



Santa Clarita

BAPTIST CHURCH

Bylaws
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Bylaws of Santa Clarita Baptist Church

27249 Luther Drive
Santa Clarita, California 91351
(661) 252-2282

Article I: Name of Organization

1. The name of this organization shall be called: "Santa Clarita Baptist Church" (SCBC) and by the Articles of Incorporation, "Santa Clarita Baptist Church, Inc."

Article II: Purpose of Organization

1. The purpose of this church shall be to labor, by the help of God and the power of the Holy Spirit, to carry out the Great Commission of our Lord Jesus Christ as stated in Matthew 28:18-20 and elsewhere. To this end, every member shall be urged to worship God, to exalt Christ, to be sanctified by the power of the Holy Spirit, to love one another, to take the Gospel of salvation to the lost, and make disciples of all nations.

Article III: Authority

1. The Holy Scriptures shall be accepted as the final authority on all matters.
2. This document exists not to replace or compete with the Holy Scriptures, but rather, to assist in assuring that all church matters will be conducted decently and in an orderly matter (1 Cor 14:40).
3. This document shall never be considered an authority on its own, but rather, a guideline for keeping SCBC faithful to the Scriptures.
 - a. Members of SCBC shall be always governed by Scripture, and shall be governed by this document only insofar as it does not conflict with Scripture.
 - b. Whenever the elders of SCBC find this document to be inconsistent with Scripture, they shall follow Scripture instead, and modify these bylaws so as to bring it into conformity with Scripture (see Section VII.I.6).

Article IV: Articles of Faith

1. **THE BIBLE:** We believe the Bible to be the Word of God; that the 66 books comprising the Old Testament and the New Testament were verbally, plenary (completely) inspired; that the Bible is infallible and inerrant down to its very words, and our final authority and our only and all-sufficient rule and practice (Isa 40:8; 2 Tim 3:16; 2 Pet 1:19-21).
2. **THE GODHEAD:** We believe that there is only one living and true God, infinite and eternal in every excellence; that in the unity of the Godhead there are three personal distinctions: The Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit – all of whom are one in substance, co-eternal and equally share every divine perfection (Isa 43:10-11; John 1:1; 1 Cor 8:6; 1 John 5:7).
3. **GOD THE FATHER:** We believe that the Father is all-knowing, omnipresent, immutable, all-powerful and sovereign over the entire universe (Ps 139:7-10; Isa 46:9-10; Mal 3:6; 1 John 3:20).

We believe that He is holy, loving, merciful, and righteous (Ps 89:14; Eph 2:4; 1 Pet 1:16; 1 John 4:7-11); that He is good, does not approve evil, and is the ultimate Judge of moral creatures (1 Pet 1:17; Hab 1:13).

4. **JESUS CHRIST THE SON:** We believe in the absolute deity of the Son, the Lord Jesus Christ, that He was divine as no other man can be, existing from all eternity co-equal with the Father and the Spirit; that He never ceased to be God for one instant, and that His humiliation did not consist in laying aside His deity; that as man, He was miraculously begotten of the Holy Spirit and born of the Virgin Mary (Luke 1:26-38; John 1:1,2; 5:30). We believe that He voluntarily died as a substitute for sinful men, fully satisfying God's wrath against sin (Rom 3:25; 2 Cor 5:21; 1 Pet 2:24); that He physically rose from the dead and ascended to the right hand of the Father, that His payment for man's sins has reconciled man to God, and that He has become our continual Advocate and High Priest (Matt 28:6; Eph 1:20; Col 1:20-23; Heb 9:11-12; 1 John 2:1).
5. **THE HOLY SPIRIT:** We believe that the Holy Spirit is a Divine Person, co-equal with The Father and The Son, and of the same essence and nature, that He convicts of sin, righteousness, and judgment.; that He bears witness to the truth; that He is the Agent of the New Birth, and that He seals, endues, guides, teaches, witnesses to, sanctifies, intercedes during prayer, and helps the believer, indwelling every true child of God (John 14:16,17; Rom 8:14-17; Eph 1:13-14). Since Pentecost, He began the work of building the church in order to glorify Christ, administering spiritual gifts to the church for the sake of edifying the church, including miraculous sign gifts which ceased at the close of the apostolic age (John 15:26; 16:13-14; Rom 12:3-8; 1 Cor 12:7-28; Eph 4:11-13; Heb 2:1-4).
6. **ANGELS:** We believe that angels are beings created to serve and worship God (Heb 1:6-7; Rev 5:11-14); that one angel, Satan, rebelled against God, taking many angels, now called demons, with him in the rebellion, and tempting Eve, leading the human race into sin (Gen 3:1-15; Isa 14:12-17; Ezek 28:11-19; Rev 12:1-14); that Satan, together with his angels and demons, is active in opposition to God and His work (Eph 6:12); that Satan and his emissaries were defeated in the cross of Christ; that Satan will be bound throughout the thousand year period of the millennial kingdom; and that ultimately Satan and the demons will be cast into the lake of fire where they will be punished eternally (Matt 4:1-11; 2 Cor. 4:4; Rev 20:10).
7. **CREATION:** We believe that God created the heavens and the earth, including all life, "each after its own kind," by direct act, and not by the false teachings of evolution, and that the six days of creation were literal 24-hour days (Gen 1:1; Psa 33:6,9; John 1:3; Col 1:16-17).
8. **MAN:** We believe that man, in the person of the first Adam, was created in the image of God as the crowning work of God's creation, but by voluntary transgression fell into sin, thus plunging the whole race into condemnation and death, so that now all mankind is born in sin and shaped in iniquity; that men are sinners by nature and conduct, and so are without excuse before God (Gen 1:26-27, 3:1-24; Rom 1:18-23, 3:10-19; 5:10-17; 6:23).
9. **SALVATION:** We believe that personal faith in the finished work of the Lord Jesus Christ is the only condition of salvation from sin and this salvation is wholly by grace; that no works, however good, make that salvation more secure; that by Christ's work on the cross, men are regenerated into a new creature and thereby justified legally before God, that God chose those whom He would save before the foundation of the world; and yet in God's perfect plan, man is also responsible to believe and repent, evidenced by obedience to Scripture (Luke 13:3,5; John 3:3-7; 3:16; Acts 16:31; Rom 3:25-28; 8:28-31; 10:9-13; 2 Cor 5:17; Eph 1:4-11; 2:8-9; Titus 3:4-7; 1 Pet 1:1-2; Rev 22:17).
10. **PERSEVERANCE OF THE SAINTS AND ASSURANCE OF BELIEVERS:** We believe that all the redeemed, once saved, are kept by God's power and are thus secure in Christ forever (John 6:37-40; 10:27-30; Rom 8:1, 38-39; 1 Cor 1:4-8; 1 Pet 1:5). We believe that it is the privilege of believers to rejoice in the assurance of their salvation through the testimony of God's Word. We believe that each one who is divinely saved will evidence that salvation through obedience to the Scriptures and by bearing fruit in keeping with righteousness (Rom. 13:13-14;

