

**CONSTITUTION
AND
BY-LAWS
OF
EASTPORT BAPTIST CHURCH, INC.**

ARTICLE I: NAME

The name of this church shall be Eastport Baptist Church Inc., Jacksonville, FL.

ARTICLE II: AFFILIATION

Eastport Baptist Church is a Reformed Baptist Church affiliated with the Southern Baptist Convention, the Florida Baptist Convention and the Northeast Florida Baptist Association. Eastport is also a non-charismatic church that is bible-believing, bible preaching, standing uncompromisingly for the unchanging Word of God. It is an evangelistic church proclaiming the whole gospel of Christ through a bible-preaching, bible teaching ministry.

ARTICLE III: PURPOSE

The specific purpose of this church is the advancement of the Kingdom of God. This purpose will be carried out by the means of:

1. Spreading the Gospel of Jesus Christ by the preaching, sharing and distributing of the Bible and related materials;
2. Discipling, teaching and shepherding the recipients of the Gospel;
3. And securing by purchase, gift, lease, acquisition of estate and personal property. And to build, erect, provide for, maintain and equip suitable buildings, houses, shelters for the benefit, use, and occupation of Eastport Baptist Church, its members and congregation in maintaining and fostering worship and religious instruction.

This church is organized for the purpose of holding the title to such property or properties and shall from time to time, purchase or acquire, and it shall have power, from time to time, to make such contracts and to do such things as shall be authorized and directed by the Elders and the members of Eastport Baptist Church.

This church shall have no power to mortgage, sell, encumber, deed or otherwise dispose of any property without the consent and direction of the Board of Elders and the members of Eastport Baptist Church.

ARTICLE IV: TERM

Eastport Baptist Church shall have a perpetual existence.

ARTICLE V: STATEMENT OF FAITH

Eastport Baptist Church subscribes to [the 1689 London Baptist Confession of Faith](#) (see booklet) and [the 1978 Chicago Statement on Biblical Inerrancy](#).

Chicago Statement on Biblical Inerrancy

Background

The "Chicago Statement on Biblical Inerrancy" was produced at an international Summit Conference of evangelical leaders, held at the Hyatt Regency O'Hare in Chicago in the fall of 1978. This congress was sponsored by the International Council on Biblical Inerrancy. The Chicago Statement was signed by nearly 300 noted evangelical scholars, including James Boice, Norman L. Geisler, John Gerstner, Carl F. H. Henry, Kenneth Kantzer, Harold Lindsell, John Warwick Montgomery, Roger Nicole, J. I. Packer, Robert Preus, Earl Radmacher, Francis Schaeffer, R. C. Sproul, and John Wenham.

The ICBI disbanded in 1988 after producing three major statements: one on biblical inerrancy in 1978, one on biblical hermeneutics in 1982, and one on biblical application in 1986. The following text, containing the "Preface" by the ICBI draft committee, plus the "Short Statement," "Articles of Affirmation and Denial," and an accompanying "Exposition," was published in toto by Carl F. H. Henry in *God, Revelation And Authority*, vol. 4 (Waco, Tx.: Word Books, 1979), on pp. 211-219. The nineteen Articles of Affirmation and Denial, with a brief introduction, also appear in *A General Introduction to the Bible*, by Norman L. Geisler and William E. Nix (Chicago: Moody Press, rev. 1986), at pp. 181-185. An official commentary on these articles was written by R. C. Sproul in *Explaining Inerrancy: A Commentary* (Oakland, Calif.: ICBI, 1980), and Norman Geisler edited the major addresses from the 1978 conference, in *Inerrancy* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1980).

Preface

The authority of Scripture is a key issue for the Christian church in this and every age. Those who profess faith in Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior are called to show the reality of their

discipleship by humbly and faithfully obeying God's written Word. To stray from Scripture in faith or conduct is disloyalty to our Master. Recognition of the total truth and trustworthiness of Holy Scripture is essential to a full grasp and adequate confession of its authority.

