved by God in such a way as to be authoritative and totally reliable today. We also believe that it is truth without any mixture of error in all realms of reality – historically, scientifically, doctrinally, and prophetically.

We hold to the Baptist Faith and Message Statement adopted by the Southern Baptist Convention on June 14, 2000, as our doctrinal understanding on primary issues. In the event of any conflict between the Baptist Faith and Message Statement and this Constitution and Bylaws, this Constitution and Bylaws will prevail.

We believe Scripture teaches that responsibility for oversight of the local church is given to a plurality of scripturally qualified elders.

This church is not subject to the control of any other ecclesiastical body, but it does recognize and sustain the importance of cooperation that is common among Baptist churches. Historically, and based on our convictions, this church has chosen to align itself with the Southern Baptist Convention, the Baptist General Convention of Texas, the Southern Baptist of Texas Convention, the Palo Pinto Association, and other such churches and ministries which are in alignment with our own purpose and beliefs.

ARTICLE IV
MEMBERSHIP
(Who We Are)

SECTION 1
ADULT MEMBERSHIP

ICBC realizes that for a church to be effective in fulfilling its purpose it must consist of a united body of believers. Therefore, in order to maintain unity and like-mindedness among its membership, adult membership in ICBC will be granted to an individual who has met the following qualifications:

1. Has received Jesus Christ as personal Savior and Lord.
2. Has followed Jesus' command of baptism by immersion.
3. Is at least 15 years of age.
4. Has received discipleship training or shown sufficient knowledge in the following areas:
 - A. Our purpose.
 - B. What we believe.
 - C. How we function.
 - D. Importance of being connected to a small group.
 - E. Awareness of his/her personal mission or ministry.
5. New members will be presented to the congregation by the elders when qualifications 1-4 have been met and no other reason for disqualification from membership has been determined.

SECTION 2
CHILD MEMBERSHIP

Child membership will be granted to an individual under the age of 15 who has met the following qualifications:

1. Has received Jesus Christ as personal Savior and Lord.
2. Has followed Jesus' command of baptism by immersion.

Children receiving Christ as personal Savior and Lord will be presented to the church membership for celebration and affirmation of this meaningful occasion. Child membership differs from adult membership in that there are no voting rights. When a child member reaches the age of 15 and has met all the qualifications in the adult membership section of this Constitution and Bylaws, an adult membership will be granted.

SECTION 3
RESPONSIBILITIES OF CHURCH MEMBERS
(What We Expect)

Understanding that the membership represents Christ and His Church, all members are encouraged to:

1. Pursue a lifestyle of obedience to God's Word and demonstrate a growing relationship with Christ. Obedience and growth will result in, but is not limited to: discovering one's talents and gifts and using such to help the church fulfill its purpose; financially supporting the church; loving one another; and supporting and cooperating with established church leadership.
2. Abide by the faith and practice as expressed in this Constitution and Bylaws.
3. Attend church services regularly, participate in a small group Bible study, and pursue Godly relationships therein.
4. To seek the mind of Christ and the unity of the Spirit for decision making matters when a church vote is requested.

Members are encouraged to communicate their perspectives, questions, and concerns on any issue to the elders for the purpose of discerning together the Truth as revealed in God's Word.

Members are also encouraged to participate in church business meetings which will be called for the following purposes: selection of elders, deacons, and ministry staff; approval of and amendments to the annual budget; acquisition or disposition of real estate; incurrence of debt; removal of a member for disciplinary reasons; and selection of messengers to any of the annual business meetings of the mission organizations to which we belong.

Members will receive a two-week notice for business meetings unless extreme urgency renders such notice impractical. The notice shall include the subject, date, and place of the meeting. Roberts Rules of Order, revised will be the basis to conduct business meetings.