Gal. 5:13; Titus 2:11-15). We believe that the souls of the redeemed are, at death, absent from the body and present with the Lord, where, in conscious bliss, they await the first resurrection, when spirit soul and body are re-united, to be glorified forever with the Lord (Luke 23:43; 2 Cor 5:8; Phil 1:23; 3:21; 1 Thes 4:16-17; 5:23).

11. **THE CHURCH:** We believe that the Church, the Body of Christ, is a New Testament institution; unknown to the Old Testament prophets; established by Jesus Christ, who is its sole Head; that the Church was revealed through the Apostles; empowered and perpetuated by the Holy Spirit; and acts as His "body" for service and his "bride" for glory; that it began with the New Testament saints and will be caught up at the close of the Church Age (Matt. 16:18; Acts 1:8; 2:1-13, 41-47; 15:14; 1 Cor. 1:12-28; Eph. 1:22, 23; 3:21; 5:23-33; 1 Thess. 4:13-18). We believe that the Church, is manifest through the local church, which is a congregation of immersed believers, associated by covenant of the faith and fellowship of the Gospel; observing the ordinances of Christ; governed by His laws; that its officers are Elders and Deacons; that it has the absolute right of self-government directed by the Holy Spirit, and it is answerable only to Christ, and that in all matters of membership, policy, government, discipline, and benevolence, the will of the local church is final (Matt. 18:15-19; 1 Cor. 1:2; 6:4; 7:17; 2 Tim. 3:1-15). Its purpose is to worship God, to teach believers, and to reach unbelievers for Christ at home and abroad (Matt 28:18-20; John 4:24).
12. **ORDINANCES:** We believe that there are only two church ordinances; Baptism and the Lord's Supper. Baptism is the immersion of a believer in water providing public testimony of the believer's identification and union with a crucified, buried, and risen Savior. The Lord's Supper consists of the church's public partaking of bread and the "fruit of the vine" together in a shared testimony of each believer's faith in being saved through the death of Christ. These elements are memorial remembrances of the body and blood of Christ, and are in no way to be construed in any fashion as the actual body and blood of the Lord (John 3:23; Acts 8:26-39; 1 Cor 11:23-30).
13. **RELIGIOUS LIBERTY:** We believe that every man should have the right of soul liberty (Rom 14:5b) and freedom of conscience without coercion or molestation; along with the right to propagate his faith to others. We believe that the church and the state are decreed by God as separate institutions. God established both the church and the civil government, and He gave each its own distinct sphere of operation. Neither should control the other, nor should there be an alliance between the two. Christians in a free society can properly influence government towards righteousness, which is not the same as a denomination or group of churches controlling the government (Matt 22:15-22; Matt 28:19-20, Rom 13:1-7, Eph 4:11-16).
14. **CIVIL GOVERNMENT:** We believe that civil government is of divine appointment for the interest and good order of human society, that magistrates are to be prayed for, conscientiously honored and obeyed, except only in things opposed to the will of the Lord Jesus Christ, Who is the only Lord of the conscience and coming Prince of the Kingdom of Earth (Psa. 72:11; Dan. 3:17-18; Matt. 22:21; 23:10; Acts 23:5; Rom. 13:7; Phil. 2:10-11; Titus 3:1; 1 Pet. 2:13,14,17;).
15. **MARRIAGE AND PURITY:** We believe that God ordained marriage exclusively as one man and one woman joined together in a lifelong legal union as the foundation of society, and His decreed means of propagating the race (Gen 1:28; 2:20-25; Matt 19:4-6; Eph 5:31-32). We believe that the only acceptable physical union is within the confines of marriage between one man and one woman (Heb 13:5). Sexual relations outside of marriage are contrary to God's Word including adultery, fornication, incest, homosexuality, pedophilia, lascivious (lustful or lewd) behavior, gender modification, and pornography (Gen 19:5-13; Lev 18:22-23; 20:10-17; 1 Cor 6:9-11; Gal 5:19-21; Eph 5:5-7; 1 Tim 1:9-10). We believe that God has called the believer to live as a new creation (2 Cor. 5:17), to put off the old man (former conduct and lifestyle) and to put on the new man (Eph 4:22-24).
16. **SEPARATION:** We believe that all the saved should live in such a manner as to not bring reproach upon their Savior and Lord; and that God has commanded separation from all

religious apostasy and separation from all sinful pleasures, practices and associations (Rom 12:1,2; 14:13; 2 Cor 6:14; 7:1; 2 Tim. 3:1-5; 1 John 2:15-17; 2 John 9-11).

17. **RETURN OF CHRIST:** We believe in the bodily, personal, pre-millennial return of Jesus Christ; that He will come before the seven year tribulation period to snatch away His church, coming only into the air, and that He will come with His church at the close of the tribulation to judge the living nations and to set up His kingdom on earth (Matt 25:31-46; 1 Thes 4:13-18; Rev 19:11-21).
18. **RESURRECTION:** We believe in the resurrection of the bodies of the dead; that believers who die in Jesus will be raised at the coming of Christ for His church and caught up with transformed living saints to meet the Lord in the air, and that the wicked dead will be raised at the close of the millennial kingdom, and stand in their bodies at the great white throne of judgment to receive their final doom (John 5:21-30; 1 Cor 15:51-52; 1 Thes 4:16; Rev 7:9-17; 20:11-15).

