

Gashland Baptist Church

Constitution

Article 1 Name

This organization shall be known as Gashland Baptist Church of Kansas City, Clay County, Missouri.

Article 2 Purpose, Covenant, and Statement of Faith

Section 1. Purpose

To reach unchurched people with God's love and help them become fully committed followers of Jesus Christ.

Section 2. Covenant

The following covenant shall be the covenant of this Church:

“Having been led, as we believe by the Spirit of God, to receive the Lord Jesus Christ as our Savior and, on the profession of our faith, having been baptized in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of 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 agree, 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 discipline and doctrines; to contribute cheerfully and regularly to the support of the ministry, the expenses of the Church, the relief of the poor, and the spread of the Gospel through all nations.

“We also agree to maintain family and personal devotions; to religiously educate our children; to seek the salvation of our kindred and acquaintances; to walk cautiously in the world; to be just in our dealings, faithful in our engagements, and to set a good example in our conduct; to avoid all tattling, gossip, and excessive anger. We shall seek to refrain from any excessive practices detrimental to our health and influence, such as the use of drugs, tobacco, or intoxicating drinks and strive to live a transformed life consistent with Biblical principles in the midst of this world.

“We further agree to watch over one another in brotherly 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 rules of our Savior to secure it without delay.

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“We moreover agree that when we move 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.

“As God is our witness, to this we commit ourselves, admitting out total dependence on the Holy Spirit for our fulfillment of this covenant.”

Section 3. Statements of Faith, Marriage and Sexuality

A. Statement of Faith

We recognize God’s word as revealed in the Holy Bible as the sole authority in matters of faith and practice, however, in order to set forth certain principles which persons who are Baptists generally agree on, we do hereby incorporate, by reference, and adopt the basic principles and intent of the 2000 Baptist Faith and Message⁸ as adopted by the Southern Baptist Convention.

B. Statements of Marriage and Sexuality

We believe that the term “marriage” has only one meaning and that is marriage sanctioned by God which joins one man and one woman in a single, exclusive union, as delineated in Scripture.

We believe that God intends sexual intimacy to only occur between a man and a woman who are married to each other. We believe that God has commanded that no intimate sexual activity be engaged in outside of a marriage between a man and a woman.

We believe that any form of sexual immorality, such as adultery, fornication, homosexuality, bisexual conduct, bestiality, incest, pornography or any attempt to change one’s sex, or disagreement with one’s biological sex, is sinful and offensive to God.

We believe that in order to preserve the function and integrity of the church as the local Body of Christ, and to provide a biblical role model to the church members and the community, it is imperative that all persons employed by the church in any capacity, or who serve as volunteers, should abide by and agree to this Statement on Marriage and Sexuality and conduct themselves accordingly.

We believe that God offers redemption and restoration to all who confess and forsake their sin, seeking His mercy and forgiveness through Jesus Christ and we believe that every person must be afforded compassion, love, kindness,

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respect, and dignity. Hateful and harassing behavior or attitudes directed toward any individual are to be repudiated and are not in accord with Scripture nor the doctrines of this church.

Article 3 Denominational Cooperation

It is the purpose of this Church to cooperate with the Clay-Platte Association, the Missouri Baptist Convention, and with the Southern Baptist Convention.

Article 4 Baptism and Membership

Section 1. Baptism

Any person confessing faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, giving evidence of a change of heart, and receiving instruction concerning baptism from a member of the ministerial staff or a deacon, shall be eligible for baptism.

Section 2. Election

The membership reserves the right to determine who shall become and remain members of this Church.

Section 3. Candidacy

Any individual may become a candidate for membership in this Church by making a personal request to the congregation at a church service or to the Pastor privately.

Section 4. Presentation

Each candidate must petition the church for membership, attend the New Members class, share their testimony and then they will be voted on by the congregation at the next regularly scheduled Ministry Meeting. Any person professing faith in the Lord Jesus Christ and who has received baptism by immersion under the authority of a New Testament church may be presented, provided they are in basic agreement with our beliefs, covenant, and policies.

