CENTRAL
BAPTIST CHURCH

CONSTITUTION & BYLAWS

Adopted December 3, 2023

CENTRAL
BAPTIST CHURCH

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CENTRAL
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PREAMBLE

We declare and affirm this Constitution and Bylaws, in light of the authority of Scripture over the church, to preserve and secure the principles of our faith and practice, and to govern our church in an orderly, unified manner. These guiding documents, to which we voluntarily submit ourselves, define and ensure the freedom of action of this church in its relation to other religious organizations.

CONSTITUTION

Name

This body shall be known as Central Baptist Church of Owasso, Oklahoma. Uses of “Central Baptist Church”, “Central”, “the church”, or “this church” throughout these governing documents refer to all ministries of Central Baptist Church of Owasso, Oklahoma.

Purpose

The purpose of this church is to live for Christ, love people, and make disciples. To this end, we will seek to fulfill the Great Commission (Matthew 28:19-20) while obeying the Great Commandment (Matthew 22:37-39).

Statement of Faith

The Bible alone is the final source of all that we believe. It is the inspired and inerrant Word of God that speaks with sole authority concerning truth, morality, and proper conduct. This church affirms and supports the Baptist Faith and Message 2000, which serves as the church’s statement on core doctrines and beliefs.

Autonomy

Central Baptist Church is self-governed and free of external control or authority from any other organization, religious or secular, within the limitations imposed by the laws of the state of Oklahoma and the United States of America. This church is affiliated with the Southern Baptist Convention (National), the Baptist General Convention of Oklahoma (State), and the Tulsa Metro Baptist Network (Local).

CENTRAL
BAPTIST CHURCH

BYLAWS

1. Church Membership

1.1 MEMBER REQUIREMENTS

Members of Central Baptist Church are people who profess faith in Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior (Romans 10:9-10), have been baptized by immersion after salvation (Mark 1:9, Acts 8:35-38, Romans 6:3-4), align with Central's Statement of Faith (see Statement of Faith), and have completed new member orientation.

Members with no attendance or recorded giving within the previous six (6) months will be considered inactive (see Member Meetings). All other members are considered active members.

1.2 MEMBER EXPECTATIONS

Members of this church are expected to place themselves under the authority of Scripture (1 Thessalonians 2:13), commit themselves to the health and unity of the church body (Ephesians 4:1-6), and agree to the following expectations of membership (Colossians 3:23):

1. **Live** a life committed to God through growth as a disciple (John 8:31-32) and by sharing their faith (Matthew 5:14-16).
2. **Actively participate** in worship and ministries of the church (Hebrews 10:25).
3. **Serve** at Central in areas where they are gifted (1 Peter 4:10).
4. **Support** the work of the church through regular financial tithes and offerings, as the Lord provides and requires (2 Corinthians 9:7).

1.3 MEMBER RESTORATION

In the event that a church member is unwilling to place themselves under the authority of Scripture and continues to live a life characterized by unrepentant sin, or when a member's action becomes a liability to the general welfare of the church or becomes divisive in nature, the church may pursue the biblical process of Member Restoration as defined in Scripture (Matthew 18:15-17, 1 Corinthians 5:1-13, 2 Corinthians 2:5-8, 2 Thessalonians 3:6-15, James 5:19-20, Titus 3:1-11).

This process shall be carried out by the Pastors and Deacons and their designees. The church shall extend both grace and truth with a concern for reconciliation rather than punishment.

A member undergoing Member Restoration will be considered not in good standing for church leadership or voting eligibility (see Member Meetings).

1.4 MEMBER DISMISSAL

A two-thirds (⅔) affirmative vote of the Pastors and Deacons is required to dismiss a member from church membership if restoration is not possible. A person may be restored to membership only by action of the Pastors and Deacons (see Deacon Handbook).

Member dismissal may also occur at the request of a church member or their transferring church, upon the death of a church member, or as a result of inactive church membership status for more than one (1) year.

2. Church Leadership

2.1 LEAD PASTOR

Responsibilities

The Lead Pastor is the primary servant leader and spiritual shepherd of the church, and he must meet the biblical qualifications of pastoral service (1 Timothy 3:1-7; Titus 1:5-9). The Lead Pastor shall cast vision, manage staff as they lead ministries, ensure pastoral care, serve as the principal preacher, oversee the day-to-day decisions and affairs of the church, and fulfill other duties as defined throughout these bylaws.

Certain limitations and constraints to the responsibility and authority of the Lead Pastor are set forth in the Lead Pastor Limitations Policies.

Vacancy

In the event of a Lead Pastor vacancy, the Church Board shall select an interim pastor and delegate the Lead Pastor's responsibilities to maintain church health. The Church Board is responsible for creating a search team to select a Lead Pastor candidate. This search team shall consist of no less than five (5) and no more than seven (7) church members that are approved by a congregational vote in a Member Meeting (see Member Meetings, Church Board).

