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Meadowdale Baptist Church

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Constitution and Bylaws

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**M E A D O W D A L E**  
**B A P T I S T C H U R C H**

**Constitution  
and  
Bylaws**

**Revision  
2021**

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# Meadowdale Baptist Church

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## Constitution and Bylaws

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### **PREAMBLE**

### **ARTICLE I: NAME**

### **ARTICLE II: MISSION AND OBJECTIVES**

### **ARTICLE III: STATEMENT OF FAITH**

### **ARTICLE IV: RELATIONSHIPS**

### **BYLAWS**

#### **ARTICLE I: MEMBERSHIP**

SECTION 1	GENERAL
SECTION 2	PROCESS
SECTION 3	RESPONSIBILITIES OF MEMBERS
SECTION 4	VOTING RIGHTS
SECTION 5	TERMINATION OF MEMBERSHIP

#### **ARTICLE II: CHURCH STAFF**

SECTION 1	PASTOR
SECTION 1A	PASTOR TERMINATION
SECTION 1B	ABSENCE OF A PASTOR

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# Meadowdale Baptist Church

---

## Constitution and Bylaws

---

SECTION 2

ADDITIONAL STAFFING

### **ARTICLE III: CHURCH OFFICERS**

SECTION 1

DEACONS

SECTION 2

MODERATOR

SECTION 3

OFFICERS

SECTION 3A

SELECTION OF OFFICERS

SECTION 3B

TERM OF OFFICERS

SECTION 3C

VACANCY IN ANY OFFICE

SECTION 4

CLERK

SECTION 5

TREASURER

SECTION 6

TRUSTEES

### **ARTICLE IV: TEAMS**

SECTION 1

STANDING TEAMS

SECTION 2

TEMPORARY TEAMS

SECTION 3

TEAM QUORUM

SECTION 4

TEAM MINUTES

SECTION 5

TEAM CHAIRPERSON

### **ARTICLE V: CHURCH MEETINGS**

SECTION 1

WORSHIP SERVICES

SECTION 2

SPECIAL SERVICES

SECTION 3

REGULAR BUSINESS MEETINGS

SECTION 4

SPECIAL BUSINESS MEETINGS

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# Meadowdale Baptist Church

---

## Constitution and Bylaws

---

### **ARTICLE VI: CHURCH FINANCES**

- SECTION 1            BUDGET
- SECTION 2            ACCOUNTING PROCEDURES
- SECTION 3            FISCAL YEAR

### **ARTICLE VII: CHURCH FUNDING**

### **ARTICLE VIII: ADOPTION AND AMENDMENTS**

- SECTION 1    BYLAWS ADOPTION
- SECTION 2    BYLAWS AMENDMENTS

### **ARTICLE IX: RULES OF ORDER**

### **ARTICLE X: VALIDATE**

- SECTION 1    CONSTITUTION AND BYLAWS AMENDMENTS
- SECTION 2    CONSTITUTION AND BYLAWS RECORD KEEPING

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# Meadowdale Baptist Church

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## Constitution and Bylaws

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### **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 individual church member, and the freedom of action of this body in matters relating to its purpose and function.

#### **ARTICLE I: NAME**

This body shall be known as Meadowdale Baptist Church, inc. of Gordon County, Calhoun, Georgia, located at 1811 Rome Road S.W.

#### **ARTICLE II: MISSION AND OBJECTIVES**

The mission of Meadowdale Baptist Church is to help people know Jesus and grow in him, to drive the following objectives:

To be a dynamic spiritual church body empowered by the Holy Spirit to share Christ with as many people as possible in our church, community, and throughout the world.

To be a worshipping fellowship, experiencing an awareness of God, recognizing His person, and responding in obedience to His leadership.

To experience increasingly meaningful relationships with God and fellow believers.

To be a church that ministers unselfishly to persons in the community and the world in Jesus' name.

To be a church whose purpose is to be Christ-like in our daily living, by emphasizing total commitment of life, personality, and possessions to the Lordship of Christ.

#### **ARTICLE III: STATEMENT OF FAITH**

The Holy Bible is the inspired Word of God and is the basis for any statement of faith. While the church subscribes to the doctrinal statement of "The Baptist Faith and Message 2000" as adopted by the Southern Baptist Convention in 2000, this is a sovereign and democratic Baptist church under the Lordship of Jesus Christ. The membership retains unto itself the exclusive right of self-government in all phases of the spiritual and temporal life of this church. The ordinances of the church are baptism and the Lord's Supper. We do not believe in closed communion.

