

CONSTITUTION & BY-LAWS

RINCON BAPTIST CHURCH

Tucson, Arizona

PREAMBLE

We establish this constitution to preserve and secure the principle of our faith, and to govern in an orderly manner consistent with God's Holy, infallible Word, and to preserve liberties inherent in each individual member of this church and the freedom of action of this body in relation to other organizations of like faith and order.

I. NAME

This body shall be known as RINCON BAPTIST CHURCH, INC., of Tucson, Arizona, located at 7500 E. Golf Links Road, 85730.

II. MISSION STATEMENT

- To be a dynamic spiritual organism empowered by the Holy Spirit to share Christ with as many people as possible in our church, community, and throughout the world.
- To be a worshipping fellowship, experiencing an awareness of God, recognizing His person, and responding in obedience to His leadership.
- To experience an increasingly meaningful fellowship with God and fellow believers.
- To help people experience a growing knowledge of God and man.
- To be a church that ministers unselfishly to people in the community and the world in Jesus' name.
- To be a church with the purpose of being Christlike in our daily living emphasizing total commitment of life, personality, and possessions to the lordship of Christ.

III. STATEMENT OF FAITH

The Holy Bible is the inspired Word of God and is the basis for any statement of faith. This church subscribes to the doctrinal statement of "The Baptist Faith and Message" as adopted by the Southern Baptist Convention in 2000. We band ourselves together as a body of baptized believers in Jesus Christ personally committed to sharing the good news of salvation to lost mankind. The ordinances of the church are baptism and the Lord's Supper.

IV. CHURCH COVENANT

Having been led, as we believe, by the Spirit of God, to receive Jesus Christ as our Savior and Lord, and on the profession of our faith, having been baptized in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and the Holy Spirit, we do now, in the presence of God and this assembly, most solemnly and joyfully enter into covenant with one another as one body in Christ.

We engage, therefore, by the aid of the Holy Spirit to walk together in Christian love, to strive for the advancement of this church, in knowledge, holiness, and comfort; to promote its prosperity and spirituality; to sustain its worship, ordinances, discipline, and doctrines; to contribute cheerfully and regularly to the support of the ministry, the expenses of the church, and the relief of the poor, and the spreading of the gospel through all nations.

We also engage to maintain family and personal devotions; to faithfully educate our children; to seek the salvation of our family and acquaintances; to walk circumspectly in the world; to be just in our dealings, faithful in our engagements and exemplary in our deportment; to avoid all divisive behavior; and to be zealous in our efforts to advance the kingdom of our Savior.

We further engage to watch over one another in Christian love; to remember one another in prayer; to aid one another in sickness and distress; to cultivate Christian sympathy in feeling and Christian courtesy in speech; to be slow to take offense, but always ready for reconciliation and mindful of the instructions of our Savior to secure it without delay.

We moreover promise that when we remove from this place we will, as soon as possible, unite with some other church where we can carry out the spirit of this covenant and the principles of God's Word.

BYLAWS

1. MEMBERSHIP

SECTION 1. GENERAL

This is a sovereign and democratic Baptist church under the lordship of Jesus Christ. The membership retains unto itself the exclusive right of self-government in all phases of the spiritual and temporal life of this church.

The membership reserves the exclusive right to determine who shall be members of this church and the condition of such membership.

SECTION 2. CANDIDACY

Any person may offer himself or herself as a candidate for membership in this church. All such candidates shall be presented to the church at any regular church service for membership in any of the following ways:

- (1) By profession of faith and for baptism according to the policies of this church.
- (2) By promise of a letter of recommendation from another Baptist church.
- (3) By restoration upon a statement of prior conversion experience and baptism in a church of like faith and order when no letter is obtainable.

All new members will be interviewed by the Pastor or his designee and be presented at the next business meeting for formal membership.

SECTION 3. NEW MEMBERS ORIENTATION

New members will be encouraged to participate in a church's new member orientation.

SECTION 4. VOTING RIGHTS OF MEMBERS

Every active member of the church is entitled to vote on all questions submitted to the church in conference, providing the member is present.

