

# By-Laws

Of

Burem Missionary Baptist Church

Rogersville, TN

## I. Church Membership

### a. General

- i. The name of this organization is Burem Missionary Baptist Church, a domestic nonprofit religious corporation organized under the laws of the State of Tennessee. Being totally independent of any outside organization, this body retains exclusive right of self-government in all phases of our Spiritual and governmental life. The membership reserves exclusive right to determine who shall become a member of this Church and the conditions of such membership.

### b. Qualifications for Membership

- i. Any person may present himself or herself as a candidate for membership in the Church if they meet the following qualifications:
  1. By profession of faith in Jesus Christ as their Lord and Savior and baptism by immersion.
  2. By promise of letter of recommendation from another Bible believing Church of like faith and practice.
  3. By a statement of prior conversion experience and baptism by immersion in a Church of like faith and practice.
  4. Infant baptism is not acceptable.
- ii. The candidate shall then be presented to the Church at any regular worship service for a vote of membership acceptance. This vote must be at least a three-fourths (3/4) affirmative vote of the Church membership present.
- iii. All membership candidates will be counseled by the Lead Pastor, Chairman of Deacons, or Lead Pastor appointee to confirm that each candidate understands the doctrine, principles, and vision of Burem Missionary Baptist Church.
- iv. Burem Missionary Baptist Church has adopted the Eighteen (18) Articles of Faith as adopted through the Southern Baptist Convention in 1963 and amended in 1998.

### c. Member Rights

- i. Every member has a right to vote on matters provided they are present and are in regular standing with the Church. Regular standing is defined as: attendance of a Sunday service at least two (2) times each month. Any member who fails to attend as defined forfeits their voting privilege for that month.
  1. Regular standing members at least sixteen (16) years old or older is eligible to vote during the election or dismissal of a Pastor and/or a major decision which greatly affects the welfare of the Church. Examples of such decisions are termination of Church membership or a major financial decision.

- ii. Every member reserves the right to request a personal meeting with a Pastor(s) and/or Deacon(s) scheduled at a convenient time for each party.
  - iii. Every member in regular standing has the right to participate in Business Meeting discussions after being recognized by the Moderator as follows:
    - 1. A male member in regular standing must bring a business issue to the floor for discussion.
    - 2. A female member in regular standing may participate in the discussion after the issue has been presented.
    - 3. Only male members in regular standing may make a motion or second a motion.
  - iv. No member under discipline counseling will be entitled to vote until the discipline process is completed.
- d. Member Responsibilities
- i. Responsibilities are defined in the covenant of the Church.

### **Church Covenant**

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

We engage, therefore, by the aid of the Holy Spirit to walk together in Christian love; 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.

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 engagements and exemplary in our deportment; to avoid all tattling, backbiting and excessive anger; to abstain from the sale of, and use of, destructive drugs or intoxicating drinks as a beverage; to shun pornography; 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.

- ii. A member is required to attend as described in the Regular Standing Qualifications. (A member will be placed on an Inactive Membership Role if they have not met the definition of Regular standing membership for a period of ninety (90) days.)
- e. Membership Termination
- i. Death of the member.

- ii. Request of membership dismissal by the member.
  - iii. Termination by action of the Church for failure to comply with the covenant, constitution, or By-Laws of the Church.
  - iv. Termination by absence in the case where the member has not been in regular standing for a period of one (1) year for good reason.
  - v. Termination for reason of immoral, un-Christian conduct that would be an offense to the good name and welfare of the Church.
  - vi. No termination will take place until all faithful efforts to restore the member to membership requirements have been made. The member must have proper notice before any action is taken before the membership for voting.
  - vii. No termination will take place without a three-fourths (3/4) vote in favor of such action by the voting members present. All such proceedings will be conducted in a spiritual and loving manner in the greatest Christian kindness. Anyone not complying with this will not be recognized in such meetings.
- f. Restoration of Terminated Members
- i. Any person may be restored to regular standing membership upon request of that person and must be accepted by three-fourths (3/4) vote for reinstatement by voting members present. Proceedings must be conducted in the same manner as in section e. line vii.
  - ii. The membership must consider the candidate's repentance and reformation to the membership guidelines.

