

CONSTITUTION AND BYLAWS

Constitution and Bylaws of Lake Ouachita Baptist Church of Mount Ida, Arkansas

PREAMBLE

We believe our authority is given to us by God through His Holy Scriptures.

This Constitution and Bylaws are made to:

1. Preserve and secure the principles of our faith.
2. Preserve the liberties of each individual member of the church.
3. Ensure freedom of action and of independence from any religious body or organization.
4. Provide for the orderly conduct of internal affairs, in dealing with others, and of governing church members.

I. Name

The name of this church shall be *Lake Ouachita Baptist Church of Mount Ida, Arkansas*. It shall be affiliated with the Caddo River Association, the Arkansas Baptist State Convention, and the Southern Baptist Convention.

II. Business Location

The address of the principal office of this church shall be 3586 Highway 270 East, Mount Ida, Arkansas 71957.

III. Purposes

The purposes of Lake Ouachita Baptist Church of Mount Ida, Arkansas, are to

1. Worship God, who is worthy of all praise and glory.
2. Serve God locally, nationally, and internationally by fulfilling the Great Commission of Jesus Christ as set forth in Matthew 28:19-20.

¹⁹Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, ²⁰teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age." Amen.

Matthew 28: 19-20 (NKJV)

3. Minister to the needs of the members and others, as the church is able to do so.
4. Do any and all things related to and in connection with the carrying out of the purposes of a New Testament Church.

IV. Articles of Faith

1. We believe the Holy Bible is the inspired Word of God, without any error, the all-sufficient authority in matters of faith, doctrine and Christian living.
2. We believe in one God, eternally existing in three Persons: the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit.
3. We believe in the Virgin Birth of Jesus Christ, and that He is truly God and man. He died on the cross for our sins. He rose bodily from the dead, ascended into heaven where He sits at the right hand of the Father and is now our High Priest and Advocate.
4. We believe that man was created in the image of God but fell into sin and is, therefore, lost. Only through regeneration by the work of the Holy Spirit can man's salvation and spiritual life be obtained.
5. We believe that eternal salvation is the free gift of God, entirely apart from man's works, and is possessed by any and all who have faith in and receive Jesus Christ as their personal Lord and Savior.
6. We believe in a regenerated church membership: that is, persons who are old enough to understand their need for Jesus Christ and who have of their own free will, accepted Him as their personal Lord and Savior.
7. We believe that baptism is by immersion and the Lord's Supper is a

memorial to Christ's suffering and death on the cross. These are ordinances to be observed by the church in its present age. They are, however, not to be regarded as means for man's salvation.

8. We believe in the personal, bodily, imminent, and glorious return of the Lord Jesus Christ and that His second coming inspires believers to dynamic and zealous life and service for Him while waiting for His return.
9. We believe in the bodily resurrection of the dead, the everlasting blessedness of the saved in Heaven, and the everlasting punishment and separation from God of the unsaved in Hell.
10. We believe in the autonomy of the local church. The church shall manage its own affairs and shall not be subject to any other religious body or organization.
11. We subscribe to the "Baptist Faith and Message" adopted by the Southern Baptist Convention as our larger statement of faith with scriptural references.

V. Covenant

Having been led by the Spirit of God to receive the Lord and Savior, and on the profession of our faith, and 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 this covenant with one another as one body in Christ.

We engage, therefore, by the aid of the Holy Spirit to walk together in Christian love; to strive for the advancement of this church in knowledge, holiness and comfort; to promote its prosperity and spirituality; to sustain its worship, ordinances, doctrines and discipline; 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 engage to maintain family and personal devotions; to religiously educate our children; to seek the salvation of our kindred and acquaintances; to walk circumspectly in the world; to be just in our dealings, faithful in our engagements and exemplary in our deportment; to avoid all gossip and excessive anger; to use our

influence to combat the abuse of alcohol, drugs, abortion, homosexuality, gambling, and the spread of pornography; and 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 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.