A three-quarter (3/4) majority vote of those Church members present and voting shall be required to elect candidates to Church membership. Should any objection be made, the case shall be postponed until the next regular or special called business meeting, and the objection investigated.

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Section 5. Duties of Members

- A. In order that persons applying for Church membership may be informed as to the duties of members, they shall have the Church Covenant presented to them by the Pastor or a member of the Body of Deacons, and shall be expected to observe it both in practice and spirit.
- B. Each member is encouraged to be a good steward of time, talent, and money.

Section 6. Privileges of a Member

- A. To be identified with a group of believers who have covenanted together to serve and glorify the Lord.
- B. To participate and possibly lead in the ministries of the Church.
- C. To have a voice during business meetings as to the direction of the Church.
- D. To call upon the Church for help in your time of need.

Section 7. Dismissal of Members

- A. Membership shall be terminated in one of the following ways:
 - 1. Death;
 - 2. Transfer to another church;
 - 3. Upon request of the Church member;
 - 4. Upon request of another church;
 - 5. Exclusion by action of the Church.

B. Failure to Attend

Any resident member of the Church who has not attended the regular worship, Bible study, or other activities of the Church for a period of six months, may be dropped and his name kept for record only; provided sufficient reason for non-attendance is not given and promise of amendment is not made, and the Church by a majority vote approves such action.

C. Failure of Nonresident Member to Communicate

Members (nonresident for a period of six months, who have disregarded their Covenant obligations in respect to the transfer of their membership upon moving, and have not communicated with the Church by a contribution or letter during that time, may have their names removed from the Church membership roll at any business meeting and the names

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kept for record only, when done upon the recommendation of the Body of Deacons, and majority vote of the Church.

Furthermore, in the case of lost addresses, if after every reasonable effort has been made to secure them without success, and these members have not communicated with the Church within six months, the Church may remove their names from the Church membership roll and keep them for record only. This may be done upon recommendation of the Body of Deacons and by majority vote of the church at any business meeting thereafter, without any warning or notice to the person or persons.

D. Discipline

The Church may terminate the membership of anyone who becomes an offense to the Church and its good name by immoral or unchristian conduct, but only after faithful effort has been made to bring such a member to repentance and amendment. The termination shall be by two-thirds (2/3) vote at a regular scheduled business meeting. The Pastor and Body of Deacons shall be a standing committee on Church discipline. All charges of error in faith and unchristian conduct shall be made to this committee. The Church Covenant shall be the committee's basic guide to what may be reasonably expected of all members in the way of conduct and service.

E. Restoration

Persons excluded from membership in this Church may seek restoration to fellowship by sitting in conference with the Pastor and Body of Deacons and demonstrating satisfactory evidence of repentance and amendment. Upon recommendation by the Body of Deacons, restoration shall be by majority vote at a regular scheduled business meeting.

Article 5 Officers

Section 1.

Corporation, Treasurer, Financial Secretary, Recording Secretary, Church Clerk, and any other officers that the Church should call to assist in administration and worship.

Section 2.

Except as otherwise provided, all officers shall be elected at the Annual Business Meeting held in December, and shall serve for the following Church year, beginning January 1st.

Section 3.

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All officers shall be members of this Church in good standing.

Section 4.

All teachers, officers, and leaders of the Church and all branch organizations of the Church shall be subject to Church approval.

Section 5.

Any officer, who for a period of three (3) months shall fail to perform faithfully the duties pertaining to his office without adequate reason, automatically vacates said office.

Section 6.

The Church has the power, for good and sufficient cause, to remove from office any officer or committeeman by simple majority vote.

Section 7.

All members of the paid Church staff shall serve for an indefinite period, or until their relationship is terminated by resignation, by action of the Church, or by death.

Section 8.

Resignation of officers should be in writing to the Church and should be effective on a reasonable date after notification.

Article 6 Duties of Officers

Section 1. Pastor

The Pastor shall preach the Gospel, administer the Ordinances, coordinate the functioning of the Church staff, watch over the membership, promote the spiritual interests of the Church, and organize and develop its strength for the best possible service. He shall be a member ex-officio of all committees, official bodies of the Church, and its auxiliary organizations.