## II. Church Officers, Committees, and Duties

- a. Church Officers – The officers will be Lead Pastor, Associate Pastor(s), Deacons, Trustees, Treasurer, Clerk, Secretary, Moderator, Sunday School Superintendent, Brotherhood officers, WMU officers, and Sunday School Teachers.
- i. *Lead Pastor:* (The Lead Pastor will be referred to as “Lead Pastor” or “Pastor” throughout this document)
    1. To proclaim the whole Gospel, superintend the work of the Church, to be shepherd of the flock, and to serve the people for Jesus' sake. He shall manifest a tender regard for the reputation of the Church.
    2. He shall have general oversight of the Church in all departments of its work, be moderator for all meetings of the Church, and be ex-officio member of all committees.
    3. He shall be responsible to fill the pulpit with qualified men in his absence and for special services such as, but not limited to, revivals.
    4. The Lead Pastor shall receive such compensation for his service, as the Church shall determine.
      - a. Qualifications – I Timothy 3: 1-7.
      - b. It shall be the duty of the Church members to honor, esteem, and love their Pastor. To pray for him constantly and to manifest a tender regard for his reputation.
      - c. The Lead Pastor shall be called for an indefinite period of time and he may resign the care of the Church upon thirty (30) day notice to the Church of his intention to do so. The Church shall

have the right to dispense with his services upon giving a similar notice.

- d. In the event the Church has received reports against the Lead Pastor of misconduct or improper representation, the accusers must meet with the Lead Pastor and the Deacons (or appointed Church leaders in the absence of Deacons) to openly discuss the accusations and provide witnesses of the improper conduct. No actions of dismissal are to take place without a thorough investigation of the accusation and the accusers.
- e. Vacancy:
  - i. When the office of Lead Pastor becomes vacant, a pulpit committee shall consist of, but not limited to, an active Deacon, or appointed Church leader in the absence of Deacons, and the members of the pulpit committee to be elected by membership of the Church. The committee shall bring to consideration of the Church, only one nominee at a time. The election shall be by an affirmation vote of three-fourths (3/4) of the qualified voting members present. The Lead Pastor will serve until the relationship is terminated by his request or at the request of the Church. The election of Lead Pastor will be at a meeting called for that purpose of which shall be announced during the Sunday morning and Sunday evening services at least two (2) weeks before the election.
  - ii. *Associate Pastor(s)*: (The Associate Pastor(s) will be referred to as “Associate Pastor” specifically throughout this By-Law but is understood that he will at time in absence of or under the direction of the Lead Pastor fill duties stated as “Pastor”.)
    1. To proclaim the whole Gospel and to serve the Church for Jesus’ sake. He shall manifest a tender regard for the reputation of the Church.
    2. He shall have general oversight of the Church in departments or areas designated by the Lead Pastor.
    3. He shall be responsible to fill the pulpit with qualified men in his absence and for special services such as, but not limited to, revivals.
    4. The Associate Pastor shall receive such compensation for his service, as the Church shall determine.
      - a. Qualifications – I Timothy 3: 1-7.
      - b. It shall be the duty of the Church members to honor, esteem, and love their Pastor. To pray for him constantly and to manifest a tender regard for his reputation.
      - c. The Associate Pastor shall be appointed for a specific period of time agreed upon at time of placement by voting members. The Associate Pastor may resign his duties upon thirty (30) day

notice to the Church of his intention to do so. The Church shall have the right to dispense with his services upon giving a similar notice.

- d. In the event the Church has received reports against the Associate Pastor of misconduct or improper representation, the accusers must meet with the Lead Pastor, Associate Pastor, and the Deacons (or appointed Church leaders in the absence of Deacons) to openly discuss the accusations and provide witnesses of the improper conduct. No actions of dismissal are to take place without a thorough investigation of the accusation and the accusers.
- e. Vacancy:
  - i. When the office of Associate Pastor becomes vacant, a pulpit committee shall consist of, but not limited to, an active Deacon, or appointed Church leader in the absence of Deacons, and the members of the pulpit committee to be elected by membership of the Church. The committee shall bring to consideration of the Church, only one nominee at a time. The election shall be by an affirmation vote of three-fourths (3/4) of the qualified voting members present. The Associate Pastor will serve until the relationship is terminated by his request or at the request of the Church. The election of Associate Pastor will be at a meeting called for that purpose of which shall be announced during the Sunday morning and Sunday evening services at least two (2) weeks before the election.
  - ii. The Associate Pastor position(s) shall be staffed as the Church determines need.