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

VI. Government

The government of Lake Ouachita Baptist Church of Mount Ida, Arkansas is vested in its members. The membership retains unto itself the right of exclusive self-government in all phases of its life and organization. It recognizes the needs for mutual counsel and cooperation, which are common among Baptist churches. This church will cooperate with and mutually work with Caddo River Baptist Association, Arkansas Baptist State Convention and the Southern Baptist Convention.

This church will be supported financially by free will gifts of tithes, offerings or material gifts and will not transfer any tangible goods or real property to any person or entity in exchange for these gifts to the church. This in no way is to prevent church organizations, classes, groups or members from having fundraisers, meals, auctions or other non-gambling activities to raise money or goods for a specific church related purpose or activity.

VII. Non-profit Status and Liquidation

This church is not organized for profit. In the event of liquidation or dissolution of the church, all of its assets and property of every nature and description shall be paid over and transferred to the Caddo River Baptist Association and to the Arkansas Baptist State Convention in the amount of fifty percent (50%) each.

VIII. Amendments

This Constitution and Bylaws may be amended provided the proposed amendment was presented in writing at a regular church business meeting and then circulated to the membership at least one month in advance of the vote. Amendments to this Constitution and Bylaws shall be by a seventy-five percent (3/4) vote of members of the church who are qualified to vote and are present in the business meeting with a quorum, as prescribed in section IV-D of the Bylaws, to discuss and vote for this matter.

BYLAWS

I. Church Membership

A. Qualifications

Membership of Lake Ouachita Baptist Church of Mount Ida, Arkansas shall consist of people having made a profession of their faith in Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior, and who, having been scripturally baptized by immersion, are in agreement with the Articles of Faith.

B. Reception

Membership in the church may be attained by a sixty-seven percent (2/3) majority vote of the church in any business meeting and in one of the following manners:

1. By scriptural baptism by immersion after profession of faith in Jesus Christ as personal Lord and Savior.
2. By transfer of church letter from another church of like faith and order.
3. By a statement of faith of their prior experience of conversion and scriptural baptism by immersion in another evangelical church of like faith and practice.
4. By reinstatement in the event the candidate was excluded from church membership for a cause deemed sufficient by the church and provided the candidate makes a statement of repentance acceptable to the church.

C. Termination

Membership in this church shall be terminated when a member:

1. Requests a letter of transfer to join another Baptist church.
2. Is dropped from the roll of membership when he or she joins another kind of church. A letter of transfer is not necessary.
3. The member dies.
4. Is dismissed by a vote of the church due to reasons and circumstances provided in Section V. Church Discipline. The pastor and deacons will do all they can to counsel the member for restoration using guidelines in Matthew 18: 15-17 prior to action of dismissal or a request of the member to be dismissed from the church membership.
5. Is deemed uninterested or inactive by choice as determined by the Church Leadership Team's annual review. This does not include homebound or nursing home members, etc.

D. Privileges and Responsibilities

1. Members in good standing shall have the privilege to a voice and vote in all church transactions and shall have the privileges to full participation in the life and work of the church.
2. It shall be the duty of church members to uphold the Articles of Faith, this Constitution and Bylaws.
3. For a member to be considered in good standing, they must, while not providentially hindered, be a resident member and support the church in attendance and with financial contributions.

E. Orientation of New Members

Candidates for membership shall attend a church membership class to learn and understand the privileges and responsibilities of belonging to the Lord's church.

II. Church Officers

All church officers must be members of the church in good standing.

A. The Pastor(s):

1. The qualifications for pastor shall be consistent with those listed in I Timothy 3:1-7, and with the current job description as adopted by the church.

¹This is a faithful saying: If a man desires the position of a bishop, he desires a good work. ² A bishop then must be blameless, the husband of one wife, temperate, sober-minded, of good behavior, hospitable, able to teach; ³not given to wine, not violent, not greedy for money, but gentle, not quarrelsome, not covetous; ⁴one who rules his own house well, having his children in submission with all reverence ⁵ (for if a man does not know how to rule his own house, how will he take care of the church of God?); ⁶not a novice, lest being puffed up with pride he fall into the same condemnation as the devil. ⁷Moreover he must have a good testimony among those who are outside, lest he fall into reproach and the snare of the devil.

