

**CONSTITUTION AND BYLAWS OF ZION HILL BAPTIST CHURCH
OF BUFORD, GEORGIA, INC. 30519
Revised and Amended August, 2010**

PREAMBLE

For the more certain preservation and security of the principles of our faith, and to the end that this Church may be governed in an orderly manner consistent with the Southern Baptist Convention and the Georgia Baptist Convention which practices the Great Commission and sends missionaries throughout the United States and around the world, and for the purpose of preserving the liberties inherent in each individual member of this Church and with respect to its relation to other Churches of the same faith, we do declare and establish this Constitution.

**ARTICLE I
NAME**

This Church shall be known as the Zion Hill Baptist Church of Buford, Georgia, Inc.

**ARTICLE II
CHARTER**

Section 1: **POLICY** The government of this Church is vested in the body of believers who compose it. It is subject to the control of no other ecclesiastical body, but it recognizes and sustains the obligations of mutual counsel and cooperation which are common among Southern Baptist Convention churches.

Section 2: **DISCIPLINE** The discipline of this Church shall conform to the pattern as set forth in the New Testament (ref. Article VI, Section 3, items 3 and 5).

Section 3: **DOCTRINE** This Church receives the Scriptures as its authority in matters of faith and practice. We affirm the Holy Bible as the inspired Word of God and the basis of our beliefs. Its understanding of Christian truth as contained therein is in essential accord with the belief of the Baptist Churches as indicated in the Articles of Faith as adopted by this Church.

Section 4: **ARTICLES OF FAITH** This Church subscribes to the doctrinal statement of "The Baptist Faith and Message" as adopted by the Southern Baptist Convention in 1963 and as amended in 2000 (Attachment "A"). We voluntarily band ourselves together as a body of baptized believers in Jesus Christ, personally committed to sharing the good news of salvation to lost mankind. The ordinances of the Church are believer's baptism by immersion and the Lord's Supper.

Section 5: **COVENANT** Having been led as we believe, by the Spirit of God to receive the Lord Jesus Christ as our Lord and 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

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presence of God and this assembly, most solemnly and joyfully enter into covenant with one another as one body in Christ.

We engage, therefore, by the aid of the Holy Spirit, to walk together in Christian love; to strive for the advancement of this Church in knowledge, holiness, and comfort; to promote its prosperity and spirituality; to sustain its worship, ordinances, 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 secret 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 tattling, backbiting, and excessive anger; 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 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.

Section 6: Statement of Purpose: To know Jesus Christ and to make Him known to others.

**ARTICLE III
MEMBERSHIP**

Section 1: Any person professing faith in the Lord Jesus Christ as Savior and declaring it as his purpose to follow Him as His disciple may, by unanimous vote of the congregation, at any Church service, be received through baptism by immersion, unless physically impaired, into full membership of this Church.

Section 2: Members of other Baptist Churches, upon presentation of letters of dismissal from those Churches, as in good standing, may, by the congregation at any Church service, be received into full membership of this Church.

Section 3: Any person who has at sometime been a member of a Baptist Church, but whose membership has been lost, may, upon statement of the facts and vow of their faith and love to Christ, be restored and received to membership by unanimous vote of the congregation at any of its Church services.

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Section 4: Any person desiring membership in this Church, who is a member of a non-Baptist Church, shall be received on a profession of faith, and unless physically impaired or has had Christian Baptism by immersion, be baptized by immersion in regular order, as is the custom of a Southern Baptist Church.

Section 5: **Opposition to membership:** When opposition is voiced by one or more members of the Church against granting membership to a particular person, the matter will be referred to the Active Deacons. The Active Deacons shall investigate the basis for such opposition and then shall report their recommendation to the Church. The Church then, in regular conference, shall decide by vote whether membership shall be granted.

Section 6: **Duties:** Members are expected, first of all, to be faithful in all duties essential to the Christian Life, to attend habitually the services of this Church, to give regularly to its support and its causes, and to share in its organized work.

Section 7: **Rights:** Such members as are in full and regular standing and do not hold letters of dismissal, and such only, may act and vote in the transactions of the Church.