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# Meadowdale Baptist Church

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## Constitution and Bylaws

---

### **ARTICLE IV: RELATIONSHIPS**

The government of this church is vested in the body of believers who compose it. This church is autonomous and maintains the right to govern its own affairs, independent of any denominational control, but it recognizes and sustains the obligations of mutual counsel and cooperation which are common among Southern Baptist churches. Meadowdale Baptist Church will cooperate with and support (as deemed practical by the church body) local, state and national Baptist organizations.

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# Meadowdale Baptist Church

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## Constitution and Bylaws

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### BYLAWS

#### ARTICLE I: MEMBERSHIP

##### SECTION 1: GENERAL

The church reserves the exclusive right to determine who shall be members of this church and the conditions of membership.

##### SECTION 2: PROCESS

Any person may request membership to Meadowdale Baptist Church. All such candidates for membership shall complete an introductory process that includes an overview of who we are at Meadowdale, what we believe, and how to be an active participant in the church body. Once the introductory process is complete, a candidate can be accepted into membership through one of the following:

1. By profession of faith in Jesus Christ and baptism by immersion (except in instances where baptism might prove harmful to the candidate).
2. By letter of recommendation from another Baptist Church.
3. By statement of faith, prior conversion experience, and scriptural baptism by immersion (except in instances where baptism might prove harmful to the candidate).

##### SECTION 3: RESPONSIBILITIES

All members have specific responsibilities, including but not limited to the following:

1. To protect the unity of our church (Romans 12:18, 14:19, 15:5-6; 1 Peter 1:22-23; Ephesians 4:29).
2. To serve the ministry of our church (1 Peter 4:10; Ephesians 4:11-13).
3. To support the testimony of our church (Hebrews 10:24-25; Philippians 1:27; Malachi 3:10).
4. To subscribe to our Church Statement of Faith (See Constitution, **ARTICLE III: STATEMENT OF FAITH**).

Should these responsibilities not be met, and some serious condition exist which would cause a member to become a liability to the general welfare of the church, every reasonable measure will be taken by the pastor and by the deacon body to resolve the problem. All such proceedings will be conducted in a spirit of Christian kindness and forbearing as described in Matthew 18:15-17. But, finding that the welfare of the church will best be served by the exclusion of the member, the pastor and deacon body may proceed to declare the offender to be no longer in the membership of the church.

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# Meadowdale Baptist Church

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## Constitution and Bylaws

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Any person whose membership has been terminated for any condition which has made it necessary for the church to exclude him/her may upon his request be restored to membership by the pastor and deacon body.

### **SECTION 4: VOTING RIGHTS**

Every member of the church is entitled to vote at all elections and on all questions submitted to the church in conference, provided the member is present or provisions have been made for absentee balloting.

### **SECTION 5: TERMINATION OF MEMBERSHIP**

Membership shall be terminated in the following ways:

1. Death
2. Transfer of membership to another church
3. Exclusion by action of this church
4. At request of the member

## **ARTICLE II: CHURCH STAFF**

### **SECTION 1: PASTOR**

The pastor is responsible for leading the church to function as a New Testament Church. The pastor will lead the congregation, the organizations, and the church staff to perform their tasks. The pastor is an ex-officio member of all teams in the church. The pastor is obligated to live up to the charge given in Acts 20:28.

A pastor shall be chosen and called by the church whenever a vacancy occurs.

The deacon body shall form a Pastor Search Team and present this group of individuals to the church body. The Pastor Search Team shall consist of four deacons and three members of the church body. The Pastor Search Team's recommendation will constitute a pastoral candidate nomination. The Pastor Search Team shall bring to the church body only one pastoral candidate at a time. His election shall take place at a meeting called for that purpose, of which at least one-week public notice has been given. The notice will be given during a Sunday morning church service and be posted to the church's official website and social media pages.



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# Meadowdale Baptist Church

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## Constitution and Bylaws

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Election shall be by closed ballot, with an affirmative vote of three-fourths of those present being necessary. The pastor, thus elected, shall serve until the relationship is terminated by his request or the at church's request.