I Timothy 3:1-7 (NKJV)

2. His responsibilities:

- a) These generally fall into the following areas: preaching, teaching, pastoral counseling, administration, planning, and guiding the church to grow and fulfill its purposes. The pastor will normally perform these functions directly but will oversee the function if it is assigned to another member.
- b) He shall lead the church, the organizations, and all leaders of the church in performing their tasks in worship, proclamation, education, and evangelism, as well as caring for the church's members and other persons in the community.
- c) The pastor shall be an ex-officio member of all church committees, except the Pastor's Search Team.

- d) He shall be responsible for securing pulpit supply for times of his absence.
- e) He shall ensure that the church shall have orientation classes for new members.

3. Call

- a) A pastor shall be chosen and called whenever a vacancy occurs.
- b) A Pastor Search Team shall be elected by the church to select a pastoral candidate. This Team shall be elected by written ballot in a regular business meeting or a called business meeting so designated for that purpose.
- c) The Team shall consist of eight (8) persons, four men and four women with no alternates. These persons shall represent all age groups of the church, for example Children, Youth, Young Adults, Median Adults, and Senior Adults. No two persons from the same immediate family may serve on the Team. No paid staff or their family members may serve on the Team. No person shall be under age eighteen (18).
- d) The recommendation of this Team will constitute a nomination. This Team must be unanimous in its recommendation.
- e) Salary, vacation, benefits and similar matters shall be agreed upon by the Personnel and Budget and Finance Committees, approved by the church, and presented in writing to the pastoral candidate by the Search Team.
- f) The Pastor Search Team shall present one (1) candidate at a time.
- g) The vote to call the pastor shall be at a meeting designated for that purpose. The vote shall be by written ballot. An affirmative vote of ninety percent (90%) of those members present is necessary to constitute a call.

4. Terms of Service

- a) The chosen pastor shall serve until the relationship is

terminated by either his request or that of the church. In either case, at least two (2) weeks notice shall be given unless otherwise mutually agreed.

- b) There should be a written mutual covenant contract made between the pastor and the church signed by the pastor and the chairperson of the Search Team. This covenant contract will become a part of the church minutes.

B. Ministerial Staff – Associate Pastor, Music Minister, Youth or Children's Minister

1. The qualifications for ministerial staff shall be consistent with those listed in I Timothy 3:1-7 (see Article II, Section A) and with the current job descriptions as adopted by the church.
2. Ministerial staff shall be called and elected by the procedures detailed in Article II, Section A, Number 3.
3. Terms of service are the same as for the pastor.

C. Deacons

1. Number, term of office
 - a) There should be a minimum of seven (7) active deacons with a maximum of a deacon for every ten (10) families.
 - b) Deacons shall be activated for a term of service of three years (3) and must rotate to inactive status for one year in order to be eligible for reactivation.
2. Qualifications
 - a) A church deacon must meet the qualifications listed in I Timothy 3:8-13.

⁸Likewise deacons must be reverent, not double-tongued, not given to much wine, not greedy for money,⁹holding the mystery of the faith with a pure conscience. ¹⁰But let these also first be tested; then let them serve as deacons, being found blameless. ¹¹Likewise their wives must be reverent, not slanderers, temperate, faithful in all things. ¹²Let deacons be the husbands of one wife, ruling their children and their own houses well. ¹³For those who

have served well as deacons obtain for themselves a good standing and great boldness in the faith which is in Christ Jesus.

I Timothy 3:8-13 (NKJV)

- b) A deacon shall demonstrate an exemplary Christian testimony in private, family and public life; should be a committed Christian man and coworker of the pastor; and should be a supporter and promoter of the church faith, practice, programs and ministries.
- c) A deacon must have one year of active membership at LOBC and must be at least twenty-one (21) years of age.

3. Election

- a) When a deacon vacancy occurs, the chairman of the deacons or pastor shall announce that an election of a deacon(s) shall be held during a named church business meeting.
- b) The deacons will enlist active men to be recommended to the church. Other names may be submitted by church members to the deacons for consideration. The duties, qualifications and importance of the office of a deacon will be explained to the candidates and shared with the church prior to the scheduled election of deacons.
- c) Voting shall be by written ballots. An affirmative vote of ninety percent (90%) of those members present is necessary to elect a candidate.