Article V: Government and Finance

1. This church shall be an independent body of baptized believers. This church shall be governed by its elders, under the authority of Scripture, through the affirmation of the church.
2. It shall never be subject to the control of any other ecclesiastical body; and no denominational or associational representatives shall ever sit in judgment over its affairs.
3. Elders shall address any concern from any church member over any church doctrine or practice that the concerned member believes is not in concert with biblical principles. A spirit of humble deference shall accompany all discussions that precipitate from such concerns. Scriptural merit shall be the sole basis behind any decisions that may result from such discussions.
4. This church shall be sustained by voluntary offerings and income generated by ministries of SCBC, both of which shall be free from any expectation or regard for any individual's special consideration or reward. It shall be the duty of the members of this church to bring their offerings, both financial and material, into the general treasury of the church (1 Cor 16:2). As special projects or needs arise, the elders may approve the designation of special voluntary offerings. If insufficient funds are raised or excess funds are raised in regard to any special projects or needs, all funds not used for such special projects or needs will revert to the general fund.

Article VI: Church Leaders: Qualifications and Duties

VI. Section A: Church Offices

1. This church shall hold to the sole two biblically defined offices: elder and deacon.
2. Men holding either office have a high calling before God to lead His flock through both official execution of church duties and exemplification of Christian character and conduct (Acts 20:28; 1 Tim 3:12).
3. Men holding positions in either office shall be qualified according to Section VI.B. or Section VI.C. Men appointed to either office (see Section VI.G-I) should understand their high calling and should honor that call by exemplifying the respective qualifications of their offices.
4. Both offices require a considerable knowledge of the faith. However, in order to be qualified, this knowledge must be proclaimed and exemplified in love, not in a spirit of pride or superiority (Eph 4:15, 29-30).

VI. Section B: Elders

1. The elders shall be the overseers of the flock of God, responsible for leading, shepherding and governing the local church. Elders must be male, blameless in character, spiritually mature, wise, dignified, experienced in spiritual leadership, and honorable (Acts 20:25-31; 1 Tim 3:1-7; Tit 1:5-9; 1 Pet 5:1-4).
2. Elders shall sign a statement upholding these bylaws.
3. There shall be at least three elders, who meet biblical qualifications, serving in the office at all times. In the event that less than three men are qualified and willing to serve as an elder, a primary goal of this church shall be to secure a second and third elder.
4. The number of unpaid elders must always comprise a majority of the total number of (paid and unpaid) elders.
5. An elder shall continue to serve in this office as long as he is willing, qualified, physically capable, and faithful in his service.
6. Elders may have a need for a season of rest. They shall be encouraged to do so by mutual elder consent. They shall remain as elders, although inactive during this period.
7. The terms "elder" and "overseer," as in the New Testament, shall be used interchangeably (Acts 20:17, 28; Tit 1:5, 7).
8. While elders are never explicitly called "pastors" in the New Testament, they are responsible to shepherd the flock (church) of God (Acts 20:28; 1 Pet 5:2).
9. Non-elder staff may be designated as pastors in order to acknowledge their giftedness for particular ministerial service (Eph 4:11).
10. Elders who earn their living by being either the senior pastor or leadership staff (referred to hereafter as "paid elders") will assume mutual responsibility with the unpaid elders. Therefore, the qualifications, responsibilities, appointment, terms of service, and removal from office for paid elders will fall under the same guidelines as that of unpaid elders. Compensation and benefits for paid elders will be determined by the unpaid elders and included in the annual budget to be presented to the congregation. Paid elders are expected to be fully devoted to preaching and teaching, both privately and publicly (1 Tim 5:17). To the maximum extent possible, all elders shall endeavor to teach both publically and privately as well (1 Tim 3:2).
11. Each of the elders must be an active member of the church and possess the qualifications described in 1 Timothy 3:1-7 and Titus 1:6-9. These qualifications are summarized as being blameless and above reproach as a steward of God (1 Tim 3:2; Tit 1:6-7). Accordingly, each shall be:
 - a. *Faithful in Marriage*: A one-woman man (1 Tim 3:2; Tit 1:6)
 - b. *Temperate*: Sober-minded, prudent, sensible (1 Tim 3:2; Tit 1:8)
 - c. *Well Respected*: Respected within the church and of good repute with those outside the church (1 Tim 3:2, 7)
 - d. *Hospitable*: A man who regularly, generously and graciously opens up his home to others in the church, as well as offering goodwill and physical accommodation to others who visit the church (1 Tim 3:2; Tit 1:8)
 - e. *Effective Teacher*: A man who, both privately and publicly, trains in sound doctrine, corrects, reproves, encourages and comforts believers according to Scripture (1 Tim 3:2)
 - f. *Courageous Defender of Sound Doctrine*: A man who exhorts believers, refutes false teachers, and clearly delineates doctrine in order to distinguish the truth from the myriad of false teachings taught elsewhere (Tit 1:9)
 - g. *Self-Controlled*: Gentle; peaceable; not quick-tempered, violent or pugnacious (1 Tim 3:3; Tit 1:7-8)
 - h. *Sober*: Not given to alcohol (1 Tim 3:3; Tit 1:7)