Calling
The church is responsible for confirming God's calling of a Lead Pastor. This confirmation will occur at a Member Meeting (see Member Meetings).

Dismissal
To dismiss the Lead Pastor, the church must conduct a vote at a Member Meeting with at least two (2) weeks public notice (see Member Meetings). This vote can only be called upon the recommendation of a two-thirds (⅔) majority vote of the Church Board (excluding the Lead Pastor) and following appropriate corrective action by the Church Board.

Grounds for dismissal include the persistent failure to adhere to the Lead Pastor responsibilities set forth in these bylaws, the Lead Pastor Limitations Policies, or the biblical standards set forth in 1 Timothy 3:1-7 and Titus 1:5-9.

2.2 CHURCH BOARD

Roles and Responsibilities
The Church Board exists to represent the congregation and assist the Lead Pastor by fulfilling the following functions:

1. Serve as the primary care group for the Lead Pastor.
2. Protect the established mission and vision of the church while the Lead Pastor and staff determine and execute the ministry strategy.
3. Advise the Lead Pastor on strategic decisions, upon request.
4. Hold the Lead Pastor accountable for the health and growth of the church. All other staff positions are accountable to the Lead Pastor.
5. Serve a fiduciary responsibility to the church by recommending the annual budget to the congregation for approval and determining the salary for the Lead Pastor. All other staff salaries are to be determined by the Lead Pastor.
6. Perform other duties as defined throughout these bylaws and the Church Board Handbook.

General Guidelines

Central holds to the biblical belief that members should serve within their spiritual gifting (1 Peter 4:10). We also believe there is great wisdom and benefit in employing sound organizational practices as Scripture allows (Proverbs 15:22). Therefore, active members who are servant leaders in the church will be identified according to their spiritual gifting and be chosen to serve on the Church Board.

The Church Board shall consist of the Lead Pastor plus six (6) non-staff church members and shall not operate with fewer than four (4) people. In the event the Church Board does not meet these minimum requirements, the Deacons shall expeditiously bring the Church Board back into compliance by performing the following: temporarily assist the remaining Church Board members in performing their responsibilities, and ensure new Church Board members are selected in a timely manner according to these bylaws.

Church Board members, other than the Lead Pastor, will serve for a period of three (3) years. After serving a three-year term, board members must rotate off for a minimum of one (1) year before serving another term.

The Church Board shall meet no less than once per quarter. A simple majority quorum is needed for all decisions requiring approval by the Church Board. Approval must be by simple majority unless otherwise specified within these bylaws or the Church Board Handbook.

Requirements for Church Board Members

1. Demonstrate proven servant leadership in ministry at Central for a minimum of two years without signs of control or authoritarianism.
2. Model a life fully devoted to Jesus (1 Corinthians 11:1).
3. Agree wholeheartedly with the mission, vision, and beliefs of Central.
4. Consistently tithe.
5. Must be a member in good standing.
6. Be a mature Christian with highly developed Christian character as outlined in Galatians 5:22-23; 2 Peter 1:5-7; Colossians 3:12-15.
7. Must not be any relative of the Lead Pastor or an immediate family member of Senior Leadership, as defined by the Staff Handbook.[1]

[1] Amendment approved 11.16.25

Selection of Church Board Members
Nominations for new Church Board members shall be submitted to the Church Board by the Lead Pastor and Staff, in cooperation with congregational input.

Nominees will be vetted and approved by the Church Board after a deliberate process of prayer, counsel, and evaluation. Approval of nominees by the Church Board must be unanimous.

Nominees approved by the Church Board shall be presented to the congregation to be voted on in a Member Meeting (see Member Meetings).

Removal of Church Board Members
When a Church Board member is unable or unwilling to fulfill their duties or fails to meet Church Board requirements, they may be removed by majority vote of the Church Board (excluding the vote of the Church Board member in question).

2.3 STAFF

General Guidelines
Duties and responsibilities of all staff are set forth in their applicable job descriptions. Specific policies and procedures related to staff are contained in the Staff Handbook.

Pastoral Staff
Pastors of Central shall serve a dual role of both pastor and ministry leader, and must meet the biblical qualifications of pastoral service (1 Timothy 3:1-7; Titus 1:5-9).

The Lead Pastor shall determine the need to hire or dismiss other pastoral staff and make these recommendations to the Church Board for majority approval before being presented to the congregation. The church must vote to call or dismiss all pastoral staff (see Member Meetings).

Church Staff
The church staff consists of all employee positions of the church that are not pastoral staff. The Lead Pastor (or his staff designee) has authority to determine all church staff positions and their appropriate titles, as well as hire and dismiss all church staff (see Lead Pastor Limitations Policy 3.3).

