

General Context:

The existing Constitution and Bylaws are combined into a document that needs to be condensed and divided into two different documents: a Constitution (which addresses the mission of the church and is much harder to change) and the By laws (which is the document that guides how we do the work, and has a lower barrier for adjustments to be made). This chart is an attempt to show how the committee has worked to extract sections of the existing documents and put them in the appropriate new document. The comparisons are not exact due to the attempt to streamline and reorganize, but every effort has been made to match them up as closely as possible.

The committee has recommend reviewing the changes in phases. The first phase of the process will be the Constitution and the bylaws that directly affect the immediate changes to the Constitution (e.g. creation of the role of elders). The next phase will evaluate the remaining bylaws, with ongoing communication with the congregation and then a vote. The existing bylaws remain in effect until that time.

Existing Document	Proposed New Wording	Explanation/Rationale
<p style="text-align: center;">DECLARATION OF FAITH</p> <p>I. The Scriptures</p> <p>We believe that the Holy Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments were given by inspiration of God and are the only authoritative standard of religious faith and patience. But in order to secure a more perfect understanding among ourselves respecting the great doctrines therein revealed and to distinguish ourselves from those who, in our judgement, pervert the gospel or its ordinances, we also profess our belief in the following as among the most important truths taught in the Bible, viz.</p> <p>II. The True God</p> <p>We believe in the existence of one God, infinite in every natural and moral perfection, who has revealed himself as the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit.</p>	<p>Constitution Article III –Statement of Faith</p> <p>We affirm the Holy Bible (Protestant edition) as the inspired, inerrant, infallible, and sufficient Word of God and the basis for our beliefs. We subscribe to the doctrinal statement of the Baptist Faith and Message, 2000 edition.</p>	<p>This shortened statement faith aligns us with our denominational affiliation. Adding something with track changes.</p>

III. The Fall of Man

We believe that man, being originally created free from sin, has fallen from that state into a state of moral depravity consisting in a wicked love of sin and aversion to God; that all men are sinners, guilty and condemned; and that there is no recovery but in the way that God has appointed.

IV. The Way of Salvation

We believe that Jesus Christ, the Son of God, eternally pre-existent with the Father, who by the Holy Spirit was born of the Virgin Mary, took upon himself human nature, obeyed the law, suffered death as a sacrifice for sin, rose from the dead, ascended on high, lives to make intercession and is thus qualified to be an all sufficient Savior.

V. Freeness of Salvation

We believe that salvation is freely offered to all and that it is the duty of all to accept it; but it becomes effectual to none but those who repent of sin and believe on Jesus Christ.

VI. Repentance and Faith

We believe that repentance consists in a sincere sorrow for sin as committed against God and in forsaking all know sin. We believe that faith in Christ consists in a cordial acquiescence in the way of salvation provided in Him, in renouncing every other ground of justification before God

and taking Him as the Savior, the Teacher and Ruler of the soul.

VII. Regeneration

We believe that such is the native opposition of the human heart to God, that none do savingly believe in Christ until the heart be renewed. We believe that this regeneration is effected by the Holy Spirit through the instrumentality of the truth and is always followed by holy affections and a godly life.

VIII. The Christian Church

We believe that a Christian Church is a company of baptized believers voluntarily associated in one place to observe the worship and ordinances enjoined by Christ, its sole Head and Lawgiver.

We believe that Christian baptism is the immersion of a believer in water, in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. We believe that the Lord's Supper is a symbolic act of obedience whereby members of the Church, through partaking of the bread and the fruit of the vine, memorialize the death of the Redeemer and anticipate His second coming. We believe that the officers, appointed by Christ for the Church, are Pastors and Deacons.

