

# THE CONSTITUTION OF THE OAK LAWN BIBLE CHURCH

## ARTICLE 1 - NAME

The name of this church shall be "Oak Lawn Bible Church."

## ARTICLE 2 - PURPOSE

Our purpose as a church is to submit to Christ as Lord, to the glory of the Father, and to make Him known.

We shall seek to accomplish this purpose through the following objectives:

**Evangelism** - Our objective is to share Christ as Savior and proclaim Him as Lord to a lost world. (*Matt 28:19-20; 1 Cor 15:1-4; Acts 16:31*)

**Edification** - Our objective is to cultivate spiritual growth, and to equip people to serve Jesus Christ. (*Col 2:6-7; Eph 4:11-12; 2 Pet 3:18*)

**Exaltation** - Our objective is to worship the Father through our Lord Jesus Christ, in our thoughts, words, and deeds. (*Eph 5:18-21; Psalm 100; Psalm 150*)

**Encouragement** - Our objective is to care for and minister to people's spiritual, emotional, and physical needs. (*Gal 6:10*)

**Exhortation** - Our objective is to urge our church family to live in obedience to the Word of God. (*Gal 6:1-2; 2 Tim 3:16-17*)

## ARTICLE 3 - DOCTRINE

### A. God and Truth

We believe God, the Creator of the heavens, earth, and man, blesses each individual from conception/fertilization with personality and intrinsic worth, and the human race is unique and exalted over the animal kingdom. God is the source of absolute truth and justice, the giver of eternal spiritual moral and social

law as exemplified in the Ten Commandments, for the benefit of mankind. God, who is Spirit, light, and love is the origin of all love, faith, hope, peace and joy, which is essential for life to be good. We believe that God has sufficiently revealed Himself in His creation and in the human heart, so that man ought to reverence and worship Him, which regard for God is the beginning of wisdom and knowledge. Jesus Christ is the full revelation of God, and

“The Way” by which one may know, enjoy and glorify God, now and forever. (*Genesis 1:1, 26-29; Psalm 139:13-16; Exodus 20:1-7; I John 4:8-9; Galatians 5:22-23; Romans 1:19-20; Proverbs 1:7; John 1:14, John 14:6*)

### **ARTICLE 3 - DOCTRINE, continued...**

#### **B. The Inspiration of the Bible**

We believe that “All scripture is given by inspiration of God”, by which we understand the whole of the book called the Bible; however, we do not take this statement in the sense which it is sometimes foolishly said that works of human genius are inspired, but rather in the sense that the Holy Spirit gave the very words of the sacred writings to holy men of old; and that His divine inspiration is not in different degrees, but extends equally and fully to all parts of these writings - historical, poetical, doctrinal and prophetic- and to the smallest word and inflection of a word, provided such word was in the original manuscripts. (*II Timothy 3:16-17; II Peter 1:21; I Corinthians 2:13; Mark 12:26, 36; 13:11; Acts 1:16; Acts 2:4; II Samuel 23:1-2*)

#### **C. The Godhead**

We believe that the Godhead eternally exists in three persons: the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit; and that these three are one God, having different offices, yet having precisely the same nature, attributes and perfections, and worthy of precisely the same homage, confidence and obedience. (*Mark 12:29; John 1:1-4; Matthew 28:19-20;*

*Acts 5:3-4; II Corinthians 13:14; Hebrews 1:1-3; Revelation 1:4-6*)

#### **D. The Fall of Man**

We believe that man, originally created in the image and after the likeness of God, fell from his high and holy estate by eating the forbidden fruit, and as the consequence of his disobedience, the threatened penalty of death was then and there inflicted, so that his moral nature was not only grievously injured by the fall, but he totally lost all spiritual life, becoming dead in trespasses and sins, and subject to the power of the devil. (*Genesis 1:26; 2:17; 3:1-24; John 5:40; 6:53; Ephesians 2:1-3; I Timothy 5:6; I John 3:8*)

## **E. The Total Depravity of Man**

We believe that this spiritual death, or total corruption of human nature, has been transmitted to the entire human race of man, the man Christ Jesus only excepted; and hence that every child of Adam is born into the world with a nature which not only possesses no spark of divine life, but is essentially and unchangeably bad, being enmity against God and incapable by any process of self-improvement or self-will of measuring up to God's holy standards.