4. Ordination

- a) Selection, election and ordination of deacons is a privilege of the local church.
- b) When ordination of deacons is planned by the church, it shall authorize the pastor to assemble a council to examine the candidates concerning their qualifications to serve as deacons.
- c) The council directed to examine the deacons shall be

composed of the pastor, associate pastor, all deacons and invited ordained pastors and deacons in the local association.

- d) When the council recommends the ordination of deacons, the ordination service shall be scheduled and led by the pastor. If the church is without a pastor, the chairman of deacons will lead this service.

5. Duties

- a) Elected deacons shall elect their chairman.
- b) No deacon may serve as chairman more than one (1) consecutive year. After two years (24 months), he is eligible to be reelected.
- c) Deacons serve in a ministry of encouragement and counsel for the pastor concerning the progress and welfare of the church.
- d) Assist the pastor in ministering to the members by implementing a deacon ministry plan.
- e) Assist the pastor in the observance of the church ordinances.
- f) In the absence of the pastor, the chairman of the deacons or his designated representative shall serve as an advisory member to all organizations, departments and committees of the church.
- g) The deacons will secure a supply preacher when the church is without a pastor. The deacons may assign this duty to another person or committee.
- h) The deacons are available for consultation to any committee.
- i) Any problems or issues within the deacon body shall be managed internally by the deacon council.

D. Church Staff

This church shall employ or call staff, as needed.

1. Non-ministerial staff (ex. secretary, childcare, custodian, yard care, etc.) shall be recommended for employment by the personnel committee with the pastor's endorsement. These positions do not necessarily have to be filled by church members.

2. A written job description and mutual covenant contract will be prepared when the need for non-ministerial staff is determined and shall be signed by the staff person and the committee chairperson.
3. Terms of service:
The chosen staff member shall serve until the relationship is terminated by either his/her request or that of the church. In either case, at least fourteen (14) day notice shall be given unless otherwise mutually agreed.

E. Moderator

1. The church moderator shall be the pastor, the chairman of the deacons or a qualified lay leader elected to this position.
2. The moderator shall preside over all regular and called business meetings of the church according to Robert's Rules of Order, Revised Edition.
3. In the absence of the moderator and the chairman of deacons and provided there is a quorum as prescribed in IV-D of the Bylaws, the church clerk shall call the church to order and an acting moderator will be elected for one meeting. If none of the listed people are available, the business meeting will be cancelled.

F. Clerk

1. The church clerk shall be elected and shall be responsible for keeping an accurate record of all business meeting transactions of the church and for preparing the annual report to the Caddo River Association.
2. He or she shall keep a register of the names and addresses of the church members, with dates of admission, dismissal, dedication of children, and deaths of members of the church family. The church secretary may be designated to perform this duty for the clerk.
3. He or she shall issue letters of dismissal voted by the church

and write letters of transfer of membership, prepare written reports of the church and keep an accurate history of the church.

4. An assistant church clerk may be elected and/or the clerk's responsibilities may be delegated to a church secretary.
5. He or she shall be responsible for maintaining the Operating Procedures Manual.

G. Treasurer

1. The church treasurer shall be elected as the custodian of all funds of the church and shall disburse these funds by checks as authorized by the church.
2. He or she shall keep, at all times, an itemized account of all receipts and disbursements and shall render a monthly and annually written report of this account to the church.
3. The treasurer's report shall be audited annually by an independent CPA with no ties to the church or its members.
4. The duties of the treasurer may be assigned, all or in part, to the financial or church secretary.
5. The treasurer shall be an ex-officio member of the Budget and Finance Committee.

H. Financial Secretary

1. The church financial secretary shall be elected by the church or employed with church approval by the personnel committee.
2. He or she shall properly credit each contributor with offerings and contributions given.
3. He or she shall be responsible for preparing and mailing a quarterly and/or annual record of contribution to contributors.