IX. The Resurrection

We believe that Jesus Christ is to come again, judge the nations, fill the earth with His glory and power and that there will be a resurrection both of the just and of the unjust, when the wicked will

<p>be sentenced to endless punishment, and the righteous welcomed to endless joy, on principle of perfect righteousness.</p>		
<p style="text-align: center;">CHURCH COVENANT</p> <p>Having been led, as we believe, by the Spirit of God to receive the Lord Jesus Christ as our Savior; and on the profession of our faith, having been baptized in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, we do now, in the presence of God, angels and this assembly, most solemnly and joyfully enter into covenant with one another as one body of Christ.</p> <p>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, discipline and doctrines; to contribute cheerfully and regularly to the support of the ministry, the expenses of the Church, the relief of the poor, and the spread of the Gospel through all nations.</p> <p>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; to abstain from the sale and use of intoxicating drinks as a beverage; and to be zealous in our efforts to advance the kingdom of our Savior.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Constitution Article IV – Membership Covenant</p> <p>Having been led, as we believe, by the Spirit of God to acknowledge Christ as Savior and Lord, and on the profession of our faith, having been baptized in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit, we do now in the presence of God and this assembly, most solemnly and joyfully enter into covenant with one another in love as one Body in Christ to:</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">LIVE as a worshipper ...</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - by seeking God personally through faith in prayer and Scripture - by worshipping God corporately with the church - by giving to God cheerfully and regularly through the church <p style="padding-left: 40px;">LOVE as a community ...</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - by disciplining the people of the church - by serving the ministry of the church - by protecting the unity of the church <p style="padding-left: 40px;">LEAD as a servant ...</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - by establishing the gospel in the household - by sharing the gospel in the community 	<p>This is to align the church covenant with the current essential beliefs, purposes, and practices.</p>

<p>We further engage to watch over one another in brotherly love; to remember each other in prayer; to aid each other in sickness and distress; to cultivate Christian sympathy in feeling, and 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.</p> <p>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.</p>	<p>- by spreading the gospel around the world</p>	
<p>Article 100 - Organization and Purpose Section 101 The name of this church shall be the WEST LYNCHBURG BAPTIST CHURCH of Lynchburg, Virginia.</p>	<p>Constitution Article I – Name and Location The name of this church shall be the WEST LYNCHBURG BAPTIST CHURCH. West Lynchburg Baptist Church is located at 3031 Memorial Avenue, Lynchburg, Virginia 24501.</p>	<p>This is for accurate language.</p>
<p>Section 102 The governance of this church shall be by its membership in accordance with the provisions of its Constitution, By-Laws and Amendments.</p>	<p>Constitution Article VI - Polity This church shall be Elder led, Deacon served, and congregationally affirmed. The congregationally affirmed Elders have biblically granted authority, responsibility, and accountability. The congregation, as the temple of the Holy Spirit, affirms the leadership of the Elders. There are decisions in which the congregants contribute in helping the Elders discern the mind of Christ. That means that the Elders have authority and responsibility in all areas of church government except those items specifically reserved by the Congregation in the Bylaws.</p>	<p>This clarifies the organizational structure of the church. Since the beginning of West Lynchburg Baptist Church (formerly West End Baptist Church), the congregation has been led by a Pastor, served by the Deacons, and affirmed by the congregation through voting. These foundational principles remain the same. The added term ‘Elder’, which is synonymous with Pastor, is written in the plural form to allow for a council of congregationally approved men to serve alongside the Senior Pastor.</p>

	<p>In addition, each elder can be elected or terminated only by the Congregation as prescribed in the Bylaws. Deacons primarily exist to serve the congregation as guided by the Elders, and they too must be elected by the Congregation.</p>	
<p>Section 103 The purpose for which this church is organized is the support and maintenance of the worship of God, for evangelism and for missionary work pursuant to the faith and principles of the Southern Baptist Convention.</p>	<p>Constitution Article II – Purpose The church exists to Magnify the greatness of God for the joy of multiplying disciples. This is accomplished through worship, evangelism, missions, discipleship, fellowship, and service. Psalm 34:1-3 – 2 Samuel 7:22 – 1 Peter 2:9 – Psalm 16:11 – Psalm 67:3-4 – Matthew 28:19-20</p> <p>Constitution Article VII - Affiliation West Lynchburg Baptist Church is autonomous and maintains the right to govern its own affairs, independent of any denominational control. However, the Bible teaches that local churches should seek voluntary fellowship with other doctrinally sound churches. This association is to provide help and encouragement while working together as the Lord directs. This is a voluntary association that in no way involves the surrender of the individual church's freedom or dependence on God. We will voluntarily affiliate with the Southern Baptist Convention, the Baptist General Association of Virginia and may cooperate with and support other bodies or individuals.</p>	