*(Genesis 6:5; Psalm 14:1-3; 51:5; Jeremiah 17:9; John 3:6; Romans 5:12-19, Romans 8:6-7)*

## **F. The Necessity of the New Birth**

We believe that, owing to this universal depravity and death in sin, no one can enter the Kingdom of God unless born again, and that no degree of reformation- however great, no attainment in morality - however high, no culture- however attractive,

no humanitarian and philanthropic schemes and societies- however useful, no baptism or other ordinance- however administered, can help the sinner take even one step toward heaven. A new nature imparted from above, a new life implanted by the Holy Spirit through the Word, is absolutely essential to salvation. *(Isaiah 64:6; John 3:3-7, Galatians 6:15; Phillipians 3:4-9; Titus 3:5; James 1:18; I Peter 1:23; II Peter 2:4)*

## **ARTICLE 3 - DOCTRINE, continued...**

## **G. The Provision for our Redemption**

We believe that our redemption has been accomplished solely by the shed blood of our Lord Jesus Christ, who was made to be sin, and made a curse for us, dying in our place as our substitute; thus paying the penalty for our guilt. No repentance, no feeling, no faith, no good resolutions, no sincere efforts, no submission to the rules and regulations of any church, or of all the churches that have existed since the days of the Apostles, can add in the very least to the value of that precious blood; or to the merit of that finished work, done for us by Him who united in His person true and proper deity with perfect and sinless humanity. *(Leviticus 17:11; Matthew 26:28; Romans 5:6-9; II Corinthians 5:21; Galatians 3:13; Ephesians 1:7; I Peter 1:18,19)*

## **H. Salvation by Grace through Faith**

We believe that Christ, in the fullness of the blessings He has secured by His obedience unto death, is received by faith alone. We believe that the Lord Jesus Christ died on the cross for all mankind, and that the sufficiency of this atoning

sacrifice to accomplish the redemption and justification of all who trust Him is assured by His literal, physical resurrection from the dead. The moment we trust in Jesus Christ as our Savior, we pass out of death into everlasting life, being justified from all things, accepted before the Father according to the measure of Christ's acceptance, loved as He is loved, and having place and portion as linked with Him, and one with Him forever. (*John 5:24; 17:23; Acts 13:39; Romans 5:1; I Corinthians 15: 1-4; Ephesians 2: 4-6,13; I John 4:17; 5:11,12*)

#### **I. The Assurance of Salvation**

We believe that it is the privilege, not only of some, but of all who are born again by the Spirit through faith in Christ as revealed in the Scriptures, to be assured of their salvation from the very day they take Him to be their Savior, and even after death or rapture, for no man can pluck us out of His Hand. This assurance is not founded upon any fancied discovery of their own worthiness, but wholly upon thy testimony of God in His written Word, exciting within His children, love, gratitude and obedience. (*Luke 10:20, 12:32; John 6:47; 10:28-30; Romans 8:33-39; II Corinthians 5:1,6-8; II Timothy 1:12, I John 5:13*)

#### **J. Christ the Theme of the Bible**

We believe that all the Scriptures- from first to last- center about our Lord Jesus Christ, in His person and work, in His first and second coming and hence that no chapter of the Old or New Testament is properly read or understood until it leads to Him; and moreover, that all the Scriptures from the first to the last, including every chapter of the Olds and New Testaments, were designated for our practical instruction. (*Luke 24:27,44; John 5:39; Acts 17:2,3; 18:28; 26:22,23; 28:23; Romans 15:4; I Corinthians 10:11*)

#### **K. The Person and Ministry of the Holy Spirit**

We believe that the Holy Spirit, not as an influence, but as a Divine Person, the source and power of all acceptable worship and service, is our abiding Comforter and Helper; that he never takes His departure from the Church, nor from the feeblest of the saints, but is ever present to testify of Christ, seeking to occupy us with Jesus Himself, and not with ourselves or our experience. (*John 7:38,39; 14:16,17; 15:26; 16:13, 14; Acts 1:8; Romans 8:9; Phillipians 3:3*)

### **ARTICLE 3 - DOCTRINE, continued...**

#### **L. The Church, the Body of Christ**

We believe that the Church, the Body and Bride of Christ, is composed of all who are born again and united by the Holy Spirit to the risen and ascended Son of God by the Holy Spirit; and that by the same Spirit we are all baptized into one body, whether we be Jews or Gentiles. As members of one another, we are

responsible to keep unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace, rising above all sectarian prejudices and denominational bigotry, and loving one another with a pure heart and fervently. (*Matthew 16:18; Acts 2:32-47; Romans 12:5; I Corinthians 12:12-27; Ephesians 1:20-23; 4:3-10; Colossians 3:14,15*)