### **SECTION 1A: PASTOR TERMINATION**

The pastor shall give at least thirty days' notice at the time of resignation before terminating his responsibilities as pastor. The church may terminate the church-pastor relationship, with two-thirds vote of members present at a business meeting called by the deacon body for the sole purpose of terminating a pastor's services. The church must give the pastor a minimum thirty days' severance pay upon termination, unless the deacon body determines gross negligence has been perpetrated on the part of the terminated pastor.

### **SECTION 1B: IN THE ABSENCE OF A PASTOR**

For any reason that a pastor is no longer present and fulfilling the pastoral responsibilities, the Chairman of the Deacons shall temporarily assume the pastor responsibilities until a pastor replacement is found and in position.

### **SECTION 2: ADDITIONAL STAFFING**

The church may employ other ministry staff and support staff as needed. Ministry staff are those employees who are given leadership of specific areas of ministry. Support staff are those employees who assist the pastor and ministry staff in other supportive functions. All ministry/support staff requirements will be formulated by the pastor, and these position(s) will be a direct report to the pastor or designee he may choose. Any new position must be approved as part of the annual budget that is presented to the church for a vote. A position that is deemed necessary prior to the annual budget meeting may be approved at a called business meeting.

## **ARTICLE III: CHURCH OFFICERS**

### **SECTION 1: DEACONS**

Guided by 1 Timothy 3:8-13 and Acts 6:1-8 the church shall elect Deacons from its membership. Their primary task is to serve and manage the various needs of the church membership and ministries. Deacons are to be men of good reputation, great wisdom and service, full of the Holy Spirit. Each Deacon will serve one three-year term, followed by one (1) year off before being eligible to serve as a deacon again.

### **SECTION 2. MODERATOR**

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# Meadowdale Baptist Church

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## Constitution and Bylaws

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The pastor shall serve as moderator in all business meetings. In the absence of the pastor the Chairman of the Deacons shall preside.

### **SECTION 3: OFFICERS**

#### **SECTION 3A: SELECTION OF OFFICERS**

Officers of the church shall be chosen through a nomination process initiated by the pastor and approved by the deacons.

#### **SECTION 3B: TERMS OF OFFICE**

The officers of the church, the first of which shall be elected at a meeting of the deacon body, shall hold office for a term of one (1) year and may succeed themselves.

Any officer may be removed by the deacon body before the end of the officer's term, according to the procedures put in place by the deacon body.

#### **SECTION 3C: VACANCIES IN OFFICES**

A vacancy in any office because of death, resignation, removal, disqualification or any other cause shall be filled only in the manner prescribed in these bylaws for regular appointments to that office. Such vacancies shall be filled as they occur.

### **SECTION 4: CLERK**

The clerk of the church shall keep a record of all official business meetings of the church.

### **SECTION 5: TREASURER**

The treasurer, or authorized personnel, shall:

- oversee all areas of church finance in regard to the receipt, and disbursement of funds.
- record all monies or things of value paid or given to the church and keep an itemized account of all receipts and disbursements.
- present to the church at each business meeting a report of receipts and disbursements.

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# Meadowdale Baptist Church

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## Constitution and Bylaws

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### **SECTION 6: TRUSTEES**

Three trustees will be selected to hold in trust the church property and serve as the corporation officers for Meadowdale Baptist Church, Incorporated. The trustees shall have no power to buy, sell, mortgage, lease, or transfer any property without a specific vote of the church authorizing each action. It shall be the function of the trustees to affix their signatures to legal documents involving the sale, mortgage, purchase, or rental of property or other legal documents where the signatures of trustees are required. Trustees shall serve a three-year term and be selected on a rotating basis, with one trustee being replaced each year.

### **ARTICLE IV: TEAMS**

#### **SECTION 1: STANDING TEAMS**

The church shall elect such standing teams as may be deemed necessary to carry out the various phases of the mission of the church efficiently and effectively. In any event, the church shall have at all times the following standing teams: finance, personnel, and any additional teams deemed necessary for the proper function of the church. In the event that any team is non-functional, the deacon body will have responsibility to oversee this area. The chairman of each team shall be invited to participate and/or report on team activities at each church business meeting.

#### **SECTION 2: TEMPORARY TEAMS**

The church may elect at any time teams to perform temporary functions.