The following Statement affirms this inerrancy of Scripture afresh, making clear our understanding of it and warning against its denial. We are persuaded that to deny it is to set aside the witness of Jesus Christ and of the Holy Spirit and to refuse that submission to the claims of God's own Word which marks true Christian faith. We see it as our timely duty to make this affirmation in the face of current lapses from the truth of inerrancy among our fellow Christians and misunderstandings of this doctrine in the world at large.

This Statement consists of three parts: a Summary Statement, Articles of Affirmation and Denial, and an accompanying Exposition. It has been prepared in the course of a three-day consultation in Chicago. Those who have signed the Summary Statement and the Articles wish to affirm their own conviction as to the inerrancy of Scripture and to encourage and challenge one another and all Christians to growing appreciation and understanding of this doctrine. We acknowledge the limitations of a document prepared in a brief, intensive conference and do not propose that this Statement be given creedal weight. Yet we rejoice in the deepening of our own convictions through our discussions together, and we pray that the Statement we have signed may be used to the glory of our God toward a new reformation of the Church in its faith, life, and mission.

We offer this Statement in a spirit, not of contention, but of humility and love, which we purpose by God's grace to maintain in any future dialogue arising out of what we have said. We gladly acknowledge that many who deny the inerrancy of Scripture do not display the consequences of this denial in the rest of their belief and behavior, and we are conscious that we who confess this doctrine often deny it in life by failing to bring our thoughts and deeds, our traditions and habits, into true subjection to the divine Word.

We invite response to this statement from any who see reason to amend its affirmations about Scripture by the light of Scripture itself, under whose infallible authority we stand as we speak. We claim no personal infallibility for the witness we bear, and for any help which enables us to strengthen this testimony to God's Word we shall be grateful. — The Draft Committee

A Short Statement

1. God, who is Himself Truth and speaks truth only, has inspired Holy Scripture in order thereby to reveal Himself to lost mankind through Jesus Christ as Creator and Lord, Redeemer and Judge. Holy Scripture is God's witness to Himself.

2. Holy Scripture, being God's own Word, written by men prepared and superintended by His Spirit, is of infallible divine authority in all matters upon which it touches: it is to be believed, as God's instruction, in all that it affirms: obeyed, as God's command, in all that it requires; embraced, as God's pledge, in all that it promises.

3. The Holy Spirit, Scripture's divine Author, both authenticates it to us by His inward witness and opens our minds to understand its meaning.

4. Being wholly and verbally God-given, Scripture is without error or fault in all its teaching, no less in what it states about God's acts in creation, about the events of world history, and about its own literary origins under God, than in its witness to God's saving grace in individual lives.

5. The authority of Scripture is inescapably impaired if this total divine inerrancy is in any way limited or disregarded, or made relative to a view of truth contrary to the Bible's own; and such lapses bring serious loss to both the individual and the Church.

Articles of Affirmation and Denial

Article I.

WE AFFIRM that the Holy Scriptures are to be received as the authoritative Word of God.

WE DENY that the Scriptures receive their authority from the Church, tradition, or any other human source.

Article II.

WE AFFIRM that the Scriptures are the supreme written norm by which God binds the conscience, and that the authority of the Church is subordinate to that of Scripture.

WE DENY that Church creeds, councils, or declarations have authority greater than or equal to the authority of the Bible.

Article III.

WE AFFIRM that the written Word in its entirety is revelation given by God.

WE DENY that the Bible is merely a witness to revelation, or only becomes revelation in encounter, or depends on the responses of men for its validity.

Article IV.

WE AFFIRM that God who made mankind in His image has used language as a means of revelation.

WE DENY that human language is so limited by our creatureliness that it is rendered inadequate as a vehicle for divine revelation. We further deny that the corruption of human culture and language through sin has thwarted God's work of inspiration.

Article V.

WE AFFIRM that God's revelation within the Holy Scriptures was progressive.

WE DENY that later revelation, which may fulfill earlier revelation, ever corrects or contradicts it. We further deny that any normative revelation has been given since the completion of the New Testament writings.

Article VI.

WE AFFIRM that the whole of Scripture and all its parts, down to the very words of the original, were given by divine inspiration.

WE DENY that the inspiration of Scripture can rightly be affirmed of the whole without the parts, or of some parts but not the whole.

Article VII.