<p>Article 200 - Membership</p> <p>Section 201 The membership of this church shall consist of those persons who have confessed Jesus Christ to be their Savior and Lord, and who;</p> <p>201.1 Have been examined regarding their Christian experience;</p> <p>201.2 Have had their letters of transfer and recommendation or substitutes therefor examined;</p> <p>201.3 Have been accepted by at least two-thirds (2/3) vote of the church members present;</p> <p>201.4 Have received believer's baptism by immersion;</p> <p>201.5 Have been accepted by statement or restoration;</p> <p>201.6 Have entered into Church Covenant as printed in these By-Laws.</p> <p>Section 202 Explanation: By Letter, is meant a letter of transfer from another church of like faith and order. By Statement, is meant reception of one who received believer's baptism by immersion or has been a member of a church of like faith and order but has lost that membership.</p>	<p>Constitution Article V – Membership</p> <p>The membership of this church shall consist of persons who confess faith in the Lord Jesus Christ as personal Savior, who give evidence of regeneration by living consistently with their profession and with the views of faith, doctrine and practice of this church, who have been baptized by immersion and who have been received into its membership according to the bylaws of this church.</p> <p>BYLAWS: ARTICLE 1 – MEMBERSHIP</p> <p>Membership shall consist of all persons who have met the requirements for membership, as provided in Article V of our Constitution.</p> <p>Section 1: Application for Membership</p> <p>a. Anyone desiring membership with West Lynchburg Baptist Church shall complete the membership application and meet with the Senior Pastor or another Elder to give their personal testimony, commitment to this church, and make a public profession in Jesus Christ.</p> <p>b. Applicants shall agree to and support the mission, statement of faith, and membership covenant of West Lynchburg Baptist Church.</p> <p>c. New members shall be presented by an Elder and affirmed by congregation at any scheduled meeting of the church.</p> <p>Section 2: Categories of Membership</p> <p>Membership shall be classified into two categories.</p>	<p>Membership in the congregation is reserved for believers. Further, it is vital that membership mean something and that there is a tangible commitment to the mission and purpose of the church.</p> <p>The two membership categories allow for a discipleship process to occur in our young people before they vote on matters regarding church governance.</p>
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<p>Section 203</p> <p>By Restoration, is meant restoring to active fellowship one who has previously lost such standing in this church. In all such cases the church must be fully satisfied as to the good intent of such applicant.</p> <p>Termination of Membership:</p> <p>203.1 By death;</p> <p>203.2 By letter of transfer when requested by a church of like faith and order by vote of the church;</p> <p>203.3 By vote of the church when a member has joined a church of different faith and order;</p> <p>203.4 By written request of the member.</p>	<p>a. Covenant Members. This category shall consist of all members ages 16 and above who are active and fulfill the requirements of the covenant and have privileges of voting as Covenant Members.</p> <p>b. Non-Covenant Members. Members who are baptized children under the age of 16.</p> <p>Section 3: Duties and Privileges of Membership</p> <p>a. In accord with the duties enumerated in the Covenant, each member shall be privileged and expected to participate in and contribute to the ministry and life of the church, consistent with God's leading and with the gifts, time, and material resources each has received from God.</p> <p>b. It is the privilege and responsibility of members to attend all members' meetings to vote on the election of officers and other matters as may be submitted to a vote.</p> <p>c. Every covenant member of the church is entitled to one vote on all matters requiring congregational approval, provided the member is present. Voting rights of the members shall not be assignable by proxy, written or otherwise.</p> <p>Section 4: Termination of Membership</p> <p>Termination of membership may occur for, but not limited to, the following reasons:</p> <p>a. Death of the member.</p>	
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> b. Transfer to another Baptist church by the member. c. Affiliation with a church of another denomination by the member. d. By request of member desiring termination. e. As a result of disciplinary action by a congregational vote. f. Inability to be contacted due to an invalid address and phone number, and no contact information being found after one year of due diligence. g. Inactivity that is not due to physical limitations for two (2) years or more, after multiple contacts by church leadership have been made. <p>No letter of recommendation shall be issued for a person whose membership has been terminated.</p>	
Article 300 - Meetings	No changes yet	This section will be reviewed in the next phase.
Article 400 - Nominating Committee	No changes yet	This section will be reviewed in the next phase.
<p>Article 500 - Election of Pastor Section 501 When the office of Pastor becomes vacant, a Pastor Search Committee shall be 10 organized composed of the following: Chairman of Deacons Fellowship, Chairman of Personnel Committee, Sunday School Director and WMU Director. These four (4) persons shall recommend four (4) other members to be elected by the church. If any of the eight (8)</p>	<p>BYLAWS: Section 2: Senior Pastor <i>1 Timothy 3:1-7 and Titus 1:5-9</i> The Senior Pastor is to provide spiritual leadership to the membership of West Lynchburg Baptist Church with primary ministries in Preaching and Teaching, Leadership, Evangelism, Pastoral Care, and Administration. The Senior Pastor is accountable to the members of West Lynchburg Baptist Church under the supervision of the Council of Elders.</p>	This section of the bylaws covers more than the corresponding Article 500 of the original document, but includes the process for selecting a new senior pastor.