Section 8: **Termination:** Membership shall be terminated in the following ways: (1) death of the member; (2) dismissal to another Baptist Church; (3) exclusion by action of this Church; or (4) erasure upon request or proof of membership in a Church of another denomination.

**ARTICLE IV
BUSINESS CONFERENCE**

Section 1: The Church shall have a regular scheduled business conference each quarter. A special business meeting of the Church may be called at any time by the Pastor or at the insistence of three Active Deacons, provided the hour named is the time for a regular service of the Church. Any action taken at said business meeting must be ratified at the next regular business meeting.

Section 2: Members present shall constitute a quorum at a business conference, unless otherwise stated herein.

Section 3: Two-thirds (2/3) of the members present must vote in the affirmative before a motion can be carried, unless otherwise stated herein.

Section 4: An annual business conference shall be held one month prior to the new church year for the purpose of electing Church officers and members of Church ministry teams. This conference shall be advertised from the pulpit at the morning worship service two (2) consecutive Sundays preceding the business conference.

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Section 5: Whenever a motion of recommendation is made pertaining to the following outstanding items of business, such motion or recommendation shall be advertised from the pulpit at the morning worship service on the two (2) Sundays preceding the business conference at which such motion or recommendation is to be discussed and voted upon.

1. Amendment to this constitution.
2. Dismissal of the Pastor or request for the Pastor to resign.
3. Calling for a new Pastor after the Pastor has been agreed upon by the Pastor Search Team.
4. Sell, purchase, or transfer real estate or Church Building(s).
5. The existing Purchase Order system applies to all purchases.
6. Combine with another Church.
7. Affiliate with another Church or group of Churches other than Southern Baptist Churches.
8. Approval of the annual budget.
9. Construction of a new building.
10. Hire a staff member.
11. Any other matter that will have a major effect upon the status or well-being of the Church.

Section 6: The authority on all parliamentary questions shall be Robert's Rules of Order.

**ARTICLE V
NOMINATION AND ELECTION OF CHURCH OFFICERS AND MEMBERS OF
CHURCH MINISTRY TEAMS**

Section 1: Term of service. The term of service shall be on (1) year for church officers and one (1) year for ministry team members, unless otherwise stated herein, and will conform to the regular Church year. In the case of a vacancy, the position will be referred back to the Nominating Ministry Team. The nominee will be presented to the Church for election. This procedure will be followed unless stated otherwise herein.

Section 2: Church year. The Church year shall be from the first day of September of each year.

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Section 3: Nominations. Nominations shall be made by the Ministry team on nominations unless otherwise stated herein.

Section 4: Election. Election will be by a two-thirds (2/3) vote in the affirmative at a business conference of the Church.

Section 5: All organizations and ministry teams of the church shall be under the control of the church membership.

Section 6: Ministry team chairpersons should contact the nominating ministry team when anyone on their ministry team becomes inactive. At that time, the nominating ministry team shall discuss the situation with the inactive member. Upon agreement by the nominating ministry team and the ministry team chairperson, an inactive ministry team member may be replaced upon approval of the church body.

Section 7: It is understood that the pastor is an ex-officio member of all organizations and standing ministry teams named by the church.

Section 8: Zion Hill Baptist Church membership is required to serve as a church officer or in a leadership position on a ministry team.

**ARTICLE VI
CHURCH OFFICERS**

Part 1: Fellowship of Deacons

Section 1: Number, Election, and Term of Service. The number of Deacons to be elected shall be determined by the Church according to its membership needs. They shall be elected upon the basis of qualifications as stated in the Eligibility Paragraph and the New Testament qualifications such as found in I Timothy 3:8-13. Active Deacons shall serve for a term of three (3) years, or until a successor has been approved by a majority vote of the church body.