Section 2. Body of Deacons

The deacons shall, in every way possible, assist the Pastor in the work and spiritual welfare of the Church, and shall also assist him in administering the Church Ordinances. They shall cooperate with him in providing pulpit supply and leader of prayer meetings in his absence. They shall cooperate with the Pastor in visiting members, and in the care of the sick, needy,

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and distressed members of the Church; and they shall assist in promoting the evangelistic and the financial programs of the Church.

Section 3. Trustees

- A. The trustees shall consist, preferable, of at least three (3) but not more than five (5) members and shall be elected annually.
- B. The trustees shall see that the Church property is properly insured and shall study the insurance program of the Church to make certain of its adequacy and efficiency.
- C. The trustees shall be responsible for supervising and conducting all loan negotiations and all major contract negotiations approved by the church at a regularly scheduled business meeting.
- D. The trustees shall be responsible for relations with city governments, especially in regard to building codes, ordinance, paving, police, fire, and utilities.
- E. The trustees shall oversee the buying, selling, and leasing of Church property and equipment as directed by the congregation.

Section 4. Treasurer

- A. The Treasurer shall pay all bills as authorized by the Church. The Treasurer and any officers who help handle the Church money shall make a combined monthly report to be presented by the Treasurer or designee at each regular business meeting of all receipts and disbursements and the balance on hand. At the end of each fiscal year, being January 1 to December 31, the accounting shall be audited by the auditing committee elected by the Church. An annual report shall be prepared by the Treasurer and submitted to the Church. Upon approval of the report by the Church, this annual report shall become part of the permanent record of the Church.
- B. The Treasurer of the Church shall also act as Treasurer of the Corporation and shall perform all the duties necessary to keep an accurate accounting of all funds of the Corporation received and disbursed.
- C. All books and records pertaining to this office shall be retained for at least seven (7) years and shall be turned over immediately to his/her successor.

Section 5. Financial Secretary

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The Financial Secretary (with assistance from the Counting Committee) shall count the monies received by the Church and make weekly bank deposits.

Section 6. Recording Secretary

- A. The Recording Secretary shall see that an accurate record is kept of all receipts including an account with each member, showing pledges made, and contributions received for each fund. He/she shall provide each member with offering envelopes and render annual statements to each.
- B. He/she shall deliver immediately to his/her successor all books and records in his/her possession.

Section 7. Church Clerk

- A. The Church Clerk shall keep accurate minutes of the business meetings of the Church, including the reception and dismissal of members; keep a complete roll of the members of the Church; issue letters of dismissal and letters of Christian standing and Church fellowship, as authorized by the Church; conduct correspondence for the Church in connection with this office; preserve and properly file all letters, reports, and other documents pertaining to this office; assist in preparing the denominational reports, and any others that may be required.
- B. All books and records pertaining to this office shall be turned over immediately to his/her successor.

Section 8. Moderator and Assistant

The Chairman of Deacons shall serve as the moderator of the Church and will preside at all business meetings unless otherwise provided. The Body of Deacons shall provide an acting moderator in the absence of the moderator, and on such other occasions as the moderator may request. In matters pertaining to the Corporation, the President of the Corporation shall preside over the meetings.

Article 7 Committees

Section 1. Standing Committees

The following committees shall be permanent standing committees:

Budget and Finance
Nominating

Trustees
Personnel

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Counting

and any other necessary committee.

Section 2. Personnel Committee

The Personnel Committee shall consist of at least three (3) but not more than five (5) members. The members shall serve for a term of three (3) years. Members of the Personnel Committee shall be nominated by the Nominating Committee and approved by the Church at a regular or special called business meeting. The chairman of the Personnel Committee will be determined by the committee members annually.

Article 8

Calling a Pastor & Ministerial Staff

Section 1. Pulpit Committee

When it becomes necessary to call a Pastor, the Church shall elect a Pulpit Committee, consisting of a member of the Body of Deacons, who will act as chairman of the committee, and four other members chosen from the Church at large.