### *iii. Deacon*

1. The task of Deacons is to be servants of the Church and shall aid the Pastor in his duties, assist with the administration of the ordinances, and to ascertain and provide relief through the Church as they see the need for assistance to Church members or others in the community. The assistance shall include but, not limited to, the needs of widows, single mothers, needy families, and elderly people.
2. The Deacons are to actively visit the homes within the community to verify the needs of each home and to encourage fellowship with God's disciples.
3. Deacons are to devote themselves to the Spiritual and general welfare of the Church, in serving with the Pastor(s) and other officers in leading the Church in the achievement of its mission, and of proclaiming the Gospel to believers and unbelievers.
  - a. Qualifications of Deacon – I Timothy 3:8-13

b. Election of Deacon

- i. The active Deacons, or appointed Church leader in the absence of Deacons, and Lead Pastor will search the total membership for qualified men and will consider recommendations from any active member.
- ii. When the Church compiles a list of perspective Deacons, they will then be interviewed by the Lead Pastor, present active Deacons, or appointed Church leader in the absence of Deacons.
- iii. If the candidate qualified and agrees to serve, his name will be presented to the Church for election. This election date must be announced during Sunday morning and Sunday night services at least two (2) weeks before the election.
- iv. Election must be three-fourths (3/4) affirmative vote by the qualified voting members present.
- v. The Church reserves the right to set a candidate aside for a period of three (3) months, or more if necessary, before bringing the candidate up for election. This would allow the candidate to prove himself worthy before the Church membership before being placed in this position of great responsibility and servanthood. (This act may be necessary before appointing a man in this position that was previously a deacon in another church. This allows the Church to verify his servanthood to his previous home Church).
- vi. The Deacon Board shall consist of an uneven number for voting purposes. There shall be at least five (5) Deacons if qualified men are available and more if and when the Church deems necessary but, not more than seven (7) active Deacons at any given time.
- vii. The Deacons shall elect a Chairman from its members annually.
- viii. The Chairman of Deacons shall preside over meetings of Deacons and shall fill role of Moderator in absence of Lead Pastor.
- ix. Deacons shall support mission work (local and foreign).

c. Dismissal of Deacon

- i. Request of Deaconship dismissal by the Deacon himself.
- ii. By action of Church for failure to comply with the covenant, constitution, or by-laws of the Church.
- iii. By absence in the case where the Deacon has not been in attendance for three (3) consecutive Deacons meetings with just cause. Subject to be dismissed by

the deciding three-fourths (3/4) vote of the active voting members present.

- iv. For reasons of immoral, un-Christian conduct that would be an offense to the good name and welfare of the Church.
- v. In case of death, dismissal, or incapacity to serve, the Church may elect a Deacon to fill the vacancy.
- vi. The Church may place a Deacon in an inactive Honorary Deacon position when he is unable to fulfill his duties due to age and/or health.

*iv. Trustee*

1. The Church shall elect three (3) Trustees to serve as legal officers of the Church. They shall hold and trust the Church property. Upon a specific vote of the Church authorizing each action, they shall have the power to buy, sell, mortgage, lease, or transfer any Church property. When the signature of Trustees are required, they shall sign legal documents involving the sale, mortgage, purchase, or rental of property, or other legal documents related to Church-approved matters.
2. A Trustee is to be replaced only if a current Trustee leaves the fellowship of the Church for any reason or if a current Trustee desires to resign the position. This position shall be reviewed on an annual basis to ensure the elected Trustees are in regular standing and desire to continue this service. The Church should keep in mind the following facts relating to Trustees:
  - a. Trustees are responsible to the Church as a body.
  - b. Trustees have the authority only as approved in regular business sessions of the Church.
  - c. Every action of the Trustees should be recorded in the minutes.
  - d. Instruments (documents) signed by the Trustees shall constitute an official signature for the Church and not the individuals. All active members are equally responsible for any indebtedness and/or legal action taken for or against the Church.

*v. Treasurer*

1. The Church shall elect, annually, a Church Treasurer as its financial officer. It shall be the duty of the Treasurer to receive, preserve, and pay out, upon receipt of vouchers approved and signed by authorized personnel, all money or things of value paid or given to the Church, keeping, at all times, an itemized account of all receipts and disbursements. It shall be the duty of the Treasurer to render to the Church at each regular business meeting an itemized report of the receipts and disbursements of the preceding elapsed time, and to be made available to members present at that meeting. It shall be the duty of the Treasurer to render tithe/offering annual reports to requesting members by January 31.

2. An auditing committee shall audit the Treasurers report and records if the Church requests an audit.
3. Upon rendering the annual account at the end of each fiscal year and its acceptance and approval by the Church, the records shall be delivered by the Treasurer to the Church Clerk, who shall keep and preserve the account as part of the permanent records of the Church.

*vi. Clerk*

1. The Church shall elect, annually, a Church Clerk as its clerical officer. The Clerk shall be responsible for keeping a suitable record of all official actions of the Church except as otherwise herein provided. The Clerk shall be responsible for keeping a resister of names of members, with dates of admission, dismissing, death, or erasure, together with a record of baptisms. It shall be the duty of the Clerk to read the minutes of all business sessions of the preceding month at each regular business meeting or special called business meeting. The Clerk shall issue letters of dismissing voted by the Church, preserve on file all communications and written official reports and give required notice of all meetings where notice is necessary, as indicated in these By-Laws. All Church records are Church property.