SECTION 4
RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE CHURCH TO ITS MEMBERS
(What You Can Expect From the Church)

The Church represents the Body of Christ, of which every born-again believer is a vital part. Therefore, every member can have the following expectations of ICBC:

1. To receive sound Biblical preaching and teaching necessary for the equipping of each member for a life of faith and service to God.
2. To be loved, nurtured, and welcomed into the body.
3. To be provided stability and protection while growing in Christ.
4. To be disciplined in accordance with the Biblical guidelines of Matthew 18:15-17, if necessary, in order to restore a rightful relationship with God and the church. Discipline ranges from private admonition to public excommunication. (Matthew 18:17, 1 Corinthians 5:5-7) If repentance and restoration is not achieved, the individual may be removed from the membership roll by a three-fourths vote of members present during a meeting called for that purpose.

Any acts of discipline must be carried out with a gentle, loving, and humble attitude, with sensitivity to God's timing, and with the ultimate goals of glorifying God, purifying the church, and restoring the individual.

SECTION 5
REMOVAL OF MEMBERSHIP

The removal of a member from the church membership roll may occur for any of the following reasons:

1. Death of a member.
2. Transfer of membership to another church upon request.
3. A member requests to be removed from the roll.
4. Removal of a member by disciplinary action of the church.
(Article IV, Section 4, Part 4)

ARTICLE V
MINISTRY STRUCTURE
(How We Are Organized)

ICBC recognizes its need for spiritual leadership as opposed to an absolute governing authority and believes that elder leadership provides a balanced combination of oversight. (Matthew 20:25-28, 1 Peter 5:1-4) ICBC elders do not dictate but lead the church into spiritual unity and the fulfillment of its purpose. While Hebrews 13:17 admonishes us to submit to spiritual leadership, we should never follow leadership in false doctrine or practice. (2 Peter 2, Acts 17:11)

SECTION 1
PASTORS/ELDERS

In accordance with Scripture, the leadership responsibilities of ICBC rest upon a plurality of scripturally qualified men chosen from among the local church.

(Acts 14:23, Titus 1:5, I Timothy 3:1-7)

1. Responsibilities - The primary work of the elders shall be to devote themselves to prayer and the ministry of the Word. Their responsibilities shall include the following:

- A. General oversight of the flock - Acts 20:28, Hebrews 13:17, I Thessalonians 5:12
 - a. In practical matters - Acts 11:29-30, Acts 6:1-6
 - b. In matters of doctrine - Acts 15, Acts 16:4
 - c. In matters of discipline/character - Hebrews 13:17, Matthew 18:15-17, Galatians 6:1
- B. Shepherding the flock - I Peter 5:2-3, Acts 20:28, Hebrews 13:17, James 5:14
- C. Equipping the saints for the work of ministry - Ephesians 4:11-12
- D. Teaching the flock - I Timothy 3:2, I Timothy 5:17, I Thessalonians 5:12
- E. Exhorting in sound doctrine - Titus 1:9
- F. Refuting those who contradict Biblical doctrine - Titus 1:9
- G. Modeling the standard of Godliness - I Timothy 3:1-7, I Peter 5:3
- H. Leading and shepherding the church body in decision-making matters. The elders have the responsibility of making decisions regarding the general welfare and direction of the church. (Acts 6, Acts 15, Hebrews 13:17, I Timothy 5:17, I Thessalonians 5:12) The elders will gather the congregation for open discussion, proposals, information, prayer, and/or voting for the purposes as indicated by Scripture and this Constitution and Bylaws. (Article IV, Section 3) (Matthew 18:17, Acts 6, Acts 15, 1 Corinthians 5)
- I. Overseeing and promoting a high level of financial accountability and integrity. The elders may approve non-budgeted expenditures, up to but not more than, 3% of the total annual budget.

All financial records except for individual giving records shall be available and open to any member during the church's normal business hours.

An elder must be willing to make the necessary time commitment to fulfill his responsibilities.

The senior pastor/teacher holds no greater authority than the residing elders, but is to be regarded as the "first among equals." He shall be responsible for the primary preaching and teaching ministries of the church, the conducting of all public and regular services, and the general day-to-day oversight of the church.