#### **M. The Local Church**

We believe that the establishment and continuance of local churches is clearly taught and defined in the New Testament Scriptures; that such churches are to be autonomous and accountable to God; and that the ordinances of believer's water baptism by immersion and the Lord's Supper are scriptural means of testimony for the Church Age. (*Acts 2:41,42; 13:1-4; 20:17; 28-32; I Timothy 3:1-3; Titus 1: 5-11, Romans 16: 1,4; I Peter 5:1-4; Matthew 28:19,20; I Corinthians 11:23-26*)

#### **N. Separation**

We believe that we are called with a holy calling to walk, not after the fleshly nature, but after the Spirit, and so live in the Spirit that we shall not fulfill the lusts of the flesh. The flesh, being still in us to the end of our earthly pilgrimage, needs to be kept constantly in subjection to Christ, or it will surely manifest its presence to the dishonor of His name. (*Romans 8:12,13; 13:14; Galatians 5:16-25; Ephesians 4:22-24; Colossians 3:1-10; I Peter 1:14-16; I John 3:5-9*)

#### **O. Marriage and Morals**

We believe that marriage is a divinely instituted unconditional covenant between one man and one woman; which covenant is to be protected in all love and faithfulness through all of life; that a Christian is at liberty to marry who he or she will, "only in the Lord", i.e., another Christian; and that sexual activity is to be sanctified as the exclusive expression of love and joy between the marriage partners. We oppose homosexuality, adultery, all fornication, and unscriptural divorce. (*Genesis 2:18-24; Malachi 2: 14-16; Matthew 19: 6-9; Hebrews 13:4; I Corinthians 6:18; 7:2, 10-16,39; Romans 1:24-29; Exodus 20:14,17*)

#### **P. The Eternal State**

We believe that the souls of those who have trusted in the Lord Jesus Christ for salvation do at death immediately pass into His presence, and there remain in conscious bliss until the resurrection of the body at His coming, when soul and body reunited shall be associated with Him forever in glory. The souls of unbelievers remain after death in conscious misery until the final judgement of the Great White Throne at the close of the Millennium, when soul and body reunited will be cast into the Lake of Fire, not to be annihilated, but to be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the

glory of His power. (*Luke 16:19-26; 23:43; II Corinthians 5:8, Phillipians 1:23; II Thessalonians 1: 7-9; Jude 6,7; Revelation 20:11-15*)

## **Q. The Second Coming of Christ**

We believe that the world will not be converted during the present dispensation, but is fast ripening for the tribulation judgement, even as there will be a fearful apostasy in professing Christendom. We, however, believe in and are constantly looking for the blessed hope, the personal, imminent, pre-tribulation coming of the Lord Jesus Christ for His redeemed ones, and in His subsequent return to earth with His saints to introduce the Millennial Age, when Israel shall be restored to its own land, and the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord. (*Luke 12:35-40; 17:26-30; 18:8; Acts 15:14-17; II Thessalonians 2:3-8; II Timothy 3:1-5; Titus 2:11-15, I Thessalonians 4:13-18*)

## **ARTICLE 4 - MEMBERSHIP**

### **Section 1**

Eligibility for Church membership is extended to any person who has by faith accepted Jesus Christ as personal Savior, gives assurance of his or her desire to live a consistent Christian life, and expresses agreement with and willingness to abide by the Doctrinal Statement and Constitution of this Church. Any believer joining this Church agrees, by God's grace to support this Church with his/her prayers, faithful attendance, Christian service, systematic giving and to honor the Christian ordinances of the Lord's Supper and Believer's Baptism by Immersion. Persons shall be received into membership upon satisfactory interview by the Elder Board. (*Acts 2:40-47; Acts 18:8-11; II Corinthians 9:6,7; Ephesians 4: 1-16; 6:18; Hebrews 10:23-25*)

### **Section 2**

It shall be within the providence of the Elders to review the Church membership whenever it deems it necessary. Members who seem to manifest inconsistency or flagrant sin in their Christian lives, a wrong attitude toward the Church doctrinal standards, or indifference toward the life and work of the Church, shall be investigated for the purpose of remedying any weakness in their Christian lives. All members of this Church shall be subject to its discipline, through the Elders. If remedy fails, the Elders may remove such person(s) from the membership roll and report to the membership, or place on a passive roll. (*Matthew 18:15-18; Galatians 6:1; I Timothy 5:20*)

### **Section 3**

Persons on a passive roll shall not be entitled to hold office or vote in Church matters. Persons on a passive roll may be restored to full membership standing by action of the Elder Board.

