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**CONSTITUTION
AND
BYLAWS**

The Constitution and Bylaws of
North Albemarle Baptist Church

Bylaws were updated to include Lay Pastors under Church Officers after the motion was passed during our Quarter 2 Member's Meeting on July 17, 2024.

This constitution and these bylaws rescind all rules and laws previously adopted by North Albemarle Baptist Church. The constitution and bylaws were originally proposed on October 2, 2022, and the vote to approve was held on November 30, 2022.

The Bylaw Committee hosted Question and Answer Sessions for the church body on October 12, 2022 and October 19, 2022.

The Bylaw Committee consists of:

Toby Thorpe - Chairman

Tanya Huneycutt

Robert Stoker

Mike Houck

Gabrielle Hatley

Seth Whitley

Pastor Jonathan Blaylock, *ex officio*

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THE CONSTITUTION OF
NORTH ALBEMARLE BAPTIST CHURCH

Albemarle, North Carolina

CONSTITUTION

Preamble

We declare and establish this constitution to preserve and secure the principles of our faith and to govern the body in an orderly manner. This constitution will preserve the liberties of each church member and the freedom of action of this body in relation to other churches.

Article I. Name

"This body will be known as the North Albemarle Baptist Church of the Stanly Montgomery Association, located at Albemarle, North Carolina."

Article II. Purpose

The purpose of this body will be to provide regular opportunities for public worship, to sustain the ordinances, doctrines, and ethics outlined in the New Testament for the Church of our Lord Jesus Christ to nurture its members through a program of Christian Education; to channel its resources to the support of the objects of the Redeemer's kingdom, and to preach and propagate among all people the gospel of the Revelation of God through Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord.

Article III. Statement of Basic Beliefs

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

Article IV. Statement on Marriage and Human Sexuality

We believe based on the teaching of the Scriptures in both the Old and New Testaments, that marriage is an institution ordained by God from the foundation of the world and intended as a lifelong union of one man and one woman. This idea is supported by the account of creation in Genesis chapters 1 and 2. Genesis 1:26-28 provides that God created man in His own image, both male and female. We believe these are the only two legitimate genders and that God assigns gender at birth. Gender cannot be reassigned by any person. The passage implies that the unity of one man and one woman is in some way necessary to fully represent the image of God in mankind.

Genesis chapter 2 provides a more detailed account in which God created the first man, Adam, and decided that it was not good for him to be alone. (Genesis 2:18). God indicated that He would make "a helper fit for him." God brought all of the animals to Adam, but none of them was a suitable helper for him, so God then created Eve, the first woman, from part of Adam himself. God did not create a second man to be Adam's helpmate, or an assortment of multiple women, but rather one woman. Together they were man and wife and had "no shame" or sin in their union with each other. They came together and became "one flesh" until they should be separated by death. (Genesis 2:15-25).

Jesus Christ reaffirmed the teaching of the Old Testament when He said, as recorded in Matthew 19:4-6, "Have you not read that he who created them from the beginning made them male and female, and said, 'Therefore a man will leave his father and his mother and hold fast to his wife, and the two will become one flesh'? So they are no longer two but one flesh. What therefore God has joined together, let not man separate."

The Apostle Paul states in Ephesians 5:22-32 that marriage is not merely a human institution, but is a special divine metaphor that is supposed to illustrate the union of Christ and the church. For this reason, also, only a union between a man and a woman can be a proper marriage because a union between two men, two

women, or one man and multiple women or any collection of people could not properly illustrate the relationship between Christ and His Church.

I Corinthians 6:9-11 condemns a variety of lifestyles including those associated with adultery, prostitution, and homosexuality. The Bible condemns all forms of sexual immorality and encourages Christians to flee from it because of its destructive effects, and because the body of the Christian is the temple of the Holy Spirit. (I Corinthians 3:16 & 6:12-20).