I. Trustees

1. At least five (5) trustees shall be elected by the church to hold in trust the property of the church.
2. They shall have no power to buy, sell, mortgage, lease or transfer any property of the church without a specific vote of the church authorizing each action.
3. It shall be the function of the trustees to sign any and all legal documents involving the sale, mortgage, purchase or lease of church property or any other legal documents requiring the signature of the trustees for and in behalf of the church.
4. Trustees shall serve on a five (5) year rotational basis. After serving an assignment, a trustee shall be eligible for re-election only after the lapse of at least one year.

J. Vacancies

In case of vacancy in any office, except that of the pastor, ministerial staff, and staff members, the vacancy shall be filled by the church at a regular or special called meeting as soon as it is expedient.

III. Church Committees

A. General

1. Church committees shall be formed as needed for successfully accomplishing the mission and purpose of the church.
2. Church committee members (except for the pastor or ministerial staff search team) shall be elected by the church from nominations presented by a Nominating Committee and from the floor with the consent of the nominees.

B. Church Committees

1. All church committees shall have a minimum of three (3)

- members with a chairperson.
2. Members will be elected to a three-year term and should rotate off for at least one year before becoming eligible to serve on the same committee.
 3. A member elected to fill a vacancy shall serve the unexpired term of the position vacated and then will be eligible to be elected to a full three-year (3) term.
 4. Committee chairpersons shall be elected for one year and must be rotated annually.
 5. Each committee chairperson shall submit an annual budget request to the budget/finance committee if required.

C. Ad hoc Committees

1. Ad hoc committees will be formed when the need arises and may consist of any number of members.
2. They will serve until the purpose for their formation has been accomplished at which time they will be automatically dissolved.

D. Responsibilities

1. All committees will be responsible for the properties or functions assigned to that committee by the church or as prescribed by these bylaws.
2. The assigned responsibilities of each committee will be further defined by a job guideline in the Operating Procedures Manual as described in section VI of these bylaws.
3. The nominating committee will submit nominations for committee members, teachers and departmental officers at least thirty (30) days prior to the assumption of the position's duties, when feasible. Committees serve from January 1 to December 31. Teachers and Department Officers serve according to the school year.
 - a. During the business meeting when these nominations are being considered, the floor will be opened by the moderator for additional nominations.

- b. Any member may present a nomination from the floor. These nominations will be voted on by the church prior to the beginning of the next year.
 - c. Any other responsibilities of the nominating committee will be described in the Operating Procedures Manual.
4. The budget/finance committee, using the information submitted by the chairpersons of each committee, the prior year's budget and any other factors, shall compile a budget for the coming fiscal year (January 1 – December 31). This proposed budget will be submitted to the church for approval at a special called business meeting.
5. All committees will be required to operate within the financial confines of the church budget and current operating funds. Any expenditure exceeding the current budget must be brought before the budget/finance committee.
6. All committees will have job guidelines, which will be reviewed by their chairperson at the beginning of the year.

E. Committee Meetings

Committee meetings will be held at least every two (2) months. At least 50% (1/2) of the membership of the team will be required for a quorum. Each committee is required to present a written report at each business meeting.

IV. Church Meetings

A. Worship Services

1. The church shall meet regularly each Sunday morning and evening for the worship of God, for preaching, instruction, evangelism, and on Wednesday, or another night, for designated prayer and/or home Bible study.
2. These meetings shall be open for the entire membership of the church and for all people and shall be conducted under the direction of the pastor, a designated church member or guest preacher in the absence of the pastor.
3. Sunday School

The Sunday School shall be the basic organization for evangelism and Bible teaching. Its tasks shall be to teach the biblical revelation, reach people for Christ and church membership, and provide and interpret information regarding the work of the church and denomination.

Sunday School shall be organized by departments and/or classes appropriate for all ages and shall be conducted under the direction of a Sunday School Director elected by the church.