#### **Section 4**

The name of any person removed or resigned from the roll of the Church shall be reported at a regularly convened membership meeting.

#### **Section 5**

Members must be 18 years or older to vote in Church matters, and at least 21 years old in order to serve on the Elder Board or Trustee Board.

### **ARTICLE 5 - ELDER BOARD**

#### **Section 1**

The government of this church is vested in its membership, and executed through the Elder Board. It shall consist of men identified as meeting the scriptural qualifications for an elder outlined in 1 Timothy 3:1-7, and Titus 1:6-9. These are to be men of proven Christian character, who make mature decisions on issues of Christian liberty, and who are seeking to live lives set apart to honor Christ.

#### **Section 2**

The Elder Board members shall be slated by a nominating committee and elected by a 3/4 vote of the membership present and voting. This board shall consist of the Senior Pastor, full-time Assistant Pastor(s), and at least two Lay-Elders for each Pastor-Elder on the board (not to exceed 12 Lay-Elders.) The Senior Pastor and Assistant Pastor(s) shall have voting privileges on the Elder Board.

#### **Section 3**

The Elder Board shall oversee all matters of the church in the spirit of the instruction given them in 1 Peter 5 by shepherding the flock of God, avoiding "lording" their position over those entrusted to them, and remaining consistent examples to the flock. They shall be vested with the executive power of the congregation in its dealings with pastors, employees, affiliated organizations, branch works and any outside denominations and organizations. The Senior Pastor and Assistant Pastor(s) shall have voting privileges on the Elder Board. Pastoral Elders or employees of the church who serve on the Elder Board shall exempt themselves from voting on issues where there is a conflict of interest.

#### **Section 4**

The Elder Board shall give its attention to, have the responsibility for, and exercise the supervision of the “**People Care**” of the church. They shall pray for and seek the salvation of the lost (*Mat. 28:19-20, 2 Tim 4:5*), see to the ministry of encouragement to visitors, recruit and interview prospective members, stimulate the unity of the Church (*Eph 4:3; Rom 14:19*), serve the Lord’s Supper (*Luke 22:19-20; 1 Cor 11:23-25*); attend to the sick and sorrowing (*James 5:14; James 1:27*), and seek to restore the delinquent and fallen (*Gal 6:1-2*). They shall have the authority to receive and remove members from the church roll (see Article 4, Section 4).

#### **Section 5**

The Elder Board shall give its attention to, have responsibility for, and exercise the supervision of all the “**Programs and Ministries**” of the church (*Eph 4:11-13*). The Programs of the church shall address the areas of Worship, Mission, and Nurture.

They shall initiate or approve new ministries and evaluate the effectiveness of existing ministries as wisdom and the Spirit of God lead; shall monitor all the ministries, knowing their purpose and function; shall direct, advise, and assist ministry leaders committee chairmen; and shall hear and prayerfully consider all ministry suggestions and needs. All ministry leaders and participants shall recognize an accountability to the Elder Board.

#### **ARTICLE 5 - THE ELDER BOARD, continued...**

#### **Section 6**

The Elder Board shall be responsible for the “**Personnel**” of the Church, establishing needed committees and appointing committee members, and approving ministry workers and employed personnel. The exception is that the Pastor(s) are called by the membership.

#### **Section 7**

The Elder Board shall be responsible for the “**Problems**” of the Church. They shall hear any complaints, inadequacies, and improprieties, responding in the truth of the Word of God and wisdom as promised by God (*2 Tim 3:16; James 1:5*).

#### **Section 8**

The Elder Board shall be responsible for the “**Policies**” of the Church concerning the spiritual matters of the church, establishing and maintaining a policy and

practice book or file. The Elder Board shall also review and approve or disapprove any trustee policies.

### **Section 9**

The Elder Board shall approve the annual proposed budget, any expansion plans, and together with the Trustee Board recommend these to the members of the church at the Annual Meeting or a specially called meeting.

### **Section 10**

The Elder Board shall hear the recommendations of the Missionary Committee for approval of new missionary support. The Elder Board shall consider this request from a ministry and policy view, before submission to the membership for vote.

### **Section 11**

The Elder Board shall not transfer, sell or purchase any real estate, nor encumber with loan, except by express authorization conveyed through a two-thirds vote of the membership present at a constitutionally called business meeting.