- i. *Not covetous*: Not a lover of money and not interested in base gain. He must not use his office for personal or professional gain (1 Tim 3:3; Tit 1:7)
 - j. *Effective Household Leader*: A man whose household elements such as finances and property are well-managed. If he is married, he leads his wife lovingly and responsibly such that she responds in submission. If he is raising or has raised children, they are submissive, are believers in Christ (as appropriate to their age), and are not accused of rebellion against God (1 Tim 3:4; Tit 1:6).
 - k. *Not a New Convert*: Mature in spiritual matters (1 Tim 3:6)
 - l. *Humble*: Not self-willed (Tit 1:7)
 - m. *Lover of what is good*: A man who joyfully clings to righteousness in all of its fullness, and forsakes every form of wickedness (Tit 1:8)
 - n. *Just*: Fair, does not apply personal favoritism, nor considers man's needs above God's commands (Tit 1:8)
 - o. *Holy*: Devout, set apart from worldly practice (Tit 1:8)
12. Each of the elders is responsible, throughout the year, for shepherding the flock with fervency, governing the flock, praying for the flock tirelessly (1 Pet 5:1-4), and living as examples of Christlikeness.
- a. The elders shall shepherd the flock of God by teaching the flock, caring for the flock and providing for the flock, all with heartfelt and evident love (Acts 20:28; 1 Pet 5:2). As a unified body, the elders shall shepherd the flock primarily through preaching and teaching the Word of God (1 Tim 3:2; 5:17; 2 Tim 4:1-5; 1 Thess 5:12; Tit 1:9). In so doing, the elders shall articulate the doctrine for the church and refute all doctrinal errors that threaten the flock (Acts 15:2, 6, 22; 16:4; 20:28; Phil 3:1-2; Tit 1:9; Jude 3-4). The primary purpose for shepherding in this manner shall be to:
 - i. Equip the saints for the work of the ministry (Eph 4:12)
 - ii. Edify the saints (Eph 4:12)
 - iii. Encourage the saints to be conformed to the image of Christ (Eph 4:13)
 - iv. Keep the saints from being misled by any form of false teaching (Eph. 4:14)
 - b. The elders shall govern the local flock of God by overseeing, ruling, leading, and serving the flock of God as delegated by the Holy Spirit and modeled by Christ (Acts 20:28; 1 Tim 3:4-5; 5:17; 1 Pet 5:1-3). They shall oversee the local church as men who will give an account to the Lord (Heb 13:17). The governing responsibilities of the elders shall include:
 - i. Establishing an organizational structure for the church, including staff reporting and ministry program reporting.
 - ii. Guiding the church through unified, wise, thoughtful, deliberate and prayerful decision-making.
 - 1. No decision shall be made unless it is agreed upon by each elder (1 Cor 1:10-17; 3:1-9). Some decisions may take many weeks or even months to make because of this requirement.
 - 2. When decisions are made, each elder shall fully support that decision without reservation continually thereafter, both publicly and privately.
 - 3. Each elder is obligated to defer humbly to other elders concerning matters of preference, thereby agreeing with the other elders.
 - 4. Each elder is permitted to make a case to the elder board regarding matters that are deemed important for the well-being of the church, yet not necessarily demanded by Scripture. However, if the elders do not agree on such matters after an appropriate amount of time and prayer, the elders in the minority are obligated to defer to and fully support the majority.
 - 5. During the decision making process, each elder is also obligated to resist agreeing with decisions that he believes, after careful consideration and prayer,

- contradict clear principles taught in Scripture.
 - iii. Overseeing all financial responsibilities and concerns of the local church in accordance with Scriptural guidelines and government regulations
 - iv. Delegating responsibilities for specific service areas (Acts 6:1-4)
 - v. Delineating doctrine, policies and philosophies of ministry in accordance with the Word of God (Eph 4:11-16)
 - vi. Seeking regular involvement and constructive input from the local body, as well as regular communication with the local body with regard to relevant issues, vision, direction, and major decisions (Acts 6:1-6; 15:1-4, 22, 30)
 - vii. Initiating and confirming all new members into the local church body
 - viii. Seeking, training, and appointing new leaders for church ministry in general as well as for pastoral ministry in particular, in accordance with the qualifications set forth in the Scriptures (1 Tim 3:1-12; Tit 1:5)
 - c. The elders, as experienced men in the faith, shall live exemplary lives before the flock in speech, in life, in love, in faith, in purity, in doctrine, in service, and in consistency of character (1 Tim 4:12, 16; 2 Tim 2:1-7; 1 Pet. 5:3).
 - d. The elders, as men of faith, shall be men of fervent prayer concerning the spiritual and physical well-being of the flock (Acts 6:1-4; Eph 6:18; Jas 5:14-15).
13. The elders shall neither associate with any secret order or lodge, nor with the National or World Council of Churches, its agencies, conventions or ecclesiastical bodies.
14. Each elder shall be accountable to and under the authority of the rest of the elders.

VI. Section C: Deacons

1. Each of the deacons must be an active member of the church and possess the qualifications described in 1 Timothy 3:8-10, 12-13. These qualifications are summarized as being above reproach as a servant of God (1 Tim 3:8, 10). Accordingly, each shall be:
 - a. *Dignified*: Sober-minded, wise, honorable, prudent, sensible, reverent; not flippant, contentious, superficial, or juvenile (1 Tim 3:8)
 - b. *Not Double-Tongued*: A man who is honest and sincere, who has indisputable integrity, and who accurately represents his true convictions such that he is resolute in his decisions (1 Tim 3:8)
 - c. *Sober*: Not given to alcohol (1 Tim 3:8)
 - d. *Not covetous*: Not a lover of money, and not interested in base gain. He must not use his office for personal or professional gain (1 Tim 3:8)
 - e. *Mature in the faith*: A man who comprehends and upholds sound doctrine, both in his own behavior and in his proclamation, such that his conscience does not condemn him as hypocritical (1 Tim 3:9).
 - f. *Approved*: A man whose blameless character and servant leadership have been validated by the church leadership and congregation (1 Tim 3:10).
 - g. *Faithful in Marriage*: A one-woman man (1 Tim 3:12).
 - h. *Effective Household Leader*: A man whose household elements such as finances and property are well-managed. If he is married, he leads his wife lovingly and responsibly such that she responds in submission. If he is raising or has raised children, their lives reflect his character (1 Tim 3:12).
2. Deacons shall be men who are members in good standing in the church, who abstain from worldly practices, are not members of a lodge or secret order, and shall upon their appointment sign a statement upholding these bylaws.
3. The deacons shall be constant examples to the congregation befitting their high calling. They shall provide service to this church as directed by the elders, which shall include, but

not be limited to, providing practical, material care for members of this church who are suffering or who have special needs (Matt 25:44; Acts 6:1; 11:29; 12:25; Rom 15:25-26; 2 Cor 9:1).

4. Deacons are expected to undertake the high honor and privilege of ministering to the deepest needs (spiritually, emotionally, physically, and financially) of the members of SCBC. This requires building the trust of the members of SCBC, and underscores the need for deacons to be fully qualified for the office. The care that deacons are to undertake is of great importance to God and to the wellbeing of His church (Tit 3:8, 14).
5. The deacons shall seek out and train others for church ministry in general, including seeking and training potential future deacons.
6. The deacons shall appoint from among themselves:
 - a. A deacon moderator to facilitate all meetings
 - b. A deacon secretary to record the minutes of all meetings.

VI. Section D: The Senior Pastor

1. The senior pastor shall be one of the elders, and shall thereby meet all the requirements specified in Article VI, Section B.
2. Prior to his appointment, the senior pastor shall sign a statement upholding these bylaws, and upon appointment becomes a member of this church.
3. In accordance with Article VI, Section B.13, the senior pastor shall be accountable to and under the authority of the rest of the elders.