WE AFFIRM that inspiration was the work in which God by His Spirit, through human writers, gave us His Word. The origin of Scripture is divine. The mode of divine inspiration remains largely a mystery to us.

WE DENY that inspiration can be reduced to human insight, or to heightened states of consciousness of any kind.

Article VIII.

WE AFFIRM that God in His work of inspiration utilized the distinctive personalities and literary styles of the writers whom He had chosen and prepared.

WE DENY that God, in causing these writers to use the very words that He chose, overrode their personalities.

Article IX.

WE AFFIRM that inspiration, though not conferring omniscience, guaranteed true and trustworthy utterance on all matters of which the Biblical authors were moved to speak and write.

WE DENY that the finitude or fallenness of these writers, by necessity or otherwise, introduced distortion or falsehood into God's Word.

Article X.

WE AFFIRM that inspiration, strictly speaking, applies only to the autographic text of Scripture, which in the providence of God can be ascertained from available manuscripts with great accuracy. We further affirm that copies and translations of Scripture are the Word of God to the extent that they faithfully represent the original.

WE DENY that any essential element of the Christian faith is affected by the absence of the autographs. We further deny that this absence renders the assertion of Biblical inerrancy invalid or irrelevant.

Article XI.

WE AFFIRM that Scripture, having been given by divine inspiration, is infallible, so that, far from misleading us, it is true and reliable in all the matters it addresses.

WE DENY that it is possible for the Bible to be at the same time infallible and errant in its assertions. Infallibility and inerrancy may be distinguished, but not separated.

Article XII.

WE AFFIRM that Scripture in its entirety is inerrant, being free from all falsehood, fraud, or deceit.

WE DENY that Biblical infallibility and inerrancy are limited to spiritual, religious, or redemptive themes, exclusive of assertions in the fields of history and science. We further deny that scientific hypotheses about earth history may properly be used to overturn the teaching of Scripture on creation and the flood.

Article XIII.

WE AFFIRM the propriety of using inerrancy as a theological term with reference to the complete truthfulness of Scripture.

WE DENY that it is proper to evaluate Scripture according to standards of truth and error that are alien to its usage or purpose. We further deny that inerrancy is negated by Biblical phenomena such as a lack of modern technical precision, irregularities of grammar or spelling, observational descriptions of nature, the reporting of falsehoods, the use of hyperbole and round numbers, the topical arrangement of material, variant selections of material in parallel accounts, or the use of free citations.

Article XIV.

WE AFFIRM the unity and internal consistency of Scripture.

WE DENY that alleged errors and discrepancies that have not yet been resolved vitiate the truth claims of the Bible.

Article XV.

WE AFFIRM that the doctrine of inerrancy is grounded in the teaching of the Bible about inspiration.

WE DENY that Jesus' teaching about Scripture may be dismissed by appeals to accommodation or to any natural limitation of His humanity.

Article XVI.

WE AFFIRM that the doctrine of inerrancy has been integral to the Church's faith throughout its history.

WE DENY that inerrancy is a doctrine invented by scholastic Protestantism, or is a reactionary position postulated in response to negative higher criticism.

Article XVII.

WE AFFIRM that the Holy Spirit bears witness to the Scriptures, assuring believers of the truthfulness of God's written Word.

WE DENY that this witness of the Holy Spirit operates in isolation from or against Scripture.

Article XVIII.

WE AFFIRM that the text of Scripture is to be interpreted by grammatico-historical exegesis, taking account of its literary forms and devices, and that Scripture is to interpret Scripture.

WE DENY the legitimacy of any treatment of the text or quest for sources lying behind it that leads to relativizing, dehistoricizing, or discounting its teaching, or rejecting its claims to authorship.

Article XIX.

WE AFFIRM that a confession of the full authority, infallibility, and inerrancy of Scripture is vital to a sound understanding of the whole of the Christian faith. We further affirm that such confession should lead to increasing conformity to the image of Christ.

WE DENY that such confession is necessary for salvation. However, we further deny that inerrancy can be rejected without grave consequences, both to the individual and to the Church.