### **Section 12**

The Elder Board shall have authority to call congregational meetings for the purpose of informing the membership, recommending actions, calling for a vote, and/or receiving advice and instruction from the membership. The Elder Board shall be subject to the majority vote of the membership.

### **Section 13**

The Elder Board shall meet monthly or more often as required. Minutes shall be taken of all meetings. The deciding factor in any vote taken in an Elder Board meeting shall be a majority vote of the members present. A quorum shall consist of fifty percent of the Elder Board. This board shall elect its chairman from among lay members of the board. No pastoral staff member or paid employee of Oak Lawn Bible Church is eligible to serve as chairman of the Elder Board.

## **ARTICLE 6 - TRUSTEE BOARD**

### **Section 1**

The Trustee Board shall be responsible for the care of the properties and finances of the Church.

## **Section 2**

The Trustee Board shall consist of the Senior Pastor, the Clerk, and the Treasurer serving one year terms to a maximum of three years and as many Trustees as the Elder Board deems necessary serving rotating three year terms without succession. The Clerk, Treasurer, and Trustees shall be slated by a nominating committee and elected by membership. Members of the Elder Board may not serve concurrently on the Trustee Board.

## **Section 3**

The Trustee Board shall be responsible for the inspection, maintenance, and repair of all properties- including buildings, grounds, parsonages, vehicles, and equipment. They shall supervise the use of Church property and equipment, and the purchase of new equipment.

## **Section 4**

The Trustee Board shall handle legal matters related to Oak Lawn Bible Church. Authorization for legal assistance must be approved by the Elder Board.

## **Section 5**

The Trustee Board shall have the oversight of the financial matters and records of the Church- including the following:

- A. Receiving and disbursing funds in accordance with the Annual Budget.
- B. Reviewing and amending the budget presented by the Budget Committee, and submitting it to the Elder Board.
- C. Reviewing the monthly financial statements, and reporting significant variances to the Elder Board with action taken and/or recommendations to the Elder Board.

## **Section 6**

The Trustee Board shall be responsible for the development of any expansion plans. All expansion plans must be approved by the Elder Board and congregation.

## **Section 7**

The Trustee Board shall approve or disapprove the requests of the Missionary Committee for new appropriations, before such a request goes to the Elder Board and the congregation.

## **ARTICLE 6 - TRUSTEE BOARD, continued...**

### **Section 8**

The Trustee Board shall meet monthly or more often as required. Minutes shall be submitted to the Elder Board. The majority vote shall rule in all decisions. A quorum shall consist of fifty percent of the Trustee Board. This Board shall elect its chairman from among its members.

## **ARTICLE 7 - THE DEACON BOARD**

### **Section 1**

The Deacon Board shall be responsible for specific ministry tasks identified by the Elder Board as an area of need. It shall consist of the chairperson of each committee who shall then be subject to the approval of the Elder Board. The purpose of this board is to carry out and coordinate each of their ministries at Oak Lawn Bible Church. This shall be done in the spirit of Acts 6-1-6 and each Deacon Board member shall meet the qualifications of 1 Timothy 3:8-13.

### **Section 2**

A chairperson from each church committee shall be elected by their committee and submitted to the Elder Board within 2 months after the Annual Meeting for board approval. The Deacon Board shall then elect a chairperson and secretary from its lay members and submit their selections to the Elder Board for approval. The Deacon Board shall consist of a chairperson from each church committee designated by the Elder Board to be a part of the Deacon Board; the Senior Pastor; any Associate Pastor assigned to this committee by the Senior Pastor or the Elder Board. The Elder Board may appoint any additional members as appropriate.

### **Section 3**

The Deacon Board shall meet at least three (3) times a year in the months of May, September and January in order to pray for the ministries of the church, coordinate their ministries with the overall church ministry, discuss cooperation issues where there may be an overlap with other ministries in the church, and to inform one another of ministry goals and ideas. The minutes from the Deacon

Board shall be submitted to the Elder Board for review. Any actions recommended by the Deacon Board must be approved by the Elder Board.

#### **Section 4**

Any vacancy on the Deacon Board due to the resignation of a committee chairperson shall be filled by the committee they served on electing a new chairperson and submitting their name to the Elder Board for approval.

### **ARTICLE 8 - NOMINATING COMMITTEE**

#### **Section 1**

During the months of January or February the Nominating Committee and its chairman shall be submitted by the Elder Board to the membership for their approval by vote. This committee shall consist of six men, including its chairman, to be chosen as follows: two members from the Elder Board, one member from the Trustee Board, and three from the membership.