Romans 1:18-32 makes it clear that it is not only sinful to engage in homosexual unions, but also to approve of such sins in others or encourage their practice. As a result, to maintain our consistent Christian witness, we cannot sanction, approve, or promote in any way adultery, fornication (a sexual relationship between an unmarried man and woman; i.e. “living together”), pornography, pedophilia, polygamy, bestiality, or homosexual unions. This is made clear also by numerous other verses throughout the Old Testament as well as by these and other passages in the New Testament.

Our church follows what the Bible reveals as the "sure foundation" of the teachings of Jesus Christ and his apostles (Matthew 7:24-29 and I Corinthians 14:37). The church is called to teach and practice these teachings and is not at liberty to depart from them for a different authority if it is to authentically bear the name "Christian." Though we strive to live peaceably with all people and to obey legitimate government authority, in instances involving matters as foundational as marriage we must ultimately obey God rather than man if the two come into conflict (Acts 4:18-22).

Sexual activities outside of marriage, including but not limited to fornication, adultery, incest, homosexuality, pedophilia, polygamy, and bestiality are inconsistent with the teachings of the Bible and the church. Lewd conduct, transgender behavior, and the creation, distribution, or viewing of pornography are incompatible with God’s intention.

Marriage is intended to be a “one flesh” union for a lifetime (Genesis 2:24; Mathew 19:4-6). The only Biblical allowance for divorce is in the case of sexual immorality or unfaithfulness (Matthew 5:31-32, 19:3-9), or desertion or abandonment by an unbelieving spouse (1 Corinthians 7:15). Remarriage is permitted for the faithful partner only when the divorce was on biblical grounds. In fact, the purpose of a biblical divorce is to make clear that the faithful partner is free to remarry, provided that the marriage is within the Lord’s fellowship (Romans 7:1-3; 1 Corinthians 7:39)

Article V. Church Covenant

Having been led, as we believe by the Spirit of God, to repent of sin and trust the Lord Jesus Christ as our Savior and, on the public 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 engage, therefore, by the aid of the Holy Spirit to walk together in Christian love, not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together; to strive for the advancement of this church in knowledge, holiness, and comfort; to promote its spiritual growth; to sustain its worship, ordinances, discipline, and doctrines; to contribute cheerfully and regularly with our tithes and offerings 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 engage to maintain family and private devotions; raise our children in the nurture and admonition of the Lord; seek the salvation of unbelievers; walk cautiously in the world; be just in our dealings, faithful in our engagements, and exemplary in our conduct; to avoid all tattling, backbiting, gossip, and excessive anger; to abstain from behaviors known to be harmful to the body, mind, and soul; to be zealous in our efforts to advance the kingdom of our Savior.

We further engage to watch over one another in brotherly love; to remember one another in prayer; to aid one another in sickness and distress; to weep with those who weep and rejoice with those who rejoice; to cultivate Christian sympathy in feeling and Christian courtesy in speech; to be slow to take offense, but always ready for reconciliation, and seek it without delay.

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

Article VI. Polity and Relationships

This church is a free, autonomous, independent body, congregational in nature. The church has the authority to determine for itself the use of all church property in the manner outlined in the constitution, free of any outside control or authority of power, whether governmental or otherwise.

Section 1. Association: This church recognizes the mutual helpfulness in the association of churches, who are in such agreement in faith and practice. The cooperation between such churches will influence the missionary, educational, and benevolent interests of each other. This church declares its intention to work in cooperation with other Baptist groups.

Section 2. Affiliation: Upon the adoption of this constitution this church will be deemed to have affiliated itself with the Stanly Montgomery Baptist Association.

Section 3. Cooperation: Upon adoption of this constitution this church agrees to be in friendly cooperation with the aims and purposes of the Baptist State Convention of North Carolina and the Southern Baptist Convention. This church, therefore, agrees to participate in these organizations through our duly elected messengers and support the missionary, benevolent, and educational programs of each organization as we are able.