We teach that two ordinances have been committed to the local church: baptism and the

Lord's Supper (Acts 2:38-42). Christian baptism by immersion (Acts 8:36-39) is the solemn and beautiful testimony of a believer showing forth his faith in the crucified, buried, and risen Savior, and his union with Him in death to sin and resurrection to a new life (Romans 6:1-11). It is also a sign of fellowship and identification with the visible Body of Christ (Acts 2:41-42).

We teach that the Lord's Supper is the commemoration and proclamation of His death until He comes, and should always be preceded by solemn self-examination (1 Corinthians 11:28-32). We also teach that, whereas the elements of Communion are only representative of the flesh and blood of Christ, participation in the Lord's Supper is nevertheless an actual communion with the risen Christ, who indwells every believer, and so is present, fellowshiping with His people (1 Corinthians 10:16).

ARTICLE VI: MEMBERSHIP

SECTION 1 – ACTIVE MEMBERSHIP: Active membership in Eastport Baptist Church shall be open to all persons who confess Jesus Christ as their Lord and Savior and who have been baptized.

(a) Eastport Baptist Church will not allow homosexuals, lesbians, transgendered people or anyone who has a habitual lifestyle of sin according to 1 Cor.6:9-10, Gal.5:19-21 and 1 John 3:9, to be employed by or become members of Eastport Baptist Church. If a member is discovered to be an active participant in this kind of lifestyle, he or she will be removed from the membership or employment of the church according to Matthew 18:15-17 (See Section 7).

SECTION 2 – VOTING PRIVILEGES: Voting privileges are restricted to active members who have passed their sixteenth (16) birthday.

SECTION 3 – APPLICATION FOR MEMBERSHIP: All requests for membership shall be made to a Pastor/Elder or a deacon. Upon making such request, the person shall be given an application for membership along with a copy of the 1689 London Baptist Confession of Faith and a summary Statement of Faith. A Pastor or Deacon shall meet with the applicant following receipt of the application. Each applicant shall subscribe to the summary Statement of Faith and testify publicly before the Elders at a regularly held meeting for prospective members.

SECTION 4 – DENIAL OF MEMBERSHIP: If, upon review of an application for membership or after meeting with a prospective member, the Board of Elders determines that the applicant does not confess Jesus Christ as his or her Lord and Savior, or that there is a lack of evidence of a godly lifestyle, membership shall be denied. The decision made by the Board shall be final and there shall be no appeal to any court from that decision.

SECTION 5 – ADMISSION OF APPLICANTS: Applicants admitted to membership shall, if

possible, present themselves at a worship service designated by the Pastor and Elder leadership, at which service such applicants shall be publicly received and given the Right Hand of Fellowship.

SECTION 6 – RESPONSIBILITIES OF MEMBERS: Members shall seek to exercise their spiritual gifts for the mutual benefit of all the church body and shall submit to the loving leadership of the Elders.

SECTION 7 – MARRIAGE AND SEXUALITY:

We teach that marriage was given by God as part of His common grace, and that it has no meaning other than as He has provided (Gen. 2:18–24). We teach that marriage is subject to the curse of the Fall but that believers, living in obedience to the Scripture and under the control of the Holy Spirit, can begin to experience peaceful, productive, and fulfilled marriage as intended by God (Gen. 3:16; 1 Peter 3:7).

We teach that the marriages of believers are to illustrate the loving relationship of Christ and His church, with the husband loving his wife as Christ loves the church and the wife responding to her husband’s loving leadership as the church responds to Christ (Eph. 5:18–33).

We teach that as believers’ marriages are to illustrate Christ’s relationship with His church, believers should choose to marry those who share their faith and regenerate life (2 Cor. 6:14).

We teach that the term “marriage” has only one meaning and that is marriage sanctioned by God which joins one man and one woman in a single, exclusive union, as delineated in scripture (Gen. 2:23–24).

We teach that marriage is always a public, formal, and officially recognized covenant between a man and a woman. We teach that without such a covenant, which may include a “common law marriage,” where valid in specific cases under pertinent law, prolonged conjugal cohabitation does not establish, and is not equivalent to, marriage (John 4:18). We teach that where no such covenant exists, or can be discerned, between a cohabiting couple prior to coming to faith in Christ, family units should be preserved to the extent possible and, if otherwise appropriate, solemnization encouraged. We teach that where a valid marriage has been established prior to coming to faith in Christ, the couple should remain married (1 Cor. 7:24).