VI. Section E: The Leadership Staff

1. The elders, in order to efficiently carry out the work of the ministry, may add men to the leadership staff. These men shall undertake duties and responsibilities as directed by the elders. While these men may or may not serve as elders, those who regularly handle the Scriptures in front of the congregation shall meet the elder qualifications of 1 Timothy 3:1-6 and Titus 1:6-9 as stated in Section VI.B.11-12 of these bylaws.
2. Leadership staff are not necessarily elders (see Article VI, Section B.7-8).
3. The leadership staff may include, but not be limited to, the following positions:
 - a. Associate Pastor
 - b. Business Administrator
 - c. School Administrator
 - d. Minister of Worship/Music
 - e. Minister of Youth
 - f. Minister of Outreach/Evangelism
4. There may also be a plurality of leadership staff in any of the above positions.
5. Prior to their appointment, all members of the leadership staff shall sign a statement upholding these bylaws, and upon appointment become a member of this church. All members of the leadership staff must also refrain from ecclesiastical and secret lodge associations.
6. In general, the minister of worship/music should report to the senior pastor.

VI. Section F: Interns

1. At any time the elders may take on a disciple as a pastoral intern for his training.
 - a. The pastoral intern shall uphold these bylaws and should observe elder and deacon meetings.
 - b. The pastoral intern may also perform any other duties which the elders may choose to

assign.

- c. Pastoral interns are expected to be moving toward elder qualification (see VI Section B.11-12).
2. The elders may also approve taking on interns for training in any other church ministry.

VI. Section G: Change Process for Elders

1. Elders shall be selected from men within the membership who have been faithful in their membership of the church, who have served for at least one (1) year, and who exhibit the qualifications set forth in section B of this article.
2. Throughout the year, the elders shall seek out, encourage, and train faithful men who have the potential to become elders.
3. During the last quarter of each calendar year, the elders shall review the responsibilities and qualifications for biblical eldership.
4. The elders shall oversee the gathering of nominees for eldership.
5. The congregation shall be given materials concerning biblical eldership to assist them in providing input to the nomination process.
6. Twelve (12) weeks prior to the annual or special business meeting, the approved list of nominees shall be presented to the deacons to vet the nominees prior to presentation to the congregation (Acts 6:2, 5).
7. After careful, prayerful consideration, eight (8) weeks prior to the annual or special business meeting, the elders shall provide their approved list of nominees to the congregation. The congregation will then have the first four (4) weeks of this eight week period to review the list of nominees and to submit, in writing, any biblical objections as to why they think the nominee should not become an elder. The elders shall handle all such objections during the full remaining eight-week period.
8. At the business meeting, the qualified nominees will be presented to the congregation for affirmation.
9. Once affirmed by the congregation, the elders will install the qualified nominees as elders through the public laying on of hands.
10. An elder shall be removed from service when he disqualifies himself according to Scripture (1 Tim 3:1-7; Tit 1:5-9). Any concerns regarding an elder's qualification can be submitted to the elders for consideration. An elder who is found to be no longer above reproach shall be removed from office and disciplined in accordance with the appropriate Scriptures (Matt 18:15-18; 1 Tim 5:19-20).
 - a. The elder shall serve in his office for an interminable length of time. Should the elder cease to meet the scriptural qualifications as outlined in section VI.B.11-12 of these bylaws, or if his relations with the elders become strained to the point that his remaining would cause harm and discord in the body, the other elders shall suspend him and direct him to resign.
 - b. A suspended elder may not preach from the pulpit, teach any Sunday School or Bible class, and shall refrain from contacting members of the church in order to create a faction or generate support for his position.

VI. Section H: Change Process for Deacons

1. Deacons shall be selected from men within the membership who have been faithful in their membership of the church for at least one (1) year and who exhibit the qualifications set forth in section C of this article. Deacons shall be selected as follows:
 - a. The elders shall oversee the gathering of nominees for deacons.

- b. During the last quarter of each calendar year, the elders shall announce from the pulpit and by public posting to all members that nominations for deacons are being accepted. The elders shall then review those who are nominated as to their qualifications and then those who are approved will be presented to the congregation.
 - c. Twelve (12) weeks prior to the annual or special business meeting, the approved list of nominees shall be presented to the deacons to vet the nominees prior to presentation to the congregation (Acts 6:2, 5).
 - d. After careful, prayerful consideration, eight (8) weeks prior to an annual or special business meeting, the elders shall provide their approved list of nominees to the congregation. The congregation will then have four (4) weeks to review the list of nominees and to submit, in writing, any biblical objections as to why they think the nominee should not become a deacon. The elders shall handle all such objections during the full eight-week period.
 - e. At the business meeting, the qualified nominees will be presented to the congregation for affirmation.
 - f. Once affirmed by the congregation, the elders will install the qualified nominees as deacons through the public laying on of hands.
2. Deacons are expected to serve in yearly increments, but are encouraged to serve indefinitely while remaining qualified and willing.
 3. A deacon who feels that he can no longer fulfill his responsibilities may at any time resign from his office after giving written notice to the elders.
 4. The elders shall remove any deacon from office who no longer meets the scriptural qualifications for the office.

VI. Section I: Change Process for the Senior Pastor

1. Whenever the office of senior pastor becomes vacant by reason of death, resignation, retirement or dismissal, the elders shall, without delay, begin the following procedure for securing a new senior pastor:
 - a. A pulpit board of five men (consisting of up to three elders, with the rest of the members selected at large by the elders) shall be formed. One of the elders shall serve as chairman of the pulpit board.
 - b. The elders shall, in a Spirit-led and prayerful manner, conduct a search for God's man to fill the position of senior pastor.
 - c. The elders shall interview and examine one man at a time, involving the deacons in the examination process.
 - d. Once the elders have found a man believed to be called by God as senior pastor, they shall present that man to the congregation.
 - e. A business meeting, in question and answer format, between the candidate and members of the congregation, shall be arranged prior to affirmation by the membership. The chairman of the elders shall moderate.
 - f. Any member not ready to affirm shall express their concerns to the elders within seven (7) days in writing. The elders shall respond to these concerns individually, prior to presenting the candidate to the congregation for affirmation (Acts 6:2, 5).
 - g. If the elders decide to call the candidate, a business meeting shall be called for the congregation to affirm the call.
 - h. The candidate shall then have ten (10) days to accept or reject the call.
 - i. If the new senior pastor has not been previously ordained, his vote of calling shall constitute approval for licensing. After one year of service the elders may arrange for an ordination service.
2. The senior pastor may retire or resign from his office as long as notice of such is given at

least thirty days in advance.