SECTION 5. TERMINATION OF MEMBERSHIP

(1) By letter of request from a church of like faith and order.

(2) If any member requests to be released from their covenant to this church, the church, after it has patiently and kindly endeavored to secure his continuance in the fellowship. If such endeavors fail, the request may be granted and his membership terminated.

(3) Should a member become an offense to the church and its good name by reason of immoral or unchristian conduct, or by persistent breach of their covenant vows, or the propagation of heresy, the deacon body may recommend termination of their membership, but only after due notice and hearing, and after faithful efforts have been made to bring such member to repentance and amendment according to Matthew 18: 15-19.

II. CHURCH ADMINISTRATION AND DUTIES

The following positions must be filled by members of this church. They consist of the pastor, ministerial staff, deacons, moderator, clerk, treasurer, trustees, and statutory agent.

SECTION 1. PASTOR

The pastor is responsible for leading the church to function as a New Testament church. The pastor will equip the congregation for their work of ministry. He will provide leadership to the organizations and the church staff to perform their tasks.

A pastor shall be chosen and called by the church whenever a vacancy occurs. His election shall take place at a meeting called for that purpose, of which at least one week's public notice has been given.

A pastor search committee consisting of five members shall be recommended by the church council to the church membership for election. All recommended members for the committee will have been members of the church for at least one year. A special business meeting will be called specifically for the discussion of and voting on the pastor search committee. The committee will be charged to seek out a suitable pastor in accordance with 1 Timothy 3. Any church member has the privilege of making a referral by submitting a resume to the pastor search committee. The pastor search committee shall bring to the consideration of the church, during a special called meeting, only one name at a time and its recommendation will constitute a nomination. Election shall be by secret ballot with an affirmative vote of three-fourths of those members present.

The pastor, thus elected, shall serve until the relationship is terminated by his request or the church's request. The pastor shall give at least two weeks notice at the time of resignation before terminating his responsibilities as pastor.

The pastor shall be paid such salary and allowances as may be authorized by the church. He shall also be allowed absences as authorized by the church.

In cases where the church membership believes the pastor should be terminated the following shall apply. A special meeting shall be called for this purpose, of which at least one week's public notice has been given. The meeting may be called upon the recommendation of a majority of the personnel committee and the deacons or by written petition signed by not less than one-fourth of the resident church members. The moderator for this meeting shall be designated by the members present by majority vote, and he shall be someone other than the pastor. The vote to declare the office vacant shall be by secret ballot; an affirmative vote of three fourths of the members present is necessary to declare the office vacant. Except in instances of gross misconduct by the pastor so excluded from office; the church will compensate the pastor with not less than one-twelfth of his total annual compensation. The termination shall be immediate and the compensation shall be rendered in not more than 30 days.

SECTION 2. MINISTERIAL STAFF

The ministerial staff shall be called and employed as the church membership determines the need for such offices. A job description shall be written when the need for a staff member is determined. Those staff members of whom the church required evidence of a personal call of God to minister shall be recommended to the church by the personnel committee and called by church action. At the time of resignation, not less than a two-week notice shall be given to the church. The church may vote to vacate such positions upon recommendation of the personnel committee, such termination being immediate, and the compensation conditions being the same as for the pastor, except that the amount shall relate to the individual's compensation. The vote must be passed by three-fourths of the membership present in order to declare the position vacant.

SECTION 3. DEACONS

The church membership shall elect deacons by ballot at regular business meetings of the church. There shall be one deacon for assigned service for every 10 to 15 active church families. The criteria in 1 Timothy 3 shall be followed when electing deacons.

Deacons shall serve on a rotating basis. Each year the assigned term of office of one-third of the number of deacons shall expire, and election shall be held to fill vacancies and to add to the deacons such numbers as the church size warrants. In case of death or removal or incapacity to serve, the church may elect a deacon to fill the unexpired term. After serving a three-year term assignment, a deacon shall be eligible for re-election only after the lapse of at least one year. There shall be no obligation to constitute as an assigned deacon one who has been a deacon in another church; but in such instances as one might be chosen by this church for assignment as a deacon, his previous ordination by another church of like faith and order shall suffice for this church.