The Nominating Committee, shall place in nomination at the Annual Meeting, candidates for election to fill vacancies in the elective offices of the Church. These offices shall be Elders, Trustees, Treasurer, and Clerk. It shall be within the province of the members of the congregation to accept or reject in part or in whole the committee's report by a majority vote. In the event the report is rejected in part or in whole, or is incomplete as to filling all positions, this committee shall continue to function, unless otherwise ordered by the congregation.

#### **Section 2**

The Nominating Committee shall thoroughly investigate the qualifications and capabilities of every person considered for office. When a majority of the committee agrees to consider a candidate, the proposed candidate shall be examined in a regularly called meeting of the committee.

For all candidates, a member of the committee shall read to the candidate, who is willing to serve for nomination, the constitutional requirements for the office in question. The committee shall examine the candidate as to his/her adherence to the Word of God, his/her demonstrated Christian maturity, his/her agreement with the doctrinal positions of this church, his/her willingness to follow the constitution of this church, and his/her willingness to live in accordance with the standards of a leader set forth in the Word of God in 1 Timothy 3, and Titus 1.

To be placed in nomination, a candidate must be agreed upon by the committee majority.

### **Section 3**

The standards for those who would serve on the Elder Board are to be consistent with those outlined in 1 Timothy 3:1-7 and Titus 1:6-9:

*1 Tim 3: 1 Here is a trustworthy saying: If anyone sets his heart on being an overseer, he desires a noble task. 2 Now the overseer must be above reproach, the husband of but one wife, temperate, self-controlled, respectable, hospitable, able to teach, 3 not given to drunkenness, not violent but gentle, not quarrelsome, not a lover of money. 4 He must manage his own family well and see that his children obey him with proper respect. 5 (If anyone does not know how to manage his own family, how can he take care of God's church?) 6 He must not be a recent convert, or he may become conceited and fall under the same judgment as the devil. 7 He must also have a good reputation with outsiders, so that he will not fall into disgrace and into the devil's trap. (NIV)*

#### **Article 8, Section 3 continued...**

*Titus 1:6 An elder must be blameless, the husband of but one wife, a man whose children believe and are not open to the charge of being wild and disobedient. 7 Since an overseer is entrusted with God's work, he must be blameless-- not overbearing, not quick-tempered, not given to drunkenness, not violent, not pursuing dishonest gain. 8 Rather he must be hospitable, one who loves what is good, who is self-controlled, upright, holy and disciplined. 9 He must hold firmly to the trustworthy message as it has been taught, so that he can encourage others by sound doctrine and refute those who oppose it. (NIV)*

The Nominating Committee shall consider whether or not a candidate for the Elder Board demonstrates a Christian character that would reflect these biblical qualifications.

The standards for those who would serve in other offices of the church shall be consistent with those outlined for the deaconate in 1 Timothy 3:8-12.

*1 Tim 3:8 Deacons, likewise, are to be men worthy of respect, sincere, not indulging in much wine, and not pursuing dishonest gain. 9 They must keep hold of the deep truths of the faith with a clear conscience. 10 They must first be tested; and then if there is nothing against them, let them serve as deacons. 11 In the same way, their wives are to be women worthy of respect, not malicious talkers but temperate and trustworthy in everything. 12 A deacon must be the husband of but one wife and must manage his children and his household well. (NIV)*

### **Section 4**

In case of vacancies of offices on the Elder Board, the board shall appoint a Nominating Committee to submit candidates for unexpired terms to the membership for election; said committee to be composed and function in accordance with Article 7 Section 1. In the event an unexpired term is six months or less, said vacancy can be filled at the discretion of the Elder Board. The person filling the unexpired term shall be eligible for congregational vote at the end of his partial term.

## **ARTICLE 9 - PASTORS AND OFFICERS**

### **Section 1**

There shall be elected as Officers of the Church, Elders, a Church Clerk, a Treasurer, and as many Trustees as the Elder Board deems necessary. The Senior Pastor, pastoral Elders, and lay-elders shall constitute the Elder Board. The Senior Pastor, Treasurer, Clerk, and Trustees form the Trustee Board.

### **Section 2**

The term of office for the Elders shall be three years, the Trustees shall be three years, and the Church Clerk and the Treasurer- one year.

- A. The Elders, upon completion of full term in office, shall not be eligible for election to the office of Elder or Trustee during the year immediately following the full term.
- B. Any Pastor's or Officer's service may be terminated for any cause at any time by majority vote of the membership after a fair and impartial hearing conducted under the supervision of the Elder Board, at a closed membership meeting.
- C. All Officers shall serve until their successors are elected, except as provided in paragraph "B" of Section 2.