members resigns, or is unable to serve on the Pastor Search Committee; other members of the committee may recommend an additional member to be elected by the church. The committee shall elect its own chairman, secretary or any other officers desired.

501.1 The purpose of this committee shall be to bring to the church a recommendation for an Interim Pastor as needed and subsequently a nomination for a person to serve as Pastor. Pastoral election shall take place at a business meeting called for that specific purpose. When this committee wishes to make a nomination to the church it shall give at least one (1) week written to the congregation. It shall bring only one (1) nominee at a time and the election shall be by private ballot. A two-thirds (2/3) vote of those members present and voting shall be necessary to elect.

1. The Senior Pastor shall be chosen by the church for an indefinite period of time.
2. The Senior Pastor shall serve as an Elder.
3. When the Senior Pastor position is vacant
 - a. The Elders will fill the pulpit or select pulpit supply or an Interim Pastor.
 - b. A Pastor Search Committee will be selected composed of the following: Three (3) Lay Elders, Personnel Committee Chair, and five (5) additional members recommend by the Elders to be elected by the church. If any of the nine (9) members resigns; the committee members may recommend an additional member to be elected by the church. The committee shall elect its own chairman, secretary, or any other officers as desired.
 - c. The purpose of this committee shall be to bring to the church a recommendation for a Senior Pastor.
4. Senior Pastor election shall take place at a business meeting called for that specific purpose. There must be at least two (2) weeks written notice to the congregation. Only one (1) candidate at a time may be presented