The replacement of deacons shall be through a yokefellow program. The church membership shall vote on members to be deacons. The newly voted members will then participate in a one year program where they will work with an assigned deacon who is

scheduled to rotate off in the next year. They will then replace that deacon after a year of mentorship.

In accordance with the meaning of the work and the practice in the New Testament, deacons are to be servants of the church. Their task is to serve with the pastor and ministerial staff in performing the pastoral ministry tasks of:

- (1) Leading the church in the achievement of its mission.
- (2) Proclaiming the Gospel to believers and unbelievers.
- (3) Caring for church members and other people in the community

SECTION 4. CLERK

The church membership shall annually elect a clerk as its clerical officer. The clerk shall be responsible for keeping a suitable record of all official actions of the church, except as otherwise herein provided. The clerk shall be responsible for keeping a register of names of members, with dates of admission, dismissal, death, or erasure, together with a record of baptisms. The clerk shall issue letters of dismissal voted by the church, preserve and file all communications and official written reports, and give required notice of all meetings where notice is necessary, as indicated in these bylaws. The clerk shall be responsible for preparing the annual letter of the church to the association.

The clerk may delegate responsibilities to church members for assistance. All church records are church property and shall be kept in the church office, when an office is maintained.

SECTION 5. TREASURER

The nominating committee shall nominate a church treasurer for election annually. It shall be the duty of the treasurer to receive, preserve, and pay out, upon receipt of vouchers approved and signed by authorized personnel, all money or things of value paid or given to the church, keeping at all times an itemized account of all receipts and disbursements. It shall be the duty of the treasurer to render to the church at each regular business meeting an itemized report of the receipts and disbursements of the preceding month. The treasurer's report and records shall be audited annually by an auditing committee or public accountant. The church will pay for a bond for the treasurer.

Upon rendering the annual account at the end of each fiscal year, and its acceptance and approval by the church, the records shall be delivered by the treasurer to the church. The church shall keep and preserve the account as a part of the permanent records of the church.

SECTION 6. TRUSTEES

The nominating committee shall nominate church members for the trustee positions. The church shall elect three trustees to serve as legal officers for the church. They shall hold in trust the church property. Upon a specific vote of the church authorizing each action, they shall have the power to buy, sell, mortgage, lease, or transfer any church property. When the signatures of trustees are required, they shall sign legal documents involving the sale, mortgage, purchase, or rental of property, or other legal documents related to church-approved matters. Trustees shall serve on a rotating basis, with one new trustee being elected every year.

SECTION 7. STATUTORY AGENT

A statutory agent shall be nominated by the nominating committee and elected by the church as needed, for the purpose of completing the requirements of the Arizona State Corporation Commission.

SECTION 8. MODERATOR

The pastor or associate pastor shall be the presiding officer over all business sessions of the church. In the absence of such, the chairman of deacons shall preside. In the absence of any of the above members, the clerk shall call the church to order and preside over the election of an acting moderator.

SECTION 9. SUNDAY SCHOOL DIRECTOR

The Sunday school director shall be elected by the church membership. The Sunday school director serves as the general administrative leader of a church's Sunday school ministry. This person is responsible for coordinating the work of all Sunday school classes, departments, and other Bible study groups.

SECTION 10. OTHER CHURCH EMPLOYEES

These employees do not need to be officers or members of the church. They may be hired from the general public. Non-ministerial staff members shall be employed as the church determines the need for their services. The church personnel committee shall have the authority to employ and to terminate services of non-ministerial staff members. Such employment and termination of services shall be with the recommendation of the supervising staff member and, as appropriate, with the consultation of related committees of the church.