3. The elders shall adopt and maintain a written policy outlining the care and benefits due the wife and dependents of a senior pastor who dies while in office.
4. In the event that there is no senior pastor, the elders will appoint an interim pastor to carry out the day to day functions and operations of the church. If possible, that person shall come from the existing elders. In general, the interim pastor should not be considered for the senior pastor position.

VI. Section J: Change Process for Leadership Staff

1. The same standards for the elders shall apply to the leadership staff who are not elders, including dismissal, resignation, retirement, and death procedures. Differences in the procedures outlined in section I of this article shall be as follows:
 - a. A pulpit board is not needed in the search for a replacement of a member of the leadership staff. The elders shall have the authority to select a candidate and present him to the church for affirmation (Acts 6:2, 5) when God has made the selection apparent to them.
 - b. The elders may dismiss any member of the leadership staff when their services are no longer needed or when there is scriptural warrant to do so.
2. In the calling of a new member of the leadership staff, the same procedures as the senior pastor shall be followed. As with the senior pastor, congregational affirmation for the call of a leadership staff member shall also constitute approval for licensing. After one year of service, any member of the leadership staff who desires to be ordained to the gospel ministry, may request the elders to arrange for an ordination service.

Article VII: Conduct of Church Ministry

VII. Section A: Principle for Conduct of Church Business

1. In all meetings, whether business, elder, deacon, or any other board within the church, the over-riding principle for conduct shall be that nothing shall be done apart from the Word of God and prayer, and all shall consider others as more important than themselves.
2. All meetings of the church shall be run peacefully, decently, and in order (1 Cor 14:33, 40), with strong emphasis upon maintaining church unity (1 Cor 1:10-17; 3:1-9; see also section VI.B.12.b.ii). To facilitate such order, various procedures of Robert's Rules of Order may be followed.
3. This church may fellowship and cooperate with other churches or other organizations, while remaining wholly self-governed, for the furtherance of the Gospel. We shall seek to maintain fellowship with other churches of the General Association of Regular Baptist Churches and other churches of like faith and practice. We shall remain independent, but not isolated.
4. All regular meetings of the church shall be announced to the congregation seven (7) days in advance of the meeting.

VII. Section B: Corporate Officers

1. For legal purposes, an elder or deacon shall be selected for each of the following offices: president of the church corporation, corporate vice-president, corporate secretary, and

corporate treasurer. The treasurer may be a member of the leadership staff who is serving as the business administrator.

2. The elders shall select and approve these corporate officers each year prior to the regular elder meeting in July. A quorum of the elders may select, terminate, fill a vacancy, or replace a person who is serving as a corporate officer.

VII. Section C: The Elders

1. The elders shall have authority in all personnel matters in the church. These matters shall include church discipline matters, employee salaries and problems, and any other matters dealing with personnel. They shall also handle the following:
 - a. Meeting with the sick for prayer and anointing as set forth in James 5:14.
 - b. The hearing and settling of disputes between members when such are of a civil (tort) nature, as set forth in 1 Corinthians 6:1-8. In such a dispute should a member not accept the decision of the elders and pursue the matter in a civil court, suing a brother, that member shall immediately be subject to church discipline (see Section VIII.D.)
 - c. Establishing goals and priorities for the church.
 - d. Calling meetings of the church or of any ministry program within the church when the elders deem it necessary.
2. An elder shall oversee each specific ministry program of this church.
3. Each elder shall be encouraged to attend and interact at all ministry programs meetings, especially those associated with the programs to which they are assigned to oversee specifically.

VII. Section D: The Chairman of the Elders

1. Each year the elders shall select or reaffirm from their members a chairman. He shall serve for a period of one year, but he may serve for consecutive years. He shall have a working knowledge of the inner dynamics of the church.
2. The responsibilities of the chairman of the elders are as follows:
 - a. Chair all elder meetings.
 - b. Chair and moderate all church business meetings.
3. The chairman of the elders shall serve as the corporate president.

VII. Section E: The Secretary of the Elders

1. Each year the elders shall select or reaffirm from their members a secretary. He shall serve for one year, but he may serve in consecutive years.
2. The secretary of the elders shall be responsible for the following:
 - a. Minutes and official records of all elders and business meetings of the church.
 - b. Official correspondence of the church and the elders.
 - c. The readings of minutes and official statements from the elders to the church.
3. The secretary of the elders shall serve as the corporate secretary.

VII. Section F: The Treasurer of the Elders

1. Each year the elders shall select or reaffirm from their members a treasurer. He shall serve for one year in that position, but he may serve for consecutive years.
2. The treasurer of the elders shall be responsible for executing or overseeing:
 - a. All financial records, statistics and projections for the church and its related ministries.
 - b. Working with accounting personnel on all matters relating to the business of the church.

- c. Annual reporting to the church on the financial status of the church and its ministries.
3. The treasurer of the elders shall serve as the corporate treasurer.
4. The fiscal year is from July 1 through June 30 and all financial reporting of the church ministries shall be based on this cycle.

VII. Section G: Ministry Programs and Boards

1. The elders may establish any ministry program or board that they deem necessary for the proper functioning of the church. There shall also be some standing boards as follows:
 - a. The School Board: The functions of this board as set forth in Article IX.
 - b. The Finance Board: The functions of this board are to research financial matters for the church, providing reports and recommendations to the elders.
 - c. The Missions Board: The functions of this board shall be to promote missions within the church and coordinate related activities.
2. No ministry program or board shall be a power unto itself. All boards within the church shall be subject to the elders and shall exercise such power as delegated to them by the elders.

VII. Section H: Elder, Deacon, Ministry Program, and Board Meetings

1. The elders and deacons each shall separately meet at least once a month. An exception to this pattern shall only occur when all members of a board agree that skipping a regularly scheduled meeting is appropriate. The elders may attend the deacon meetings in order to provide accountability, leadership or guidance as necessary. Both groups may also meet as necessary whenever they shall decide.
2. A quorum of the elders or the deacons shall be at least two-thirds of their numbers. No business of an official nature may be conducted without a quorum.
3. All other ministry programs within the church shall meet when needed, however the times and place of their meetings should normally be posted one week ahead of time.
4. Members of the congregation may attend any elder, deacon, board, or ministry program meeting as observers, except when such board shall enter into "executive session." "Executive sessions" are reserved for discussion of matters deemed too sensitive for public interaction.
5. Members desiring to participate in any meeting may request to do so by becoming part of the agenda prior to the meeting.