Section 4. Discontinuance of Affiliation and/or Cooperation: The calling of a church conference to vote on withdrawal from affiliation with the Stanly Montgomery Baptist Association and/or discontinuance of cooperation with the Baptist State Convention and/or Southern Baptist Convention will require that physical or electronic notice be sent to each resident member of the church, stating the purpose and time of the said conference. In order for the action to withdraw to be valid, the vote must be carried by three-fourths of the members present and voting.

Section 5. Property Holding: If the vote to discontinue affiliation and/or cooperation is less than unanimous, the property of this church will remain vested with the majority. We then expect all parties to gather in Christian love and prayer to seek effective reconciliation or an agreeable basis of division, each being mindful of the Beatitude which says, "Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called sons of God."

Adoption and Amendments

Section 1. This constitution will be adopted and in immediate effect, if and when two-thirds of the members present and voting, vote in favor of the same. This vote will be taken not less than 30 days after the formal presentation of the constitution to the church.

Section 2. This Constitution may be amended, altered, or repealed by a two-thirds vote of the members present and voting, at any regular business meeting of the church. Any amendment, alteration, or repeal must be given to the Administrative Ministry Assistant in writing; this proposed change will be presented to the church at least 30 days before the time the vote is taken.

THE BYLAWS OF
NORTH ALBEMARLE BAPTIST CHURCH

Albemarle, North Carolina

BYLAWS

Church Membership

Section I. General

This is a sovereign and democratic Baptist Church under the lordship of Jesus Christ. The membership retains the exclusive right to govern itself in all spiritual and worldly matters of the church.

The membership reserves the exclusive right to determine who can be a member and the conditions of church membership.

Section 2. Candidacy

The membership of this church consists of people who have given evidence of regeneration by the spirit of God, who have been baptized by immersion following their conversion, who have subscribed to the articles of faith, the constitution of this church, and who have been received into membership by vote of this church. Each member must agree to submit to the teaching of Scripture as expressed in the *Baptist Faith and Message (2000)* and must promise to keep the commitments expressed in the *Church Covenant (2021)*.

Section 3. Pathway to Membership

Membership Orientation: Prospective members must complete the membership class offered by the pastors. This class informs prospective members of the beliefs, the covenant, and the expectations of church members.

Pastoral Conversation and Recommendation: Any prospective member must have a membership conversation with a pastor of North Albemarle Baptist Church. Prospective members will share their conversion testimonies and previous church experiences and spiritual experiences. Membership is approved by the church at the recommendation of pastors.

Congregational Affirmation: Members of North Albemarle Baptist Church must publicly affirm the recommendation of the pastors to admit prospective members into membership.

Transfer of Letter: In addition to steps one through three, the member of another Baptist Church may be received by a vote of the church upon the promise of a letter of transfer from the church where membership resides. The applying member will be in a watch-care relationship until a letter of transfer is received from the other church.

Statement of Faith: A prospective member who has once been a member of a Baptist church and in consequence of peculiar circumstances has lost that relationship or is not able otherwise to promise a letter of transfer may be received into the fellowship of this church upon statement to the membership and by a vote of the church.

Profession of Faith and Promise of Baptism: Prospective members may be received into membership upon a first-time profession of faith and the promise of a subsequent baptism.

Applications for membership under circumstances other than those described in the paragraphs above will be considered by the church in a Members' Meeting, and the decision of the church will be final in each case.

Dismissing Members by Letter: The Administrative Ministry Assistant will, upon request for a church letter, at the recommendation of the pastor of North Albemarle Baptist Church, grant it immediately to a fellow Baptist church. The pastor will write a personal letter to a church of another denomination to commend the person or persons to the fellowship of that church. The Administrative Ministry Assistant will orally report this dismissal at the next Members' Meeting.