*vii. Secretary*

1. The Church shall annually elect a Secretary to assist the Clerk, Treasurer, and Trustees as needed. The Secretary is to work closely with the Treasurer in establishing and overseeing a proposed budget for all departments and requirements of the Church.

*viii. Moderator*

1. The Lead Pastor shall serve as Moderator of the Church. In the absence of the Lead Pastor, the Chairman of Deacons shall preside as Moderator. In the absence of the Lead Pastor and Chairman of Deacons, an appointed Church leader shall preside as Moderator. The Moderator shall conduct and oversee all Church business meetings and special meetings. All members are to wait until recognized by the Moderator before speaking in a Church meeting. He is authorized to call members out of order if deemed necessary. Should the meeting get out of order, the Moderator is to adjourn the meeting until a later date.

*ix. Sunday School Superintendent*

1. The Church shall annually elect a Sunday School Superintendent to welcome the congregation before dismissing to Sunday School and before the Pastor brings the message. The Superintendent is to read scripture before dismissing to Sunday School and to make announcements to the congregation before the Pastor preaches.

*x. Brotherhood Officers*

1. Brotherhood Officers consist of President, Vice-President, Secretary, Treasurer, RA Leader, and assistants as needed. These officer duties and requirements are the same as the other Church elected positions.



These positions are voted on by the Brotherhood membership on an annual basis.

*xi. WMU Officers*

1. WMU Officers consist of President, Vice-President, Secretary, Treasurer, Mission Friends Leader, GA Leader, Acteen Leader, and assistants as needed. These officer duties and requirements are the same as the other Church elected positions. These positions are voted on by the WMU membership on an annual basis.

*xii. Sunday School Teachers*

1. The Church shall annually elect Sunday School Teachers. The teacher's duty is to study God's Holy Word and prepare themselves to teach a class through constant prayer and Spiritual guidance of the Holy Spirit. They are to use literature and doctrine approved by the Church and reference the King James Version of the Bible. Teachers are to be in regular standing with the Church. Teachers are required to train and assist others to become Sunday School Teachers.

*xiii. Ministry Committees*

1. Church membership may from time to time, by resolution adopted by voting regular standing members in business session, designate special committees, and may confer certain powers on such committees as deemed necessary. Likewise, termination of committees requires resolution adopted by voting regular standing members in business session.

**III. Marriage, Gender, and Life**

- a. Burem Missionary Baptist Church recognizes the Institution of Marriage to be between one (1) biological man and one (1) biological woman as ordained by God in His Holy Word (Genesis 2:24 and Hebrews 13:4). Only Marriage ceremonies between one (1) man and one (1) woman shall be performed in and/or on Burem Missionary Baptist Church owned facilities or property. Furthermore, Burem Missionary Baptist Church ordained ministers shall only facilitate Marriage ceremonies between one (1) man and one (1) woman. (Ephesians 5)
- b. Gender is assigned and ordained by God at inception and is not based on identity or medical advancements. (Psalm 139 , Genesis 1 and 2, Luke 1)
- c. Life begins at inception. (Genesis 1 and 2, Luke 1:41)

**IV. Financial Affairs**

a. Contracts

- i. The voting Church membership at an appropriately called business meeting may authorize Trustees or a specific called agent(s) to enter into any contract or execute and deliver any instrument in the same name of and behalf of Burem Missionary Baptist Church, and such authority may be general or confined to specific instances.

b. Loans

- i. No loans shall be contracted on behalf of Burem Missionary Baptist Church and no evidence of indebtedness shall be issued in its name unless authorized by a

resolution of the voting Church membership at an appropriately called business meeting. Such authority may be general or confined to specific instances.

c. Checks, Drafts, etc.

i. All checks, drafts, or other orders for the payment of money, notes, or other evidences of indebtedness issued in the name of Burem Missionary Baptist Church shall be signed by the Treasurer, Secretary, or agent(s) of specific mission of Burem Missionary Baptist Church and in such manner as shall from time to time be determined by resolution of the voting Church membership at an appropriately called business meeting.

d. Deposits

i. All funds of Burem Missionary Baptist Church not otherwise employed shall be deposited from time to time in such banks, trust companies, or other depositories as the voting Church membership may select.

e. Investments

i. Burem Missionary Baptist Church by its voting Church membership shall have the right to invest and reinvest any funds Burem Missionary Baptist Church holds.

f. Fiscal Year

i. The fiscal year of Burem Missionary Baptist Church shall begin on the first day of January and end on the last day of December in each year.

g. Handling of Tithes and Offerings

i. All of Burem Missionary Baptist Church's tithes and offerings shall be collected, counted, and total documented by at least two (2) authorized persons. Once counted, the funds shall be secured until they can be deposited in the bank. A record shall be kept of all receipts, deposits, and disbursements of Burem Missionary Baptist Church.