When a Deacon's term has expired, he is not eligible for re-election until at least one (1) year has lapsed. Each year, the congregation will submit names of men to be considered for Deacons in a designated (or series of) Sunday morning service(s). These names will be given to the Pastor and Active Deacons, who will evaluate the men for eligibility. Of those men qualified, a sufficient number to provide two (2) candidates for each position to be filled will be contacted. The order of contacting the qualified men will be determined by the number of times their name was submitted, starting from highest to lowest. If sufficient candidates have not been qualified, the active Deacons will solicit additional nominees. The list of nominees (whether two for each position or not) shall be published in the Church newsletter and announced from the pulpit two (2) weeks prior to the election which shall take place at a Sunday morning service. Each Church

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member will have one (1) vote for each position to be filled. The election shall be conducted by secret ballot. In the event there is a vacancy due to death, resignation, or removal, the Pastor and Active Deacons shall submit to the Church a name for the vacancy (or vacancies). The person so selected is not to be eligible for re-election to the Active Deacons until at least twelve (12) months has elapsed following his term of service.

Eligibility

- a) A man must have been a member of Zion Hill Baptist Church for a minimum period of one (1) year prior to election.
- b) A man must be at least twenty-one (21) years of age and have been a professed Christian for a minimum of two (2) years.
- c) A man may be either single or married. If married, he shall be a man of one wife.

Section 2: Duties: In accordance with the meaning of the Word and the practice of the New Testament, Deacons are to be servants of the Church. They are to be zealous to guard the unity of the spirit within the Church in the bonds of peace. They shall serve as Council of Advice and confer with the Pastor in all matters pertaining to the welfare and work of the Church. With the Pastor, they are to consider and formulate plans for the constant effort and progress of the Church in all things pertaining to the saving of souls, the development of Christians, and the extension and growth of the Kingdom of God.

Section 3: Method of Procedure

- 1. The whole body of Active Deacons shall be organized as a unit for consideration of all larger problems and general policies. They may organize themselves into such committees as their wisdom may direct for efficiency in service.
- 2. They shall apportion the membership of the Church among themselves, or make plans whereby the entire membership may have the benefit of the oversight in Christ of their brethren.
- 3. Each Deacon shall freely confer with the Pastor about all matters and in case of discipline which in his judgment would be most wisely and spiritually handled in private.
- 4. By proper organization and method among themselves, they are to establish and maintain personal fraternal relation with and inspiring oversight of all members of the Church. Especially they are to seek to know the physical needs and the moral and spiritual struggles of the brethren and sisters; and to serve the whole Church in relieving, encouraging, and developing all who are in need.

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5. In counsel with the Pastor, and by such methods as the Holy Spirit may direct in accordance with the New Testament teaching, they are to have oversight of the discipline of the Church. In administering discipline, they are to be guided always by the principles set forth in Matthew 18:15-17, I Corinthians 5:9-13, and I Thessalonians 5:12-14. The Deacons shall be free to call upon any member of the Church to aid in disciplinary action.
6. The Deacons shall serve as a general Pulpit Ministry team. In case of absence or inability of the Pastor, subject to the advice from and in conference with him, they shall provide for the pulpit supplies. In any period, when the Church is without a Pastor, the Deacons will arrange the temporary ministry and take counsel with reference to securing a Pastor, but will not serve as Pulpit Ministry Team. It is not intended in any way to prejudice herein the method by which the Church shall proceed in securing a Pastor.
7. The Deacons will oversee and counsel the Pastor of the Church. They shall make recommendations of financial increases as they deem necessary.

Part 2 - Moderator

The Pastor shall be the moderator, except in conference dealing with Article VIII, Section 7. In the absence of the Pastor, the Chairman of the Deacons shall preside, or in the absence of both, the Clerk shall call the Church to order and a moderator pro-tem shall be elected.

Part 3 - Minister of Education

The Sunday School Director will have the oversight of the entire Sunday School and shall administer it with the aid of the Pastor, the Minister of Education, and all officers and teachers. He shall make monthly and annual reports to the Church. The Sunday School Director will also serve as a member of the Church Council. The job description for this position may apply.

Part 4 - Employees and Staff Members

All ministerial staff shall be required to become members of the Zion Hill Baptist Church, upon completion of a probationary period according to their job description, and meet the qualification for minister found in I Timothy 3:1-13.

Employees and staff member shall be under the general direction of the Personnel Team and daily supervision of the Pastor. A job description for each staff position will be kept in a separate procedures manual and maintained in the church office.

ARTICLE VII

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Part 1 - Board of Trustees

Section 1: The Board of Trustees shall consist of the Pastor, Treasurer, and a Deacon. The Nominating Team shall nominate a member in good standing to serve for a period of five years.