#### **SECTION 3: TEAM QUORUM**

All teams shall be governed by a quorum. A quorum shall be fifty percent plus one member of team members.

#### **SECTION 4: TEAM MINUTES**

All teams shall keep accurate minutes of meetings in order that proper transmission of information can be made. A digital copy will be kept, and a hard copy kept in church office.

#### **SECTION 5: TEAM CHAIRPERSON**

Each team shall elect a chair for the purpose of reporting team activities to the church body at the church business meeting.

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# Meadowdale Baptist Church

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## Constitution and Bylaws

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### **ARTICLE V: CHURCH MEETINGS**

#### **SECTION 1: WORSHIP SERVICES**

The church shall meet for public worship each Sunday and any other days deemed appropriate by the church leaders.

#### **SECTION 2: SPECIAL SERVICES**

Special services deemed necessary to promote the objectives of the church shall be held at the discretion of the pastor and ministerial staff.

#### **SECTION 3: REGULAR BUSINESS MEETINGS**

Regular business meetings shall be held annually, unless special arrangements have been made. A one-week notice of the subject, date, time, and location must be given for the regular business. The notice will be given during a Sunday morning church service and be posted to the church's official website and social media pages.

#### **SECTION 4: SPECIAL BUSINESS MEETINGS**

A special business meeting (called by the pastor or the Chairman of the Deacons) may be held to consider special matters of significant nature. A one-week notice of the subject, date, time, and location must be given for the specially called business meeting unless extreme urgency renders such notice impracticable. The notice will be given during a Sunday morning church service and be posted to the church's official website and social media pages.

### **ARTICLE VI: CHURCH FINANCES**

#### **SECTION 1: BUDGET**

The Finance Team shall prepare and submit to the church for approval an inclusive budget, indicating by line items the amount needed and sought for all local and worldwide expenses, at the annual business meeting.

#### **SECTION 2: ACCOUNTING PROCEDURES**

All funds for any and all purposes shall pass through the hands of the church Treasurer, or financial secretary, and be properly recorded on the books of the church.

A system of accounting that will adequately provide for the handling of all funds shall be the responsibility of the finance team.

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# Meadowdale Baptist Church

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## Constitution and Bylaws

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All financial matters will be handled in accordance with the procedure's manual of the finance team.

### **SECTION 3: FISCAL YEAR**

The fiscal year of the church shall run concurrently with the calendar year, which begins on January 1 and ends on December 31.

### **ARTICLE VII: CHURCH FUNDING**

The church shall operate primarily from funds received as tithes and offerings of its members. When the borrowing of money from institutions or individuals becomes necessary, guidelines present in the financial procedures\* will be followed.

Fundraising benefits shall be limited to activities within the ministries of the church. Other fundraising techniques, such as the holding of real estate property for speculative purposes, and the owning and renting of property for monetary gain shall be prohibited.

All fundraising must follow qualifications outlined in the financial procedure's manual.

### **ARTICLE VIII: ADOPTION AND AMENDMENTS**

#### **SECTION 1. BYLAWS ADOPTION**

These bylaws shall be considered adopted and in immediate effect if and when a majority of the members present at the business meeting at which a vote is taken shall vote in favor of same. This vote shall be taken not less than fourteen days after formal presentation of the bylaws to the church.

#### **SECTION 2. BYLAWS AMENDMENT**

These bylaws may be amended, altered or repealed by a two-thirds vote of the members voting. This vote shall take place at a meeting called for that purpose, of which at least one-week public notice has been given. The notice will be given during a Sunday morning church service and be posted to the church's official website and social media pages.

### **ARTICLE IX: RULES OF ORDER**

The church shall use Roberts Rules of Order in the conduct of its parliamentary procedures.

### **ARTICLE X: VALIDATE**

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# Meadowdale Baptist Church

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## Constitution and Bylaws

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### **SECTION 1: CONSTITUTION AND BYLAWS AMENDMENTS**

The amendments of this constitution and bylaws, once approved by the church, shall repeal all previously adopted rules.

### **SECTION 2: CONSTITUTION AND BYLAWS RECORD KEEPING**

A copy of this constitution and bylaws shall be kept in the church office. All amendments to or revision thereof shall be prepared and attached to copies of the constitution and bylaws and made available to the church members, generally upon request.