2. Qualifications - The essential qualification is that of Godly character. Consistent with I Timothy 3:1-7 and Titus 1:5-9, a pastor/elder must possess the following characteristics:
 - A. Above reproach (blameless)
 - B. Husband of one wife (a one-woman man)
 - C. Temperate (sober, vigilant)
 - D. Prudent (sober-minded, sensible)
 - E. Respectable (orderly, of good behavior)
 - F. Hospitable
 - G. Able to teach (can exhort believers and refute false teaching)
 - H. Not given to wine
 - I. Not pugnacious (non-combative)
 - J. Gentle (moderate, forbearing, patient)
 - K. Not contentious (not soon angry, not quarrelsome, leaning away from strife)
 - L. Free from the love of money (not covetous, not greedy of gain)
 - M. Manages his own house well (his children are faithful, not accused of rebellion to God)
 - N. Not a new convert
 - O. Has a good reputation with outsiders
 - P. Not self-willed

- Q. A lover of good (men and things)
 - R. Just (fair)
 - S. Devout (holy)
 - T. Self-controlled
3. Number - There shall always be a plurality of elders with no set limit. (Acts 14:23, Philippians 1:1) At all times, the church shall seek to have a greater number of non-ministry staff elders than ministry staff elders.
 4. Selection - The elders shall determine when the church will benefit from the appointment of additional elders. This determination will be based on membership growth, a decrease in the number of existing elders, and/or the availability of qualified elder candidates. Church members may at any time recommend a potential elder to the elder body. The candidates shall then be considered through the following process:
 - A. The elder body shall identify qualified candidates for the office of elder in accordance to the qualifications outlined herein.
 - B. The candidates shall be contacted and interviewed by the elders.
 - C. Upon approval by the elders, candidates who have been found qualified and available to serve as an elder will be presented to the church membership.
 - D. Members will be given a period of three weeks for the purpose of affirmation, using the following process:
 - a. Members shall pray with regard to the elder candidate.
 - b. Members may express to an existing elder any concerns, objections or support regarding the suitability of a candidate.
 - c. The elders will consider all concerns, objections and support expressed by the membership in order to determine the suitability of the candidate and the degree of the membership's support.
 - E. After consideration of all members' input, and upon the elders' unanimous support, the candidate will be presented to the church for a vote. A candidate must be approved by a three-fourths vote of the members present during a meeting called for that purpose.
 - F. A public ordination service will ensue at a later date for recognizing and commissioning the approved candidate to his responsibilities as an elder.
 5. Term - Elders may serve continuously as long as they possess the character qualities and fulfill the standards of leadership and service described in Article V, Section 1.
 6. Termination - An elder may resign by written notification to the remaining elders.

An elder may be removed from office by the unanimous decision of the remaining elders for any of the following reasons:

- A. Physical incapacitation that prevents him from fulfilling his responsibilities as an elder.
- B. Spiritual or moral disqualification or failure to fulfill his responsibilities or meet the qualifications outlined in this document under Article V, Section 1.
- C. Doctrinal disqualification by failing to agree with the Statement of Faith outlined in Article III.

Any member of the church body may, and should, initiate church discipline against an elder who is not exhibiting the character or fulfilling the responsibilities of an elder. An accusation against an elder should not be received except on the basis of two or three witnesses. (I Timothy 5:19)

If an elder is deemed unqualified for any of the aforementioned reasons, yet refuses to resign, he may be removed by a three-fourths vote of the members present during a meeting called for that purpose.

If the elder's removal is because of a spiritual or moral disqualification, and he refuses to repent, he is to be disciplined in accordance with Article IV, Section 4, Part 4, and rebuked in the presence of all, so that the rest will be fearful of sinning. (I Timothy 5:20)

7. Meetings - A quorum is necessary to conduct an elders' meeting. A quorum shall consist of two-thirds of the elders currently serving. The elders shall operate under the principle of total unanimity in all decision making matters. (I Corinthians 1:10, Acts 15:25, Philippians 2:2) Unanimity shall consist of a unanimous vote of all elders present. There shall be no abstentions.