It shall be the duty of this committee to take the necessary steps to secure a Pastor. The committee shall investigate the merits of each man under consideration in regard to his personal character, education, ministerial record, preaching ability, his Christian experience, and his call to the ministry, in determining his fitness for said Pastorate. The committee members shall be reimbursed for the necessary costs of carrying out these duties, such as postage, telephone calls, and transportation. When a suitable man is found the committee shall invite him to come before the Church to conduct a service or services. The committee shall be responsible for arranging a time for the prospective Pastor to come before the Church for questioning. Any member in good standing may ask questions.

Section 2. The Call

The call of a Pastor shall come before the Church at a regular or called business meeting, notice of such meeting and its purpose having been given from the pulpit on two successive Sunday mornings prior to such business meeting, or notices mailed to the resident membership at least three (3) days prior to such meeting, or both such methods may be used.

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A favorable vote of seventy-five percent (75%) of the members present who are fifteen (15) years of age or over shall be required to issue a call. The vote shall be by written ballot and only one candidate shall be presented to the Church at any one time.

When a man has come before the Church in view of a call, he shall be voted on by the Church within three (3) days unless the Church is providentially hindered, and in any event, before anyone else is considered.

Section 3. General

The Pastor shall be called for an indefinite period of time. The salary and other benefits shall be fixed at the time of the call and may be changed by vote of the Church at any regular business meeting.

Section 4. Pastor Emeritus

Any former pastor having served for at least twelve (12) years as a faithful, dedicated pastor may be proclaimed by the Church a Pastor Emeritus, and as such shall be privileged to attend any and all meetings of the Church in an advisory capacity only. The nomination shall be from the Body of Deacons to the Church at any regular or called business meeting.

Section 5. Termination of Pastorate

The term of office may be ended upon thirty (30) days notification on the part of the Pastor. Termination of the office by the Church or resignation by request of the Body of Deacons may be made effective immediately with a least thirty (30) days pay in advance.

This termination of office shall be voted at a regular or called business meeting, notice of such meeting having been in the same manner as for calling a Pastor. A majority vote of the members present who are in good standing and fifteen (15) years of age or over shall be required to terminate the relationship. The moderator for this meeting shall be designated by the Body of Deacons and he shall be someone other than the Pastor.

Resignation by the Pastor may be made and voted on by the Church at any regular or called business meeting.

Section 6. Ministerial Staff

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This Church shall call such ministerial staff members as the Church shall need. A job description shall be written by the Personnel Committee when the need for staff members is determined. Ministerial staff members other than the Pastor shall be recommended to the Church by the Personnel Committee and called by Church action. Procedures for calling and approving a ministerial staff member shall be the same as for calling and approving a Pastor except the Personnel Committee shall act in place of a Pulpit Committee.

At least two (2) weeks notice at the time of resignation should be given.

Dismissal of ministerial staff shall come through the Personnel Committee before coming to the Church. In the event of dismissal or resignation by request of the Personnel Committee, thirty (30) days pay may be paid in lieu of notice.

Section 7. Church Employees

Non-ministerial staff shall be hired and dismissed by the Personnel Committee in accordance with the GBC Employee Handbook. It is not compulsory that other church employees be members of this Church. In the event of dismissal, two (2) weeks pay may be paid in lieu of notice.

Article 9 Election of Deacons

Section 1. Procedure

Each candidate shall be recommended by the congregation and Body of Deacons; and must receive a seventy-five percent (75%) favorable vote on written ballot of members present and voting.

Section 2. Number of Deacons

The Church shall endeavor to maintain deacons in the ratio of one (1) deacon for each twenty (20) to forty (40) members.

Section 3. Chairman

The Body of Deacons shall elect their own chairman, subject to approval of the Church. He shall serve for a period of one (1) year.

Section 4. Deacon Emeritus

Any former deacon, having served for at least twelve (12) years as a faithful, dedicated deacon, and who because of advanced age and/or ill health can no longer serve on the active Body of

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Deacons, may be proclaimed by the Church a Deacon Emeritus, and as such be privileged to attend any and all meetings of the Body of Deacons in an advisory capacity only. The nomination shall be from the Body of Deacons to the Church at any regular or called business meeting.