III. COMMITTEES

SECTION 1. GENERAL

The church may establish such committees as it deems necessary. A minimum of three members will be nominated by the nominating committee and elected by the church per committee. All church committee members shall be recommended by the church nominating committee and elected by the church unless otherwise specified within these bylaws. Committee members shall serve on a three-year rotation basis with one-third to be elected each year. The pastor and associate pastor will serve as ex-officio members of all committees. A deacon may be required to be a member of certain committees. The committees are not limited to committee membership for the completion of duties. Committees are encouraged to utilize the talents of other church attendees for projects.

If the committee requires funding from the church to fulfill responsibilities, it shall develop and present a budget to the stewardship committee for maintenance, repair and supplies necessary to meet commitments. All committees shall report activities regularly at the monthly business meeting.

SECTION 2. NOMINATING COMMITTEE

The nominating committee coordinates the staffing of all church leadership positions that are filled by volunteers. The nominating committee recommends persons for all volunteer positions to be elected by the church membership. This committee shall consist of three members elected by the church, serving on a rotating basis, with one new member being elected every year. The committee shall present to the church membership, those being recommended for committees at the November business meeting. These recommendations would then take effect on 1 January of the New Year.

SECTION 3. PERSONNEL COMMITTEE

The personnel committee assists the church in matters related to employed personnel administration. Its work includes such areas as determining staff needs, employment, annual performance reviews, salaries, benefits, and personnel services. At least one member of the committee shall be a deacon. The personnel committee will forward all recommendations on salaries and benefits to the stewardship committee for consideration.

The Personnel Committee will be responsible for the development of job descriptions for non-ministry staff. The job descriptions will be presented at business meetings for church member review and comment, and will be kept on file at the church office for review by any member.

SECTION 4. PROPERTIES COMMITTEE

The properties committee shall be responsible for maintenance and repair of church property and provide supplies to meet property requirements. The properties committee assists the church in matters related to properties administration. Duties include such areas as maintaining all church properties for ready use, recommending policies and expanding use of properties. At least one member of the committee shall be a deacon.

SECTION 5. KITCHEN/FELLOWSHIP COMMITTEE

The kitchen and fellowship committee is responsible for formulating and recommending to the church, policies for all church and social functions, and presenting these policies to the church body. Duties include:

- (1) Functional and sanitary maintenance of the kitchen and fellowship hall
- (2) Making arrangements for adequate personnel to serve at scheduled church and social functions during preparation, decoration, presentation, and clean-up.
- (3) Creating a list of basic supplies required in the kitchen, and maintaining those supplies.
- (4) Arranging to have adequate food supplied for church scheduled events.

SECTION 6. PRESCHOOL COMMITTEE

The preschool committee is responsible for the care and policies of the preschool. This committee shall see that the preschool is properly cared for and shall make all policies governing the preschool. Duties include selecting appropriate age level toys and sanitary maintenance of rooms. The committee shall be responsible for seeing that the preschool has adequate workers for all services when the preschool is needed.

SECTION 7. CHURCH USHERS

The nominating committee shall recommend ushers for election by the church membership. The usher committee shall be responsible for developing policies and training for those serving as ushers. They shall provide a schedule of those serving for each of the services. The ushers are to greet people as they enter and leave the church, seat people at the proper time, provide bulletins and/or other materials at the time of seating. They will also be responsible for taking up the offering and the head usher will ensure the offering is secured.

SECTION 8. FLOWER AND BULLETIN BOARD COMMITTEE

This committee is responsible for securing, arranging, and disposing of floral arrangements for church services and for providing flowers for the sick and bereaved. Duties include the arrangements placed in the sanctuary during services, decorations, around the church, and organizing decoration supplies. The committee shall plan themes for the bulletin boards, acquire materials, and schedule the changing of the boards.

SECTION 9. MEDIA COMMITTEE

The media committee shall maintain a resource center with an updated library for the church. This committee will seek to provide and promote the use of printed, audio, visual, and electronic resources. This committee will also provide consultation to church leaders and members in the use of electronic, audio/visual and printed resources. Duties include maintaining a library of updated materials approved by the pastor or his representative. Committee members shall be responsible for setting up and maintaining electronic equipment such as projectors, TV's, VCR's, CD players, and computers for media purposes. The committee shall communicate to the church membership the process for checkout and care of resources. Assigned members shall provide services as requested by the pastor that may include maintaining a web page, building a library of resources for church attendees to checkout, and update the church directory as needed. Other committees may ask the media committee for help creating announcements and advertisements presented to the congregation or community.