Section 3. Rights and Duties of Members

1. Every member of the church, unless under discipline, is entitled to vote at all elections and on all questions submitted to the church in a Members' Meeting, providing that the member is present or provision has been made for absentee balloting.
2. Every member of the church, except members under discipline, may participate in the ordinances of the church as administered by the church.
3. Every member is expected to regularly gather with the body for worship. Every member is expected to live in accordance with the governing documents, including the constitution, bylaws, and policy and procedure handbook, they agreed to upon admittance to membership. Every member is expected to contribute to, serve in, and pray for the ministry of the church, the vision of the church, and the leadership of the church. Annually, the pastors and deacons will reach out to any member who has not been regularly gathering with the body for worship. Pastors and deacons will then make recommendations, during a quarterly Members' Meeting, for continued membership to the church body based on conversations with those members.
4. Any member consistently neglectful of his or her duties or living contrary to the agreed upon governing documents, guilty of conduct by which the name of our Lord Jesus Christ may be dishonored, and so opposing the welfare of the church, will be subject to the admonition of the pastors and the discipline of the church, according to the instructions of our Lord in *Matthew 18:15-17* and the example of Scripture. Church discipline, then, should ordinarily be contemplated after an individual, private admonition towards repentance has failed.

Section 4. Termination of Membership

Membership can be terminated in the following ways:

1. Death of the member
2. Dismission to another Baptist church by letter
3. Exclusion by action of this church as an act of church discipline at the recommendation of the pastors and with a vote of two-thirds of the members at any Member's Meeting.
4. Erasure upon written request or proof of membership in a church of another denomination.

Section 5. Service of Members

No member will serve on the Nominating, Finance, Property, and/or Personnel Committee at the same time.

Meetings

- This church will hold regular meetings for worship, teaching, training, and fellowship.
- This church will hold regular Members' Meetings- no less than once per quarter- to dispose of all business matters not otherwise provided for, to hear reports from the various church organizations, and to consider other matters essential to the spiritual welfare and prosperity of the congregation.
- Notification of Members' Meetings and intended business should be provided to the congregation no less than two weeks in advance.
- Other meetings of the church, as a whole or of authorized groups within the church, may be called by the lead pastor or the deacon body according to the needs of the congregation.
- Members' Meetings should be conducted according to parliamentary rule as outlined by the Policy and Procedure Handbook.

Church Officers

The offices of this church will be as presented in the New Testament: pastors and deacons. In addition, our church recognizes administrative offices of trustees, treasurer, and moderator. The church may recognize

other vocational leadership and/or officers that are required for the work of the church in any of its committees, departments, or organizations. All of these will be elected by the church and will be members in good standing.

The following duties are the minimum requirements of the office or position held. Other duties may be necessary to properly fulfill the office or positions to enhance the spiritual edification of the church. Any other duties may be found in the Policies & Procedures Handbook.

Pastoral Team

NABC is led by a plurality of pastors as demonstrated in the New Testament (Acts 20:17-38; 1 Peter 5:1-4; Acts 6:1-7), and that meet the qualifications of an elder/pastor as set forth in 1 Timothy 3:1-7 and Titus 1:6-9. NABC practices a polity that is pastor led, deacon served, and congregation ruled. The pastoral team that leads consists of both staff pastors and lay pastors. Pastors may not hold the office of deacon during his tenure as pastor. All pastors must be members of the congregation before assuming their responsibilities.

Lead Pastor

While every pastor on the pastoral team is equally recognized by the church as a pastor and holding the biblical authority given to a pastor, a pastoral team does not negate the necessity of having one lead pastor to lead the pastoral team in its collective leadership of the church, and to be recognized by the church as the lead pastor.

Calling and Dismissing Lead Pastor: A pastor will be called by the congregation to serve until the relationship is dissolved at the request of either the pastor or the church. In either case, at least thirty days' notice will be given of termination of the relationship, unless otherwise mutually agreed, with both pastor and the church seeking to follow the will of God and leadership of the Holy Spirit.