We teach that God hates divorce, permitting it only where there has been unrepentant sexual sin (Mal. 2:14–16; Matt. 5:32, 19:9) or desertion by an unbeliever (1 Cor. 7:12–15). We teach

that remarriage is permitted to a faithful partner, but only when the divorce was on biblical grounds.

We teach that God intends sexual intimacy to occur only between a man and a woman who are married to each other. We teach that God has commanded that no intimate sexual activity be engaged in outside of a marriage between a man and a woman (Heb. 13:4).

We teach that any form of sexual immorality, such as adultery, fornication, homosexuality, bisexual conduct, bestiality, incest, pedophilia, pornography, any attempt to change one's sex or disagreement with one's biological sex, is sinful and offensive to God (Lev. 18:1–30; Matt. 5:28; Rom. 1:26–29; 1 Cor. 5:1, 6:9; 1 Thess. 4:1–8).

We teach that homosexuality, in particular, is subject to God's wrath of abandonment, is a matter of choice and not inherited status, and epitomizes man's ungrateful rebellion against God (Rom. 1:18–28).

We teach that every person must be afforded compassion, love, kindness, respect, and dignity. Hateful and harassing behavior or attitudes directed toward any individual are to be repudiated and are not in accord with Scripture or the doctrines of the church. We teach that the faithful proclamation of the Scripture, including the call to repentance, does not constitute hate speech, or hateful and harassing behavior, but is instead a fundamental part of the church's loving mission to the world (Matt. 28:16–20; 2 Cor. 5:11–20; 1 Tim. 1:5; 2 Tim. 4:1–2).

We teach that God offers redemption and forgiveness to all who confess and forsake their sin, including sexual sin, seeking His mercy and forgiveness through Jesus Christ. We teach that His forgiveness is total and complete (Ps. 103:11–12, 130:3–4; Is. 43:25, 44:22; John 5:24; Col. 2:13–14) and that God imputes the full righteousness of Christ (2 Cor. 5:21) to the believing sinner. We teach that the forgiven sinner has been cleansed from the guilt of sin, set apart unto God, or made holy, and justified before Him (1 Cor. 6:9–11). We teach that any man or woman who has received that forgiveness is "in Christ" and is a "new creation" (2 Cor. 5:17).

Elders Statement on Marriage, Divorce, Remarriage, and Sexuality (/pr 1.27.14)

SECTION 8 – DISCIPLINE OF MEMBERS: Members of this church who shall err in doctrine or conduct shall be subject to dismissal; however, it shall be the duty of any member of this church who has knowledge of the erring member's heresy or misconduct to warn and to correct such erring member. If said erring member does not heed this warning, then the warning member shall again go to the erring member accompanied by one or two witnesses to warn and correct such erring member. If said erring member still does not heed this warning, it shall be brought to the attention of the Elders. If said erring member refuses to heed the warning and correction of the Elders, he or she shall be publicly dismissed from the church.

On occasion a Christian will wander away from the fellowship of other believers and find himself ensnared by sin through ignorance or willful disobedience. It then becomes necessary for the church, and particularly its shepherds, to actively seek the repentance and restoration of that Christian. As shepherds of the flock, the elders love the sheep and are also held accountable by God for their spiritual welfare, including that of the wandering sheep. As in Jesus' parable in Luke 15:3-8, it is a time of joy, both in heaven and within the church, when the wandering Christian truly repents.

One means by which the church seeks to lovingly restore wandering believers is the process of church discipline. In Matthew 18, the Lord explains to His disciples how to respond when a fellow believer sins. The principles He sets forth must guide the body of Christ as she seeks to implement discipline in the church today.

(a) The Purpose of Discipline

The purpose of church discipline is the spiritual restoration of fallen members and the consequent strengthening of the church and glorifying of the Lord. When a sinning believer is rebuked and he turns from his sin and is forgiven, he is won back to fellowship with the body and with its head, Jesus Christ.

The goal of church discipline, then, is not to throw people out of the church or to feed the self-righteous pride of those who administer the discipline. It is not to embarrass people or to exercise authority and power in some unbiblical manner. The purpose is to restore a sinning believer to holiness and bring him back into a pure relationship within the assembly.