SECTION 10. STEWARDSHIP COMMITTEE

The stewardship committee develops and recommends an overall stewardship development plan, a unified church budget, and budget subscription plans. It advises and recommends in the administration of the gifts of church members and others, using sound principles of financial management. The church treasurer is an automatic member of this committee and serves as its chairman. It works with the treasurer in the preparation and presentation to the church of required reports regarding the financial affairs of the church.

SECTION 11. MISSIONS COMMITTEE

The missions committee shall consist of the various age groups within the church. They will seek ways of increasing membership through outreach programs, starting new works, and discover possibilities for mission projects. The committee will present programs and ideas to the church membership during business meetings. At least one member of the committee shall be a deacon.

SECTION 12. SOUND SYSTEM COMMITTEE

Sound System committee members are responsible for the maintenance of the sanctuary sound system. They will operate the sound system for sanctuary functions where its use is required. The team will be responsible for making tapes of the Sermons on Sunday. In the event of equipment malfunction, the members will first attempt to repair the defect on their own; if these efforts are unsuccessful, the ministerial staff and stewardship committee will be notified so repair off site or equipment replacement can follow. At least one member of this committee will serve on the Media Committee.

IV. PROGRAM ORGANIZATIONS

SECTION 1. GENERAL

The church shall maintain programs of Bible teaching; church member training; church leader training; new member orientation; mission education, action, and support; and music education, training, and performance. All organizations related to the church programs shall be under church control, all members being elected by the church and reporting regularly to the church membership during monthly business meetings. All program activities may be subject to church coordination and approval. The church shall provide the human resources, the physical resources, and the financial resources for the appropriate advancement of these programs.

If the program requires funding from the church to fulfill responsibilities or advance the program, the head of the program shall develop and present a budget to the stewardship committee for all items or services necessary to meet commitments.

SECTION 2. SUNDAY SCHOOL/BIBLE STUDY

The Sunday school shall be the basic organization for the Bible teaching program. Its tasks shall be to teach the Biblical revelation, reach people for Christ and church membership, provide and interpret information regarding the work of the church and denomination, and perform the functions of the church within its class membership such as visitation and caring for ill members.

The Sunday school shall be organized by departments and/or classes, as appropriate for all ages, and shall be conducted under the direction of the Sunday school director elected by the church.

SECTION 3. MUSIC TEAM

The music team is responsible for the music ministry of the church. The chairman of the team shall be the music director and members shall include song leaders and instrumentalists. The team is responsible for coverage of all needed instruments for all services, special music for services, and planning song worship during all services.

The music team shall meet monthly to plan the next month's music services and will coordinate with the pastor/associate pastor to ensure the needs and goals of the services will be met. All music scheduled, including special music, during regularly scheduled services will be for the uplifting and praising of God and shall be performed in like manner.

SECTION 4. WOMENS MISSION UNION

There shall be a Women On Mission program with such officers and organizations as needed. The tasks of Women on Mission shall be to teach missions, engage in mission action, support world missions through prayer and giving, and interpret information regarding the work of the church and the denomination.

SECTION 5. MEN IN ACTION

There shall be a Men In Action program with such officers and organizations as needed. The tasks of Men In Action shall be to teach missions, engage in mission action, support world missions through prayer and giving, and interpret information regarding the work of the church and the denomination.

SECTION 6. CHURCH COUNCIL

The church council shall serve the church by leading in planning, coordinating, conducting, and evaluating the ministries and programs of the church and its organizations.

The primary functions of the church council shall be to recommend to the church suggested objectives and church goals; to review and coordinate ministry and program plans recommended by church officers, organizations, and committees; to recommend to the church the use of leadership, calendar time, and other resources according to program priorities; and to evaluate achievements in terms of church objectives and goals.