Election: Whenever a vacancy occurs, the election will be by the recommendation of a special committee of five members appointed by the deacons and approved by pastoral team and the church, to seek out and nominate a minister of the gospel who is affiliated with the Southern Baptist Convention and whose Christian character and qualifications fit him for the office of pastor of this church.

The call of the pastor will take place at a meeting especially set for that purpose of which at least one week's notice has been given to the membership. The committee will bring only one name at a time for consideration of the church, and no nomination will be made except that of the committee. Election will be by ballot, with an affirmative vote of three-fourths of those present and voting necessary for a call. Should the one recommended by the committee fail to receive a three-fourths vote, the committee will be instructed to seek out another candidate, and the meeting will be adjourned without debate.

The pastoral team and deacons will be responsible for obtaining an interim lead pastor whenever the need arises.

Tenure: A pastor will be called by the church to serve until the relationship is dissolved at the request of either the pastor or the church. In either case, at least thirty days' notice will be given of termination of the relationship, unless otherwise mutually agreed, with both pastor and the church seeking to follow the will of God and leadership of the Holy Spirit.

The dismissal of the pastor by the church will take place at a meeting, called by the deacon body, especially set for that purpose, of which at least two weeks' notice has been given to the membership. The dismissal of the pastor will be by written ballot and will require a majority of the members present and voting. At the call for dismissal by the deacons, the pastor will be placed on administrative leave prior to the dismissal vote.

Qualifications: A minimum of a college degree and seminary degree in related fields.

Responsibilities: The lead pastor will be in charge of the welfare and oversight of the church; he will be an ex-officio member of all organizations, departments, and committees; he may call a special meeting of the

deacons or any committee according to procedures which may be outlined in the bylaws; he will conduct religious services on stated and special occasions and perform other duties that usually pertain to that office; he will have special charge of the pulpit ministry of the church and will, in cooperation with other pastoral staff or the deacons, provide for pulpit supply when he is absent and arrange for workers to assist in revival meetings and other special services. The pastor will preside at all meetings of the church except as otherwise provided in the bylaws. He will be the administrative head of the church and, in cooperation with the pastoral team, will arrange and approve all absences and vacations of all church employees. The pastor, in cooperation with the pastoral team, is authorized to call off any worship services due to bad weather conditions or any other appropriate reasons.

Benefits and Provisions: The lead pastor will be allowed to attend conferences and conventions as approved by the church. He will be granted three weeks of vacation per year with pay, including three Sundays away from his regular work. He will be allowed two full days per week off from work. This excludes regular service dates and cannot be carried over to another week without agreement with deacons. The pastor will be permitted to participate in three weeks of revival each year. (Pulpit supply expenses will be taken care of by the pastor.)

Staff Pastors

Staff pastors are pastors of the church that are compensated by the church for their time invested into their pastoral responsibilities, including full-time and part-time compensation. The pastoral team will work alongside the personnel committee for the purpose of determining compensation packages. Staff pastors are called by the congregation, at the recommendation of the pastoral team and deacon ministry, and terms of employment must be approved by the congregation at a members meeting.

Lay Pastors

Lay pastors are pastors of the church that are not compensated by the church for their time invested into their pastoral responsibilities, but rather volunteer their time towards their responsibilities. Lay pastors are called by the congregation, at the recommendation of the pastoral team and deacon ministry, and their appointment as a pastor must be approved by the congregation at a members meeting. Lay pastors will meet with the pastoral team to assess whether a period of sabbatical might be necessary every two years. If sabbatical seems mutually appropriate to the pastoral team and the lay pastor in subject, the pastoral team will make appropriate arrangements of responsibilities to allow for a season of sabbatical.

Responsibilities of pastors on the pastoral team: The lead pastor will be in charge of leading the team towards ministering towards the welfare and oversight of the church. One pastor on the team may be an ex-officio member of all organizations, departments, and committees as agreed upon by the pastoral team, or as appointed by the lead pastor. The pastoral team will be responsible for the general oversight of all ministries, departments, and organizations in the congregation. The pastoral team exists to distribute the load of responsibility off of any single man. Individual responsibilities may shift and be reassigned as the pastoral team agrees the needs of the church and pastoral team shift.