### **Section 3**

A Pastor or any assistant or associate Pastor may be called, upon a three-fourths vote of the congregation, after recommendation by the Elder Board, or by a committee appointed by the Elder Board and congregation. Pastors shall serve until their pastorate is terminated by resignation or by request of the congregation.

Pastors shall give a minimum of thirty days notice before termination of their services. In the event the congregation votes the Senior Pastor's or any assistant or associate Pastor's service to be terminated abruptly, the salary shall

continue for one month and not to exceed six months, at the discretion of the Elder Board.

## **ARTICLE 10 - RESPONSIBILITIES OF PASTORS AND OFFICERS**

### **Section 1**

The Senior Pastor shall have general oversight of the spiritual life, regular services and ministration of the ordinances of the Church, shall be ex-officio member of all committee meetings connected with the Church or any of its organizations, and shall conscientiously perform such duties as may be arranged between the Elder Board and he. If at any time his personal belief, preaching or teaching shall not be in full accord with the doctrinal standard and statement of this Church, his services as Pastor shall be terminated. (Article 12, Section 2 B)

### **Section 2**

Any assistant Pastor(s) of this Church shall perform such duties as may be designated by the Senior Pastor, Elder Board.

## **ARTICLE 10 - RESPONSIBILITIES OF PASTORS AND OFFICERS, continued...**

### **Section 3**

Elders shall have the responsibility for the counsel, teaching and discipline of members as provided for in the Word of God. They shall seek to model the Christian life before the Church. They shall see to the responsibility of the compassionate benevolent care of the widows and the poor. They shall seek to model the Christian life before the Church.

### **Section 4**

The Church Clerk shall keep an accurate record of all congregational business meetings, Trustee Board meetings, and other meetings as designated by the membership or Elder Board. The Clerk shall be responsible for the keeping of a record of the Church membership, deaths, dedications and baptisms. The Clerk shall have custody of the Church Seal, official Church documents and records.

In the event that the Church Clerk is not able to perform his/her duties, or there is a vacancy in this office, the duties of the Clerk may be taken care of by any qualified member authorized by the Elder Board. The Elder Board shall have the authority to appoint a Clerk for the unexpired term.

## **Section 5**

The Treasurer is responsible for the implementation of all financial policies, procedures and practices for the Oak Lawn Bible Church. The Treasurer is the custodian of all funds.

The Treasurer is accountable for the following:

- A. Counting of funds, which will be performed by at least two of the following: Treasurer, Trustees, Elders, Clerk or those who have been approved by both the Trustee and Elder boards.
- B. Provide monthly financial reports to the Trustee Board.
- C. Contribute to sound fiscal decisions by providing the Trustee Board advice and guidance in the interpretation of Church financial trends.
- D. Review and approve monthly bank reconciliation.
- E. Manage the cash needs of the Church by overseeing the Church's disbursements.
- F. Protect the properties of the Church by annually procuring cost effective insurance coverage.

In the event the Treasurer is not able to perform his/her duties or there is a vacancy in the office, the duties of Treasurer may be taken care of by any qualified member authorized by the Elder Board. The Elder Board shall have the authority to appoint a Treasurer for the un-expired term.

## **ARTICLE 10 - RESPONSIBILITIES OF PASTORS AND OFFICERS,** continued...

### **Section 6**

The Church Clerk and Treasurer shall be people capable of performing the duties of their respective offices, and their spiritual qualifications shall meet the standards as sets forth in the doctrinal statement and constitution of the Church.

### **Section 7**

Within one month after each Annual Meeting, the Chairman of the Elder Board shall require the Pastor and all Church officers to sign the doctrinal standards of the Church, and shall require said signatures to be filed with the Clerk.

## **ARTICLE 11 - MEETINGS**

### **Section 1**

The fiscal year of this Church shall end on the last day of February. The Annual Meeting shall be held during the month of March, as scheduled by the Elder Board and announced two or more weeks in advance.

### **Section 2**

At the Annual Meeting, the minutes of the preceding Annual Meeting and the report of the Church Clerk shall be read, the Church's yearly financial report- including the proposed budget- will be presented, and the report from the Nominating Committee submitted to the membership for action. Other business as may be necessary shall also be transacted.