Regular members of the Church Council shall be the pastor, other church staff members, directors of church program organizations, chairman of deacons, church officers, and chairmen of church committees.

All matters agreed upon by the council that call for action not already approved shall be referred to the church at regular business meetings for approval or disapproval.

V. CHURCH ORDINANCES

SECTION 1. BAPTISM

A person who receives Jesus Christ as Savior by personal faith, and who indicates a commitment to follow Christ as Lord, shall be received for baptism.

1. Baptism shall be by immersion in water.
2. Baptism shall be administered by the pastor or whomever the church will authorize. The deacons shall assist in the preparation for, and observance of baptism.
3. Baptism shall be administered as an act of worship during any worship service.

SECTION 2. THE LORD'S SUPPER

The Lord's Supper is a symbolic act of obedience whereby members of the church, through partaking of the bread and fruit of the vine, commemorate the death of Jesus Christ and anticipate His second coming.

1. The Lord's Supper shall be observed at least quarterly.
2. The Lord's Supper shall be observed at any regular worship service of the church.
3. The pastor and deacons shall be responsible for the administration of the Lord's Supper.

VI. CHURCH MEETINGS

SECTION 1. WORSHIP SERVICES

The church shall meet regularly each Sunday morning, Sunday evening, and Wednesday evening for the worship of Almighty God. Prayer, praise, preaching, instruction, and evangelism shall be among the ingredients of these services. The pastor shall direct the services for all the church members and for all others who may choose to attend.

SECTION 2. REGULAR BUSINESS MEETINGS

The church shall hold regular quarterly business meetings on a designated Wednesday night in the month following each calendar quarter. Financial reports will be made available on a monthly basis.

SECTION 3. SPECIAL BUSINESS MEETINGS

The church may conduct called business meetings to consider matters of special nature and significance. Such special meetings may be called by the pastor, deacons, or church council. A one-week notice must be given for the specially called business meeting unless extreme urgency renders such notice impractical. The notice shall include the subject, the date, the time, and the place, and it must be given in such a manner that all resident members have an opportunity to know of the meeting.

SECTION 4. QUORUM

The quorum consists of at least 25 church members present provided it is a stated meeting or one that has been properly called.

SECTION 5. PARLIAMENTARY RULES

Robert's Rules of Order, Revised, is the authority for parliamentary rules of procedure for all business meetings of the church.

VII. CHURCH FINANCES

SECTION 1. BUDGET

The stewardship committee, in consultation with the church council, shall prepare and submit to the church an annual budget for approval. This budget shall indicate by item the amount needed and sought for all expenses.

It is understood that membership in this church involves financial obligation to support the church and its causes with regular and proportionate gifts and tithes to God.

SECTION 2. ACCOUNTING

All funds for any and all purposes shall pass through the hands of the church treasurer, and be properly recorded on the books of the church. A system of accounting that will adequately provide for the handling and control of all funds shall be the responsibility of the stewardship committee.

SECTION 3. FISCAL YEAR

The fiscal year of the church shall run concurrently with the calendar year, January 1 through December 31.

VIII. AMMENDMENTS

Changes in this constitution and bylaws may be made at any regular business meeting or special called meeting, provided each amendment shall have been presented in writing at a previous meeting, and copies of the proposed amendment be furnished to each member present. Amendments to the constitution shall be passed by two thirds vote of all members present.

IX. DISSOLUTION CLAUSE

If at any time this church ceases to function as a Southern Baptist Church, the property and assets, both real and personal, shall become the trust of the local Southern Baptist Association and/or the Arizona Southern Baptist Convention.

X. ADOPTION

The adoption of this constitution and bylaws shall rescind all previous adopted rules of order in conflict therewith, and all rules shall become binding on the church upon adoption on and from the date indicated below.

This constitution and bylaws shall be adopted upon the affirmative vote of three-fourths of the members present at any church business meeting.

Official copies of this constitution and bylaws shall at all times be kept in the records of the church clerk and in the church office. An official copy shall be given to all church members. All changes shall be recorded by the clerk and shall be attached to the official copies and shall be made available to any church member upon request.