VII. Section I: Church Business Meetings

1. The church membership shall have an annual business meeting, on a date set by the elders, within the first ten (10) days in the month of June.
2. In the annual meeting the congregation shall affirm the following matters:
 - a. Selection of elders and deacons as set forth in Article VI Section G and H.
 - b. Approval of the proposed annual budget. The budget shall be submitted to the congregation by the elders at least eight (8) weeks prior to the annual business meeting, beginning with a four (4) week review period. There shall be an open forum meeting scheduled four (4) weeks prior to the annual business meeting for congregational input into the proposed budget.
 - c. Any other items of business chosen by the elders.
3. In the annual meeting, reports from the elders shall be given, including, but not limited to:
 - a. The Elders' Report (including affirmation of the minutes of the previous year's business meeting)

- b. The Deacons' Report
 - c. The Treasurer's and Financial Report
 - d. The School Board's Report
 - e. The Mission Board's Report
 - f. Any other ministry program report deemed necessary
4. The elders may call any other business meetings during the year as required.
 - a. Requirements for calling a special business meeting are as follows:
 - i. A minimum notice of seven (7) days by public posting is required for a special business meeting. No secret meetings of the church shall be permitted. If such are held, no decision that is reached shall be binding and those participating in such an unauthorized meeting shall be subject to immediate church discipline.
 - ii. Any member or members may request the elders to call a special business meeting of the church. If after reviewing the petition, the elders decide to call the meeting as proposed, the agenda of such a meeting shall be conducted as all other business meetings with the elder chairman presiding.
 - iii. The sale or purchase of any real property shall require the approval of two-thirds of the members present at the meeting. The exception to this shall be when the church becomes the owners of small parcels (funeral plots, land of one acre or less in size, etc.) through donations or gifts, in which case the elders may authorize the sale of such property without approval of the congregation.
 - iv. Appointment of elders, a senior pastor, leadership staff or deacons shall be handled in the manner prescribed in Article VI.
 - v. Under these special meetings, the eight (8) weeks time frame may be waived.
 - b. Church business meetings do not cover baptisms, new member inductions, or the church discipline process.
 5. Amendments to these bylaws shall require the approval of two-thirds of the members present at the meeting. Members shall be notified by public posting of the date and time of the meeting to decide the change as well as the text of the change. An open forum meeting may be scheduled for a discussion prior to the official meeting.
 6. The entire membership of the church shall be eligible to take part in congregational affirmations. For items requiring affirmation or a vote, proxy affirmations, proxy votes, or absentee ballots are not allowed and members must be 18 years of age or older to affirm or vote on a church matter.
 7. The elders shall have the authority to approve the expenditure of funds for items and projects not specifically addressed in the budget without the prior approval of the congregation, providing that such does not exceed eight percent (8%) of the total budget for that year.

VII. Section J: Dissolution of the Corporation

1. Upon dissolution of the church corporation the elders shall cause the assets of the church to be distributed as follows:
 - a. Sale of items needed to pay for any outstanding obligations that the church may have incurred.
 - b. Distribution of all other assets to another nonprofit corporation with a similar doctrinal statement and beliefs as the Santa Clarita Baptist Church.

Article VIII: Membership

VIII. Section A: Coming into Church Membership

1. Membership in the church may be granted in the following manner:
 - a. Faith: Any person, confessing Jesus Christ as his personal Savior according to the Scriptures, and having followed Him as Lord in water baptism by immersion, and having given as his personal testimony his sincere desire to serve Him according to the Scriptures, may be received in church membership.
 - b. Letter: Any person meeting the above qualifications of Article VIII, Section A, paragraph 1a, may be received by letter from a church of like precious faith.
2. No person shall be immediately admitted into the membership of this church, but shall complete a membership class or other arrangement as directed by the elders. Membership is conditioned upon the approval of the elders.
3. Student membership is available to those students who are members at their home church, but are in the vicinity for an extended period of time. The qualifications and approval of a student member are the same as those of a member. Student members enjoy all the privileges of membership except affirmation and voting rights at business meetings.
4. Candidates for membership shall be presented by the elders to the church for a voice affirmation.

VIII. Section B: Dissolution of Church Membership

1. Membership in this church may be dissolved or its privileges restricted in the following manner:
 - a. Death: At a regular business meeting the secretary of the elders shall assure that the church rolls indicate that said member has deceased.
 - b. Transfer: Members who are not under church discipline may decide to leave SCBC in order to join a different doctrinally sound local church. They will remain members of SCBC until the elders confirm that this transition has fittingly occurred. To assist in this transition, it is desirable that the elders submit a letter of recommendation to the new church upon request from the departing member.
 - c. Delinquency: Any member who avoidably misses services for a period of three months shall be considered delinquent. If the elders are not already engaging the member in the first stages of church discipline, the secretary of the elders shall have his name presented to the elders as such. The elders, having made investigation and said condition not corrected, shall then, if the delinquent member is able to be contacted, continue the process of church discipline (see Article VIII, Section D). If not able to be contacted or if the member has not attended for one year, the delinquent member shall be considered for removal from membership. The elders may consider exceptions to non-attendance including military status, missionary status, college attendance, and shut-in conditions.
 - d. Discipline: If a member persists in unrepentant sin such that they enter the fourth stage of church discipline according to Article VIII, Section D, they shall be removed from membership.

VIII. Section C: Duties for Church Members

1. Members of this church are obligated by God to obey Him according to His Word, to worship Him in all areas of life, to grow in personal holiness, to edify the church, and to take the Gospel of Jesus Christ to the lost and to make disciples (Matt 28:18-20).
2. Members are to cultivate brotherly love (John 13:35) for all the other members of the church and to show this love by using all proper measures to promote their spiritual benefit and prosperity.