<p>Section 502 Should any circumstances arise that would make it necessary for the church to seek to relieve the Pastor, Deacons or other Officers the matter shall be brought to the attention of the church at a called business meeting for that specific purpose. One (1) week advance notice of the meeting shall be given. A two-thirds (2/3) vote of those members present and voting shall be required to relieve the Pastor. A majority is required to relieve other officers</p>	<p>and the election shall be by private ballot. A two-thirds (2/3) majority vote of those covenant members present and voting shall be necessary to elect.</p> <p>5. Should circumstances arise that would require relieving the Senior Pastor, the matter shall be brought to the attention of the congregation at a called business meeting for that specific purpose. Two (2) weeks advance notice of the meeting shall be given. A two-thirds (2/3) vote of those members present and voting shall be required to relieve the Senior Pastor.</p>	
<p>No old version</p>	<p>ARTICLE 2 – CHURCH OFFICERS All officers must be covenant members of West Lynchburg Baptist Church. The ministerial positions of West Lynchburg Baptist Church shall be the Senior Pastor, Elders, Associate Pastors, and Deacons.</p> <p>Section 1: The Chief Shepherd <i>Ephesians 1:22-23; Matthew 23:8-11; 1 Peter 5:4; Colossians 1:18</i></p> <p>The Lord Jesus Christ is the Chief Shepherd of this congregation. It is before Him that all other leadership must bow. He communicates His will for the church through the Bible. He shepherds the flock through the leaders of the church to whom He has given specific leadership gifts and who are biblically qualified.</p>	

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- BYLAWS: Section 3: Council of Elders**
I Peter 5:1-5; Hebrews 13:17; I Timothy 3:1-7; 5:17-25; Acts 20:17, 28-37; Titus 1:5-9
- a. The Council of Elders shall be composed of men, including the Senior Pastor, approved associate Pastors, and lay Elders. More than half of the Elders must be lay Elders.
 - b. Each member of the Council of Elders shall meet the same qualifications as the Senior Pastor in 1 Timothy 3:2-7 and Titus 1:6-9.
 - c. The Council of Elders function primarily as discerners and guardians of the organization, and shepherds of the members. They function as overseers for the entire organization. (I Peter 5:1-5; Hebrews 13:17; I Timothy 3:1-7; 5:17-25; Acts 20:28-37; Titus 1:5-9)
 - d. The Council of Elders may establish ministry positions or committees to assist them in fulfilling their responsibilities. The Elders may also propose funding for new paid staff positions. The Elders shall have primary responsibility for the employment, supervision, and evaluation of staff members in conjunction with the Personnel Committee. This responsibility may, on a case-by-case basis, be delegated to another staff member.
 - e. New or additional Elders will be unanimously recommended by the Council of Elders and reaffirmed by the church each year. After a lay Elder has served two consecutive three year terms, he may only be elected to the office of

	<p>Elder after at least one sabbatical year. In order to be approved, a quorum must be present, and the recommendation must be passed by a two-thirds (2/3) vote at a normally publicized congregational meeting.</p> <p>f. An Elder's term of office may be terminated by resignation or by dismissal. Any two members with reason to believe that an Elder should be dismissed should express such concern to the Elders and, if need be, to the congregation. Any such action shall be done in accordance with the instructions of our Lord in Matthew 18:15–17 and 1 Timothy 5:17–21. Any of the Elders may be dismissed at any business meeting of the church. In order to be dismissed, a quorum must be present, and the dismissal must be passed by a two-thirds (2/3) vote.</p> <p>h. The Council of Elders has final say in any and all matters concerning the overall spiritual direction of the organization. The following are decisions, in addition to those already stated, that the Council of Elders may not make without membership approval at an organizational business meeting.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. The Council of Elders may not appoint a new Senior Pastor.2. The Council of Elders may not authorize the annual operating budget without congregational approval at a business meeting.3. The Council of Elders, with the Stewardship Committee and	
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	<p>Properties Committee may not approve emergency expenditures for the organization in excess of five percent (5%) of the current year's annual operating budget.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 4. The Council of Elders cannot change the denominational affiliation of West Lynchburg Baptist Church without congregational approval at the business meeting. 5. The Council of Elders may not change the Articles of Incorporation, Constitution, or Bylaws of West Lynchburg Baptist Church without congregational approval at a business meeting. 	
Articles 500-1000	No changes yet	These sections will be reviewed in the next phase.