**V. Indemnification and Insurance**

a. Insurance

i. Burem Missionary Baptist Church will purchase and maintain liability insurance on behalf of any and all persons who are or were members, employees, volunteer, or leaders of Burem Missionary Baptist Church (while serving in their capacity as such). Such insurance will be purchased for the purpose of protecting such persons from covered loss resulting in liability asserted against the above individuals in connection with their activities on behalf of Burem Missionary Baptist Church.

b. Indemnification Requests

i. Should any member, employee, volunteer, or leader incur any liability as a result of their affiliation with or service to Burem Missionary Baptist Church that is not covered by insurance, and such liability result in any out-of-pocket cost to such individual, then such individual may request indemnification from Burem Missionary Baptist Church if the individual was acting on behalf of Burem Missionary Baptist Church in good faith and within scope of authority designated to the individual by the Church. The granting of full or partial

indemnification shall be at the discretion of the voting regular standing members within an appropriate business meeting.

**VI. Conflicts of Interest**

- a. Burem Missionary Baptist Church expects its members, employees, volunteers, leaders, or other agents acting on behalf of Burem Missionary Baptist Church (“representatives”) to conduct Burem Missionary Baptist Church business to ultimately achieve the highest ethical standards of conduct, to comply with all applicable laws, and to conform with Biblical principles. Burem Missionary Baptist Church representatives are expected to put Burem Missionary Baptist Church’s interests ahead of their own personal interests as they carry out their responsibilities on behalf of Burem Missionary Baptist Church, and they have a duty to recognize, disclose, and avoid conflicts of interest. Representatives are prohibited from using their position with Burem Missionary Baptist Church for any type of private gain or to obtain benefits for themselves or members of their family. Potential conflict of interest occurs when a representative’s outside interests (i.e. financial, business, personal, or relational interests) interfere with Burem Missionary Baptist Church’s interests or the representative’s work-related duties.

**VII. Governing Law**

- a. These By-Laws shall be construed and interpreted in accordance with the laws of the State of Tennessee

**VIII. Dispute Resolution**

- a. The Scriptures call Christians to resolve their disputes outside of civil courts (1 Corinthians 6:1-8). Accordingly, all disputes which may arise between any member of Burem Missionary Baptist Church and Burem Missionary Baptist Church itself, or between any member and any other member, employee, volunteer, leader or other agent acting on behalf of Burem Missionary Baptist Church, shall be resolved by binding arbitration as provided below if initial efforts to mediate or conciliate the dispute have failed. Any dispute as mentioned above shall be settled by Biblically based mediation and, if necessary, legally binding arbitration in accordance with the Rules of Procedure for Christian Conciliation of the Institute for Christian Conciliation. Judgement upon any arbitration decision may be entered in any court otherwise having jurisdiction. These parties understand that these methods shall be the sole remedy for any controversy or claim arising out of these By-Laws and expressly waive their right to file a lawsuit in any civil court against one another for such disputes, except to enforce an arbitration decision.
- b. The arbitration process is not a substitute for any disciplinary process that may be set forth in Burem Missionary Baptist Church’s Constitution and By-Laws, and shall in no way affect the authority of Burem Missionary Baptist Church to investigate issues of misconduct or administer discipline as appropriate.
- c. If a dispute may result in an award of monetary damages, then use of this arbitration procedure is conditioned on acceptance of the procedure by the liability insurer of Burem Missionary Baptist Church and the insurance carrier’s agreement to honor any arbitration awarded against Burem Missionary Baptist Church up to any applicable policy limits.

**IX. Dissolution**

- a. Upon the dissolution of Burem Missionary Baptist Church, assets shall be distributed for one or more exempt purposes within the meaning of section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code, or corresponding section of any future federal tax code, or shall be distributed to the federal government, or to the State of Tennessee for a public purpose.

**X. Amendments**

- a. Burem Missionary Baptist Church may adopt such By-Laws it may see fit and can change them from time to time at any regular business meeting or special called meeting provided that notice of such change shall be given at two (2) preceding Sunday morning services and Sunday evening services.
- b. Amendments to this document requires a three-fourths (3/4) vote by the regular standing voting members present.

Amended and Record Date: July 2, 2023