Article 10 Meetings

Section 1. Devotional Meetings

- A. The Church shall normally meet each Sunday (Lord's Day) for Worship and Christian training and instruction (the study and teaching of the Bible) and at such other times as the Church may decide.
- B. The Church shall normally meet each Wednesday evening for prayer and Bible study.
- C. The Church shall meet for the observance of the Lord's Supper at least four (4) times a year as scheduled by the Pastor and the Body of Deacons.
- D. The Church shall carry out the Ordinance of Baptism as can be arranged by the Pastor, the Body of Deacons, and eligible candidates.

Section 2. Business Meetings

- A. The business meeting shall normally be held as deemed necessary by the Pastor and the Body of Deacons.

Special business meetings may be called at any time by the Pastor, the Body of Deacons, Corporation Officers, or by the Church Clerk upon written request of twelve (12) members of the Church in good standing. Notice of such meeting, and agenda for which it is called, shall be given during the worship service from the pulpit at least one (1) Church service preceding said meeting, or by written notice to all resident Church members. The special business meeting shall consider only the agenda for which it was called.

- B. Fifteen (15) members in good standing, qualified voters, shall constitute a quorum. A majority of such members present and voting at any regular or called business meeting shall be sufficient to decide any question presented, unless otherwise provided by this Constitution.
- C. All matters pertaining to the purchase, sale, or mortgaging of property shall be voted only

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by members in good standing and who are at least fifteen (15) years of age. On all other matters, any member in good standing is entitled to vote except as otherwise provided for by this Constitution.

Section 3. Other Meetings

- A. Any meeting of the Church other than devotional and business meetings (as already provided in this Constitution) will be subject to Church approval.
- B. All auxiliaries and branch organizations of the Church are permitted to meet in accordance with their own policies, subject to Church intervention at any time for good and sufficient cause. The policies of these organizations shall be consistent with the spirit and purpose of this Constitution.
- C. Weddings and funerals may be conducted in the Church when arrangements are made with the Pastor or Chairman of the Body of Deacons.

Article 11 Church Finance

Section 1. Method of Finance

The Church shall be financed by tithes and offerings. Special offerings and/or solicitations may be sought by the Church or by any of its organizations only upon approval of the Church and/or the Body of Deacons. This does not preclude individuals making special offerings at any time as the Spirit of God may move them.

When it becomes necessary for the Church to finance or to obtain a loan from either a financial institution, group, and/or individual, the Church will obtain permission to do so with a favorable vote of sixty-six and two-thirds percent (66 2/3%) of the quorum. The meaning of a quorum, for this vote, shall mean at least thirty (30) active members in good standing present for the vote. The loan proposal will require an explanation of the need for taking out a loan and all details of the financing including, but not limited to, terms of the loan, length of time for the loan, interest rate, monthly payment and final payment date. The proposal will be announced at least two (2) Sunday services or a Sunday and a Wednesday service and will be discussed on Wednesday service unless tabled until a later date. The actual vote for the proposal will be taken on Sunday morning after the service with no discussion.

If a proposal is made to make a purchase in the amount of five thousand dollars (\$5,000.00) or more and there is no need to request a loan but rather use existing funds, then a vote must be taken. This vote will be similar to the previously mentioned requirements, that being, a quorum of at least fifteen (15) active members in good standing and a sixty-six and two-thirds percent (66 2/3%) favorable vote.

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Section 2. Fiscal Year

The fiscal and financial year of the Church shall begin on the first day of January and close on the last day of December.

Article 12 Use of Buildings

Primarily, and above all, the use of these premises is for the worship of God, the study of his word and the extension of His kingdom. The use of these premises by any group, or for any other purpose must be approved in advance by the Church.

Article 13 Amendments

This Constitution may be revised or amended at any regular or called business meeting of the Church, provided such change is presented as a recommendation of the Body of Deacons or on signed request of at least fifteen (15) adult members of this Church in good standing. A two-thirds (2/3) favorable vote of those present and voting is required for adoption of a revision or amendment.

Notice of the proposed revision or amendment shall be given from the pulpit on two (2) successive Sundays preceding the meeting.

Article 14 Rules of Order

The principals contained in Robert's Rules of Order shall govern the business proceedings of this Church in all cases where they are not inconsistent with this Constitution.