Number of Pastors: The number of pastors of the church is dependent upon the needs and responsibilities of pastoral ministry in the congregation. The pastoral team may recommend a new pastor (staff pastor or lay pastor) to the congregation at any members meeting, as the team agrees the addition is necessary to the wellbeing of the body.

Calling an Additional Pastor: All new pastors must be thoroughly examined by the pastoral team on matters of pastoral giftings and calling, sound doctrine, and a life of Christian character before being recommended. The pastoral team must be unanimous in their recommendation of a candidate. If the pastoral team is desiring an additional pastor from outside the congregation, they will recommend a search committee from the body to aid in the search process. If the pastoral team is desiring an additional pastor from within the congregation, no search committee is necessary. If compensation is required, the pastoral team must work with the personnel

committee to determine the package offered.

Tenure of pastors: A pastor will be called by the church to serve until the relationship is dissolved at the request of either the pastor or the church. In either case, at least thirty days' notice will be given of termination of the relationship, unless otherwise mutually agreed, with both pastor and the church seeking to follow the will of God and leadership of the Holy Spirit.

The untimely dismissal of a pastor by the church will take place at a meeting, called by the deacon body, especially set for that purpose, of which at least two weeks' notice has been given to the membership. The dismissal of the pastor will be by written ballot and will require a majority of the members present and voting. At the call for dismissal by the deacons, the pastor will be placed on administrative leave prior to the dismissal vote.

Deacons

The deacons will be elected from among those members who have proven themselves to have scriptural qualifications according to I Timothy 3 and Titus 1 and Acts 6:1-4. They will be elected for a term of three years.

Election:

1. New deacons should be elected before the beginning of the new church year (September 1- August 31).
2. Nominations for deacons will be accepted for two-weeks.
3. The current deacons will review the list of nominees and create a ballot of eligible candidates willing to serve the required three-year term to present to the congregation.
 - a. Eligible nominees should be men who are active members of the church in good standing, meeting the biblical qualifications of 1 Timothy 3:8-13 and Acts 6:1-4.
 - b. Current deacons should have a conversation with all nominees about the possibility of serving and should secure the nominees' willingness to serve before presenting them to the congregation.
4. The created list of *eligible* and *willing* nominees should be presented to the congregation at least two weeks before an announced vote.
5. The current deacons rotating off will count the vote totals.
6. The nominees receiving the highest number of vote counts will be elected as new deacons.
7. A deacon ordination service will be scheduled and presided over by the pastor should an unordained man be elected.

Trustees

The church will elect three or more trustees to serve as legal officers for the church. They will hold in trust the church property. Upon a specific vote of the church authorizing each action, they will have the power to buy, sell, mortgage, lease, or transfer any church property. When the signatures of trustees are required, they will sign legal documents involving the sale, mortgage, purchase, or rental of property, or other legal documents related to church-approved matters.

Trustees will serve three-year terms on a rotation basis, with one new trustee being elected every year. One year must lapse before trustees are eligible to serve in this capacity again.

Moderator

The church will elect annually a moderator as its presiding officer for any Members' Meetings. In the absence of the moderator, the chairman of deacons will preside; in the absence of both, the Administrative Ministry Assistant will call the church to order and preside for the election of an acting moderator.

Adoption and Amendments

Section 1. The Bylaws will be adopted and in immediate effect, if and when two-thirds of the members present and voting, vote in favor of the same. This vote will be taken not less than 30 days after the formal presentation of the constitution to the church.

Section 2. The Bylaws may be amended, altered, or repealed by a two-thirds vote of the members present and voting, at any regular business meeting of the church. Any amendment, alteration, or repeal must be given to the Administrative Ministry Assistant in writing; this proposed change will be presented to the church at least 30 days before the time the vote is taken.