### **Section 3**

Any regular or called meeting of the congregation may be a constituted meeting for the transaction of business, provided the announcement of said meeting be given from the pulpit at two regular Church services on the Sunday preceding the meeting, except the Annual Meeting (Article 10, Section 1) and amending this Constitution (Article 12). Sunday morning and evening services and the prayer meeting shall be the regular meetings of the Church.

### **Section 4**

The Elder Board shall call a special congregational business meeting upon the written request of ten percent of the members with power to vote; said meeting and its purpose to be announced as provided in Section 3 of Article 10 and convened within thirty days after filing request with the Elder Board.

### **Section 5**

A majority vote of the voting members present at any constitutionally called congregational business meeting shall be required for the election of officers or to render final decisions in any matter under consideration, except the transfer, sale or purchase of real estate, or securing of a loan (Article 5, Section 11), the calling of a pastor (Article 8, Section 3) or the amending of this Constitution (Article 12).

**ARTICLE 11 - MEETINGS**, continued...

### **Section 6**

The voting members present at any business meeting called in accordance with the requirements of the constitution shall be considered a quorum for the transaction of business.

## **Section 7**

In the conduct of business meetings, any parliamentary questions not covered by this Constitution shall be decided by the latest edition of "Robert's Rules of Order".

## **ARTICLE 12 - ORDINATION**

When in the judgment of the Elder Board, a man in this membership is called to the Christian ministry, it shall be within the power of the Elder Board to call and conduct a Council for Ordination, provided such authority is granted by vote of the Church.

The Ordaining Council shall thoroughly examine all applicants for Ordination as to their call to the Christian ministry, education, Christian experience, reputation, character, doctrinal belief and demonstrated efficiency in Christian service.

The following shall not be ordained into the ministry:

- A. One who has not served six months as Pastor, Assistant Pastor or in definite Christian work in such a manner as to convey reasonable evidence of God's call to the ministry.
- B. One who does not meet the scriptural qualifications of an Elder set forth in 1 Timothy 3 and Titus 1.

It shall be within the province of the Elder Board to discipline even to revoking the ordination credentials of any minister, ordained under this Constitution, if the said minister is found to no longer evidence the qualifications of an elder after an impartial hearing in the spirit of I Corinthians 13.

The minister in question shall have the privilege of appealing his case to the congregation within sixty days after the decision of the Elder Board.

## **ARTICLE 13 - AMENDMENTS**

This Constitution may be amended by a two-third vote of the voting members present and voting at any regular or special meeting provided the proposed amendment has been presented to the congregation at each regular church service for the two Sundays preceding said meeting, and provided an exact copy

of the proposed amendment has been conspicuously posted in the Church, with copies provided for each Church Member.

### **HISTORY SUMMARY**

A Sunday School was started in the home of Max Conrad on 54<sup>th</sup> Avenue, in Oak Lawn. From 1926, this continued for three years, until the Sunday School had outgrown the home. In the fall of 1929, the Sunday School was moved to a store front at 5137 West 95<sup>th</sup> Street. Within a few months, this ministry adopted "The Mission" for its name.

In the Spring of 1934, under the acting pastoral leadership of Mr. Walter Bach, the Mission became a branch of the Cicero Bible Church. One year later, on May 6, 1935, the Church organized and became Oak Lawn Bible Church- with a charter membership of twenty-one persons. The following week the Church became a member of the Independent Fundamental Churches of America. Later, on September 22, 1935, Mr. Bach was ordained to the ministry of our Lord and became the first Pastor called by Oak Lawn Bible Church.

Three lots of land had been donated during its first year and in the summer of 1936, the Church began its first building program. On November 8, 1936, the new building was officially dedicated to the Lord's service.

As the work and ministries grew, so did the congregation. On September 9, 1953, the members approved the action of the Official Board to erect an educational addition to the building. This was dedicated on November 11, 1956.

The latest project was the 400 seat sanctuary and fellowship hall, which was dedicated to the Lord on May 8, 1987.

The Senior Pastors of the church have been- Rev. Bach, who served until 1961, Rev. Everett Hovey, who was installed as Youth Director in 1955 and called as Pastor in 1961, Rev. Curtis Loux, who served from March of 1964 to January 1978, and Rev. Daniel Lupton, who served from March 1978 until August of 1989. In November of 1989, Rev. Chris Ranley was called and served until November of 1993. Pastor Robert Wheeler was called to Oak Lawn Bible Church in July of 1994 and currently serves as Senior Pastor.

Faithful to God's Word and the Great Commission, OLBC supports 15 missionaries worldwide, even as it continues locally in worship, nurture and evangelism.