In the unlikely event the elders cannot attain a unanimous decision, the majority may call for a church vote. The decision to be made must be posted for two weeks in writing and notice given in public worship two weeks prior to the business meeting called for that purpose. A three-fourths vote of the members present during the meeting must be obtained for any action to occur.

The elders will select from among themselves a secretary to take notes and provide a summary of every elders' meeting. The minutes of elders' meetings will be kept in the church office and made available to any church member. The date and time of regular monthly elders' meetings will be communicated to the church in advance. The initial portion of an elders' meeting is open to any church member to address matters of interest.

Compensated elders shall not participate in voting or other matters regarding their own compensation.

SECTION 2 **DEACONS**

1. Responsibilities - Deacons are responsible for particular and specific areas of ministry, help, and service as designated by the elders. Their responsibilities shall include the following:
 - A. To assist the pastors, so they may be devoted to "prayer and the service of the Word". (Acts 6:2-4)
 - B. To administer (be in charge of) practical tasks assigned by the elders. (Acts 6:3)
 - C. To be an example of servanthood to the church body. (Acts 6:2-4, Matthew 23:11, I Timothy 3:13)A deacon must be willing to make the necessary time commitment to fulfill his responsibilities.
2. Qualifications - The essential qualification is that of Godly character. A deacon must exhibit the character qualities of I Timothy 3:8-13 and Acts 6:3. Although there is a great similarity of a deacon's qualifications with that of an elder, the roles are distinct in that a deacon is not charged with teaching the Word and shepherding the flock.
3. Number - The number of deacons will be determined by the elders based upon the needs of the church and the number of qualified candidates. (Acts 6:2-3)
4. Selection - Elders will solicit nominations for deaconship from the church membership. (Acts 6:1-5) The candidates shall then be considered through the following process:
 - A. The elders shall receive nominations for review.
 - B. Names of deacon candidates will be posted publicly for a period of three weeks for the purpose of consideration by the church body through the following means:
 - a. Members shall pray with regard to the deacon candidate.
 - b. Members may express to an elder any concerns, objections or support regarding the suitability of a candidate.
 - c. The elders will consider all concerns, objections and support expressed by the membership in order to determine the suitability of the candidate and the degree of the membership's support.
 - C. After consideration of all members' input, and upon the elders' unanimous support, the candidate will be presented to the church for a vote. (Acts 6:5) A candidate must be approved by a three-fourths vote of members present during a meeting called for that purpose.
 - D. A public ordination service will ensue at a later date for recognizing and commissioning the approved candidate to his responsibilities as a deacon. (Acts 6:6)
5. Term - Deacons will serve continuously as long as they possess the character qualities and fulfill the standards of ministry and service described in Article V, Section 2.
6. Termination - A deacon may resign by written notification to the elders.

A deacon may be removed for any of the following reasons:

- A. Physical incapacitation that prevents him from fulfilling his responsibilities as a deacon.
- B. Spiritual or moral disqualification or failure to fulfill his responsibilities or meet the qualifications outlined in this document under Article V, Section 2.
- C. Doctrinal disqualification by failing to agree with the Statement of Faith outlined in Article III.

Any member of the church body may, and should, initiate church discipline against a deacon who is not exhibiting the character or fulfilling the responsibilities of a deacon.

If a deacon is deemed unqualified for any of the aforementioned reasons, yet refuses to resign, he may be removed by a three-fourths vote of the members present during a meeting called for that purpose.

If a deacon's removal is because of a spiritual or moral disqualification, and he refuses to repent, he is to be disciplined in accordance with Article IV, Section 4, Part 4.