2.4 DEACONS

Responsibilities
Deacons are responsible for serving the church, promoting its unity, and supporting the staff. Deacons will work with the Lead Pastor to determine the spiritual and physical needs of the congregation.

Qualifications
All Deacons shall meet the qualifications found in Acts 6:3 and 1 Timothy 3:8-13.

Selection Process
Deacons shall be selected and function according to the process outlined in the current Deacon Handbook. The congregation must vote to approve the calling of Deacons (see Member Meetings).

2.5 TRUSTEES

Selection
For business and legal purposes, there shall be three (3) trustees consisting of the Lead Pastor, one deacon appointed by the Deacons, and one Church Board member appointed by the Church Board.

Vacancy
In the event of a Lead Pastor vacancy, the Church Board may appoint a church member to temporarily serve as a trustee until the position is filled.

Responsibilities
Trustees shall serve as the official representatives of the church in legal and business affairs including but not limited to the signing of legal documents and the transfer of real property. Certain actions as defined in these bylaws may not be taken by the Trustees unless duly authorized by the congregation (see Member Meetings). Trustees will not be held personally liable for any indebtedness of the church.

3. Operations

3.1 MEMBER MEETINGS

The church shall hold Member Meetings quarterly or as called by the Lead Pastor or Church Board. Unless otherwise approved by the Church Board due to an emergency situation, Member Meetings and upcoming votes require a two-week advance notification using any current method of church-wide communication. Approval of Member Meeting agendas and voting procedures rests solely with the Church Board.

Robert's Rules of Order shall serve as the preferred parliamentary guide to ensure efficient and orderly meetings.

Voting

Eligible voters at Member Meetings are church members in attendance who are at least fourteen (14) years of age and are active members in good standing (see Church Membership).

The following matters require a two-thirds (⅔) majority vote of voting members present and a quorum (10% of eligible voters): calling and dismissal of pastoral staff*, adoption and amendments to the annual budget, incurring debt, buying and selling of real estate, amendments to bylaws, calling of deacons, approval of Church Board members, approval of Lead Pastor search team members, dissolution of the church, and other matters as determined by the Church Board.

*Calling a Lead Pastor requires an 80% majority vote.

3.2 FINANCES

Annual Budget

The annual budget shall be prepared under the leadership of the Lead Pastor and approved by the Church Board (see Lead Pastor Limitations Policy 3.5). The annual budget and budget amendments shall be presented to the congregation for adoption[2] at a Member Meeting (see Member Meetings).

Oversight of Finances

Central's administrative staff shall provide day-to-day oversight of church finances and deliver financial reports directly to the Church Board. The Church Board shall hold the

[2] Amendment approved 11.16.25

Lead Pastor accountable for the financial health of the church (see Church Board, Lead Pastor Limitations Policy 3.5).

Use of Funds
Funds received will be used as designated, unless the donor agrees to a different designation.

3.3 FACILITIES

Central may offer the use of its property and facilities to the community when not in use by church members. However, groups or persons holding, advancing, or advocating beliefs or practices that conflict with Central's faith or moral teaching, as summarized in these bylaws and supporting documents, are not permitted to use Central's property and facilities. The Lead Pastor is responsible for ensuring the proper use and stewardship of church property and facilities (see Lead Pastor Limitations Policy 3.4 and 3.5.1.4, Facilities Use Agreement).

3.4 LEGAL

No Private Inurement
Central is organized as a nonprofit corporation and is to be operated exclusively for one or more of the purposes specified in Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code, or the corresponding sections of any future federal tax code, and in the promotion of purposes stated in the Certificate of Incorporation of the Church. All funds of the church shall be devoted exclusively to such charitable purposes and shall not inure to the benefit of any private individual other than the payments of employee wages and benefits. No member or person from whom the church may receive any property or funds shall receive or shall be entitled to receive any pecuniary profit from the church.

Severability
The invalidity of any provision of these bylaws shall not affect the other provisions hereof, and in such event, these bylaws shall be construed in all respects as if such invalid provisions were omitted.

Dissolution of the Church and Transfer of Assets
Should the church ever be dissolved, all assets remaining after payment of outstanding debts and obligations shall be distributed to the Tulsa Metro Baptist Network, and no assets of the church shall be given to any member or former member of the church (see Member Meetings).

3.5 RATIFICATION, REVIEW, AND AMENDMENTS

Ratification

These bylaws were approved by members of Central Baptist Church on December 3, 2023 and enacted February 5, 2024.

Review

The Church Board shall ensure that these bylaws are reviewed annually.

Amendments

Proposed amendments to this constitution and bylaws must be submitted to the Church Board. Proposed amendments approved by the Church Board shall be submitted to the congregation for a vote (see Member Meetings).

4. Supporting Documents

- Lead Pastor Limitations Policies
- Church Board Handbook
- Staff Handbook
- Deacon Handbook
- Facilities Use Agreement