Section 2: It shall be the duty of the Board of Trustees to act in all matters coming within the legal business of the Church.

Section 3: The Board of Trustees shall negotiated all loans, execute all deeds and mortgages, and hold in trust all property, both personal and real, either owned or acquired by the Church.

Section 4: The Board of Trustees shall be empowered to sue in any Court of Law in any and all matters legal, appertaining to the business of the Church.

Section 5: The Board of Trustees shall have no power to negotiated loans, to buy or sell property, or to sign any legal papers except when instructed to do so by two-thirds (2/3) of the members present at a regular conference of the Church.

Section 6: No matter shall be considered legal and binding on the Church unless approved and signed by at least three (3) members of the Board.

Section 7: In the event there is a vacancy caused by death, resignation, or removal, same shall be filled immediately, provided the unexpired term is for more than 31 days.

**ARTICLE VIII
CALLING A PASTOR**

Section 1: When the pulpit of this Church becomes vacant, or at any time the Church has noticed that the pulpit will become vacant, the Pastor Search Team consisting of an Active Deacon, Sunday School Director, an active member of the Finance Team, and two members of the congregation elected through the normal nominating process shall organize itself with a Chairman and a Secretary and shall proceed to seek, under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, a Pastor whom they shall recommend to the Church. The Pastor Search Team shall, at regular intervals, keep the Church informed as to the progress it is making.

Section 2: The Pastor Search Team shall bring to the consideration of the Church only one (1) pastor at a time. When such pastor is recommended, the ministry team shall give to the Church such information that shall enable the Church to act wisely and intelligently upon said recommendation. It shall also set forth in detail the salary and other money necessary to secure

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the support of such ministry, and what plans have been set in motion to provide such money. This is to be done with the cooperation of the Finance Team.

Section 3: When the Pastor Search Team has reached a decision and is ready to recommend a prospective pastor to the Pastorate of this Church, notice will be given to the congregation. The prospective pastor will be scheduled to deliver a Sunday morning worship sermon and then attend a question and answer session. The decision to recommend the calling of a pastor to the Pastorate of this Church, notice of such purpose shall be given to the Church two (2) successive Sunday morning worship services prior to the conference in which the action is to be taken on the recommendation. Such action shall be taken at the Sunday morning service.

Section 4: The vote, in calling a Pastor and in any other matter concerning the Pastor, of this Church, shall be by secret ballot and shall require 85 % of the vote cast. Results will be counted and announced immediately.

Section 5: The call to the Pastorate of this Church shall be for an indefinite period of time unless otherwise specified.

Section 6: If the Pastor of this Church desires change of Pastorate and plans to resign, he is requested to give to the Church at least one (1) month notice of his intentions so that the Church may have information of such plans.

Section 7: In case it should occur to this Church that a general sentiment would indicate that a change of Pastor would be best for the general welfare of the Church, and in case ten (10) percent of the active resident members of the Church shall submit such sentiment in writing to the Active Deacons, then the Active Deacons, after prayerful consideration and conference with the Pastor, shall submit such petition to the Church with their recommendations and shall announce that a conference dealing with this matter shall be held. If the vote is so carried in the advertised conference, the Pastor shall be so notified and shall be given, if necessary, one (1) month or be paid one (1) month's salary. This conference shall conform to Article IV, Section V, of the Constitution and bylaws.

Section 8: The Church reserves the right to dismiss the Pastor on short notice in case of persistent flagrant misconduct.

**ARTICLE IX
MEETINGS FOR WORSHIP**

Section 1: Regular meeting for worship shall be held each Sunday morning and other designated times. These services are to be under the direction of the Pastor of the Church.

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Section 2: Special revival meeting shall be held at times agreed upon by the Pastor and the Church.

Section 3: The Lord's Supper shall be observed each quarter or at such other time as the Church may direct.

**ARTICLE X
USE OF CHURCH PROPERTY**

The use of Church buildings and Church property shall be limited to Church-sponsored and Church-approved activities. Permission shall not be given to use of Church buildings and/or Church property for a purpose that would cause a disgraceful or adverse feeling toward the Church.