3. Members are to display love for their enemies and for the lost in general (Matt 5:43-48).
4. Members are to esteem their elders (1 Thess 5:12-13), to pray for them (2 Thess 3:1-2) and to submit to them in the scriptural exercise of their Holy Spirit given authority (Acts 20:28, Heb 13:7, 17).
5. Members are to demonstrate godly behavior, such as being exact in fulfilling obligations and keeping promises, such that as opportunity arises, they may credibly commend the Gospel of Christ to those outside the membership.
6. Members, upon moving from the city, shall unite with another church of like faith and practice, and shall request that the elders of SCBC send a letter of recommendation to their new church home.
7. Members are responsible to report to the elders any corroborated evidence of disqualification of any elder (1 Tim 5:19-20) or deacon.
8. All congregants, and in particular, all leaders, are responsible to make disciples (a process also known as "discipleship"). This involves one-on-one discipleship as well as more structured public forums (such as Bible studies, outreaches, small groups, and fellowship meals) that facilitate discipleship. Discipleship involves teaching one another, exhorting one another, praying for one another, stimulating one another to love and good deeds, and living exemplary lives in one another's presence.

VIII. Section D: Discipline of Church Members

1. When a church member or a Christ-professing regular attendee clearly violates Scripture in teaching or in conduct, an exhortation to repent with the offender begins a process called "church discipline." This process aims to maintain local church purity (1 Cor 5:6), to maintain church unity (Eph 4:1-6), to deter sin (1 Tim 5:20), to exhort and encourage the offender to repent (Gal 6:1), and to restore the offender to peaceful fellowship within the church body.
2. The process shall proceed according to Matthew 18:15-18. Throughout the process, once the offender repents (including warranted forgiveness, restoration, or both), the church discipline process terminates. Otherwise, church discipline shall commence in 4 (four) stages:
 - a. Stage One. A fellow believer who is aware of the offender's violation urges the offender, in private, to repent, seeking repentance and restoration.
 - b. Stage Two. Any member who has followed stage one returns with one or two members to the offender urging repentance. The additional members serve: (1) to continue the process of urging repentance and restoration, (2) to confirm the sin of the offender, and (3) to confirm his or her lack of repentance.
 - c. Stage Three. The elders shall investigate the situation. If the offender is confirmed as unrepentant in the alleged violation, the elders shall instruct the congregation to urge the offender to repent. If the offender repents, the elders will notify the church membership of this fact.
 - d. Stage Four. The offender shall be publicly dismissed from membership and fellowship of the church. All church member interaction during phase four shall be exclusively for the purpose of repentance and restoration (1 Cor 5:11). If the offender repents and desires to rejoin the church, the elders will grant a restoration of the offender's membership.
3. If the offender leaves the church to attempt to join another church, the church discipline process shall follow the offender by means of global church cooperation. Even if other churches fail to cooperate, the church discipline process will continue until the offender is restored to fellowship.
4. If one of the following four situations transpires, the elders may skip stage one or two (but

not both), as well as step three: if the violation and lack of repentance openly affects the whole church (1 Cor 5:1-5); if the violation and lack of repentance involves false teaching (Rom 16:17); if the violation and lack of repentance involves ignoring two (2) warnings to cease from factious and divisive conduct (Tit 3:10-11); or if the violation and lack of repentance creates a threat against the well-being of the church as a whole or any of its members.

5. Church members and Christ-professing regular attendees shall agree that there shall be no appeal to any court because of the offender's dismissal or because of public statements to the entire church membership at the third or fourth stages of church discipline.
6. Members who are under discipline by the church, as defined in the previous paragraphs, waive the right to remove their standing as members of Santa Clarita Baptist Church until they are no longer under church discipline.
7. Any church member or any other individual, at the discretion of the elders, may be restricted from occupying certain parts or all of church grounds for safety purposes. This may or may not be part of a church discipline process.
8. Generally, church services are open for public attendance and visitors are warmly welcomed. However, if an individual or a group of people are disruptive to the service, the SCBC leadership may request or direct them to leave the premises. Failure to cooperate and leave the premises may result in police and or legal action against such people.

Article IX: School Ministry

IX. Section A: Name and Purpose

1. As a ministry of the church, a school, hereafter known as "Santa Clarita Christian School," may be operated.
2. The school shall be operated for the grade levels that the elders deem suitable and needful.
3. This end will be pursued in accordance with, and as an expression of, the doctrine and values of Santa Clarita Baptist Church.
4. The mission of Santa Clarita Christian School is to partner with Christian parents of like faith to challenge students' minds and train their hearts for God through a distinctively biblical education. The school seeks to pursue academic excellence, promote spiritual growth, and encourage character development in order to produce students who are prepared to make a difference in the world for God.

IX. Section B: Goals

1. To lead its students to a personal knowledge of Christ as Lord and Savior, and afterward lead them to a fuller knowledge of God as revealed in the Bible (Tit 2:11-14).
2. To provide a well-rounded education in the arts, sciences and humanities, all with an emphasis on Biblical instruction (Deut 6:4-9).
3. To educate young people so as to prepare them to live Godly lives as ambassadors for Christ in the world, as they either seek further education or take up employment responsibilities (Col 1:28-29; 2 Cor 5:20-21).

IX. Section C: Administration and Organization

1. Under the congregation there shall be three levels of leadership within the school ministry. Those levels shall be:

- a. The Elders
 - b. The School Administrator
 - c. The School Board
2. The elders shall have overall oversight of the school ministry. They shall adopt and maintain the organizational structure and overall integrity of the school program.
 3. The School Board shall be an advisory board to the elders with powers and responsibilities as delegated by the elders.
 - a. An elder or a deacon shall be the chairman of the School Board.
 - b. The elders may authorize deacons or leadership staff to serve on the School Board.
 - c. The elders may authorize school children's parents, who are believers but not members of SCBC, to sit on the School Board. But this number may not exceed two (2) and no meeting may be conducted when the nonmembers constitute a majority of those present.
 4. The School Administrator shall be responsible under the elders for the day-to-day operation of the school. He shall always be a member of SCBC. His general duties shall include carrying out the directives of the elders and School Board, proposing budgets and revisions to the budget, and other responsibilities as set forth in an approved organizational structure established by the elders.

Notes:

The SCBC Constitution was updated with an administrative action in October 2008 to reflect the church's name in accordance with the initial Articles of Incorporation. The phrase, "and by the Articles of Incorporation, 'Santa Clarita Baptist Church Inc' " was added to the first sentence in Article I.