SECTION 3 **MINISTRY STAFF**

- 1. **Responsibilities** – Job descriptions and responsibilities of ministry staff positions will be determined by the elders. Serving under the general oversight of the elders, ministry staff positions may include, but are not limited to, the positions of senior pastor, music minister, youth minister, education minister, and outreach minister.
- 2. **Qualifications** - Every ministry staff member should be striving for the character qualifications of a pastor/elder or a deacon. (I Timothy 3:1-13, Titus 1:5-9) The senior pastor/teacher must have these qualities and must also serve as an elder. Other ministry staff members may serve as elders or deacons if selected under the processes described in Article V, Sections 1 and 2. Ministry staff members may be compensated or non-compensated.
- 3. **Number** – The number of ministry staff positions shall be prayerfully determined by the elders.
- 4. **Selection** - The elders may act as a search committee or designate a committee to fill a vacant position.
 - A. Candidates will be screened by the elders and presented to the church for vote.
 - B. A candidate must be approved by three-fourths vote of the members present during a meeting called for that purpose.
- 5. **Termination** - Any ministry staff member may resign by written notification to the elders. At least two weeks notice is required, unless the staff member and the elders mutually agree upon a shorter time.

A ministry staff member may be removed for any of the following reasons:

- A. Physical incapacitation.
- B. Spiritual or moral disqualification or failure to fulfill the responsibilities or meet the qualifications outlined in this document under Article V, Section 3.
- C. Doctrinal disqualification by failure to agree with the Statement of Faith outlined in Article III.
- D. Continued employment is not in the best interest of the church.

If a ministry staff member's removal is because of sin and he/she refuses to repent, he/she is to be disciplined in accordance with Article IV, Section 4, Part 4.

A ministry staff member who is deemed unqualified for any of the aforementioned reasons, yet refuses to resign, may be removed by a three-fourths vote of the members present during a meeting called for that purpose.

SECTION 4 **SUPPORT STAFF** **(Other Paid Employees)**

“Support Staff” shall include positions such as administrative support staff, grounds and custodial staff, childcare employees, and other positions as deemed necessary. The elders shall oversee all support staff, or may delegate such authority. This oversight

includes, but is not limited to, employment, designation of responsibilities, supervision, and termination. Employees are responsible to the elders, unless otherwise designated.

SECTION 5
TRUSTEES/BOARD OF DIRECTORS

The trustees/board of directors of the church shall be made up of a majority of non-staff elders.

SECTION 6
MINISTRY TEAMS

Committees or ministry teams will be established or abolished by the elders as necessary for the proper functioning of the church.

A church council consisting of the deacons, ministry team leaders, committee chairs, ministry staff, church clerk, treasurer, and moderator shall meet as often as deemed necessary to share information between teams and committees and provide input and feedback to the elders. Members of the church council will periodically report their activities to the church in meetings called for that purpose.

ARTICLE VI
CHURCH POLICIES AND PROCEDURES MANUAL
(Development, Contents, and Maintenance)

The church council will develop and recommend to the elders a Church Policies and Procedures Manual.

1. The Church Policies and Procedures Manual shall include, but not be limited to, staff job descriptions, church policies, procedures, and organizational charts indicating lines of responsibility in the administration of the church.
2. The master copy will be kept in the church office and made available for use by any church member.
3. A designated special committee shall review the manual at least annually for any needed changes in the manual and to insure that there are no conflicts with this Constitution and Bylaws. In the event of a conflict between the Church Policies and Procedures Manual and this Constitution and Bylaws, this Constitution and Bylaws will prevail.
4. Any member may recommend additions, revisions, or deletions to the Church Policies and Procedures Manual. The recommendations will be discussed in church council and approved by the elders.

ARTICLE VII
DISSOLUTION

In case of the dissolution of this church, all of its remaining assets, after payment of liabilities, will be given to another church affiliated with the Southern Baptist Convention. No pastor, elder, deacon, member, ministry staff, or private individual will be entitled to share in the distribution of any assets of the church upon dissolution.

ARTICLE VIII
AMENDMENTS/CHANGES TO THIS CONSTITUTION AND BYLAWS

This document shall be reviewed at least annually by the elders. Amendments may be proposed by the unanimous consent of the elders or by petition signed by at least 25% of the adult membership. Proposed amendments/changes will be made available in writing to the congregation for a period of two weeks for the purpose of consideration by the church body through the following means:

1. Prayer.
2. Questions/comments/consideration. Questions, comments and concerns should be directed to an elder.
3. A three-fourths vote of the members present during a meeting called for that purpose shall constitute adoption of the proposed amendments or changes.