B. Regular Business Meetings

1. Regular business meetings should be held at least once a quarter or more often as determined by the leadership.
2. The agenda with all recommendations shall be made available to the church members at least one week prior to the business meeting. Therefore, all recommendations must be submitted in writing to the church office two weeks prior to the meeting. Each written recommendation must be signed by the committee chairperson or individual person making the recommendation.
3. Robert's Rules of Order (Revised Edition) is adopted as the authority for parliamentary rules of procedure for all business meetings of the church and for all other meetings that demand voting of the church members, including committee meetings. Copies are available in the church office and library.

C. Special Business Meetings

1. A special called business meeting may be called by the pastor, chairman of deacons, other church officers, or by action of the church to consider special matters of significant nature or matters that require immediate action.
2. Notice of a called business meeting must be given at least one week in advance at no less than three (3) church meetings. The notice shall include the subject, date, time and place.
3. In case extreme urgency renders such notice impractical, the moderator or any member may request that the church consider a stated subject. The consent of three-fourths (3/4)

of the members present and voting is required to declare the church in conference for such consideration. No subject other than that stated may be discussed during a business meeting called in this manner.

D. Quorum

1. The quorum consists of those who attend the business meeting, provided it is a stated meeting or one that has been properly called. Because of this, no absentee voting will be allowed.
2. Regardless of conditions, at least ten percent (10%) of the membership must be present to constitute a quorum.
3. This will be increased to twenty-five percent (25%) when voting on call to a ministerial position.

V. Church Discipline

- A. Should any unhappy difference arise among members, the aggrieved member shall follow in a tender spirit, the rules given by our Lord in Matthew 18:15-17.

¹⁵Moreover if your brother sins against you, go and tell him his fault between you and him alone. If he hears you, you have gained a brother. ¹⁶But if he will not hear, take with you one or two more, that 'by the mouth of two or three witnesses every word may be established.' ¹⁷And if he refuses to hear them, tell it to the church. But if he refuses even to hear the church, let him be to you like a heathen and a tax collector.

Matthew 18:15-17 (NKJV)

- B. All such proceedings shall be pervaded by a spirit of Christian kindness and forbearance, but should an adverse decision be reached, the church may proceed to admonish or declare the offender to be no longer in the membership of the church. This vote would require an affirmative vote of seventy-five percent (3/4) of church members present and qualified to vote to pass.
- C. Any person whose membership has been terminated for any offense may be restored by vote of the church, upon evidence of his/her repentance and reformation.

VI. Accounting and Operating Procedures

A. Accounting Procedures

1. All funds received from regular or special offerings shall be properly counted and deposited in the bank by the counting committee.
2. The treasurer and those managing funds shall be bonded.
3. The treasurer or someone so designated shall prepare a monthly financial report of the receipts and disbursements of all funds and present to the church.
4. The church fiscal year shall be from January 1 to December 31.

B. An Operating Procedures Manual will be maintained in the church office. This manual will have, but not be limited to, sections on Administration, Finance, Committees, Property and Staff/Job Guidelines/Descriptions. This manual will be used to record decisions made in business meetings that will affect the continued operation of the church. It will negate the necessity of continually researching old business meeting minutes to determine proper operational procedures to follow and will prevent the amending of the constitution and bylaws to clarify minor operating procedures.

1. No operating procedure may be adopted that would conflict with or change the intent of the Constitution, Bylaws or God's Word.
2. The church clerk, assisted by the church secretary, will be responsible for maintaining this manual of operating procedures. Whenever a motion is passed in a business meeting that will affect the continuing operation of the church, an operating procedure will be placed in the manual reiterating the motion and the date of its passage.
3. A majority vote (51%) of a quorum of the members, as specified in Section IV-D of the Bylaws, will be required to adopt, change or delete an operating procedure that involves church wide activities.

VII. Ratification

This Constitution and Bylaws will become effective when ratified by a 75% (3/4) majority vote of the church. This vote will be taken in a business meeting called two weeks in advance for that purpose. A quorum of the membership as prescribed in Section IV-D of the Bylaws of this document must be present for the vote to be taken. Copies of this document will be made available to all members two weeks prior to the vote for ratification.

Ratified by action of Lake Ouachita Baptist Church in its business meeting on **September 21, 2008**

Moderator:

Billy O. Kite, Intentional Interim Ministry Pastor

Church Clerk:

Helen Daniels