In Matthew 18:15, Jesus says, "And if your brother sins, go and reprove him in private; if he listens to you, you have won your brother." The Greek word translated "won" was originally used of accumulating wealth in the sense of monetary commodities. Here it refers to the gaining back of something of value that is lost, namely, an erring brother. When a brother or sister strays, a valuable treasure is lost, and the church should not be content until he or she is restored. The body of Christ is in the business of recovery (Gal. 6:1), and such is the purpose of church discipline.

(b) The Process of Discipline

In Matthew 18:15-17, Jesus sets forth the four step process of church discipline: (1) tell him his sin alone; (2) take some witnesses; (3) tell the church; and (4) treat him as an outsider.

Step One (Matt. 18:15). The process of church discipline begins on an individual level. Jesus said, "And if your brother sins, go and reprove him in private" (v. 15a). Here, an individual

believer is to go to a sinning brother privately and confront him in a spirit of humility and gentleness. This confrontation involves clearly exposing his sin so that he is aware of it and calling him to repentance. If the sinning brother repents in response to the private confrontation, that brother is forgiven and restored (v. 15b).

Step Two (Matt. 18:16). If the sinning brother refuses to listen to the one who has rebuked him privately, the next step in the discipline process is to take one or two more believers along to confront him again (v. 16a). The purpose of taking other believers is so that “by the mouth of two or three witnesses every fact may be confirmed” (v. 16b). In other words, the witnesses are present not only to confirm that the sin was committed but, in addition, to confirm that the sinning brother was properly rebuked and that he has or has not repented.

The presence of additional witnesses is as much a protection for the one being approached as it is for the one approaching. After all, a biased person could erroneously say, “Well, I tried to confront him, but he’s impenitent.” It would be presumptuous to think that one person could make that ultimate determination, especially if he was the one who had been sinned against. The witnesses need to confirm whether there is a heart of repentance or one of indifference or rejection. Such a report provides the basis for further action because the situation has been verified beyond the report of one individual.

At this point, it should be hoped that the one or two who are brought along to confront the sinner will not have to become public witnesses against him before the rest of the church. Ideally, their added rebuke will be sufficient to induce a change of heart in the offending brother that the initial rebuke did not cause. If this change of heart does occur, that brother is forgiven and restored, and the matter is dropped.

Step Three (Matt. 18:17a). If the sinning brother refuses to listen and respond to the confrontation of the witnesses after a period of time, those witnesses are then to tell it to the church (v. 17a). This is most appropriately done by bringing the matter to the attention of the elders, who in turn oversee its communication to the assembly as a whole.

How long should the witnesses continue to call the person to repentance before telling the church? The elders at Eastport Baptist Church avoid carrying out the third or fourth stage of church discipline until they are absolutely certain that the erring believer has truly sinned, or is continuing to sin, and that he has refused to repent when appropriately confronted. The elders will routinely send a letter by registered mail warning the individual that the third (or fourth) step of discipline will be taken if they have not received word of repentance by a specific date. When this date has passed, the person’s sin and refusal to repent are made known publicly, either before the entire assembly during a Communion service or through a fellowship group in which the person is known.

It has been the custom at Eastport Baptist Church, upon enacting this third step, to clearly indicate to the congregation that they are to pursue the person aggressively and plead with him to repent before the fourth step becomes necessary. That crucial and potent procedure often draws the sinner to repentance and obedience. If repentance does take place, the sinning believer is forgiven and restored.

Step Four (Matt. 18:17b). The fourth and final step in the process of church discipline is ostracism. If a sinning believer refuses to listen even to the church, he is to be ostracized from the fellowship. Jesus said, "let him be to you as a Gentile and a tax-gatherer" (v. 17b). The term "Gentile" was primarily used of non-Jews who held to their traditional paganism and had no part in the covenant, worship, or social life of the Jews. On the other hand, a "tax-gatherer" was an outcast from the Jews by choice, having become a traitor to his own people. Jesus' use of these terms doesn't mean that the church is to treat these people badly. It simply means that when a professing believer refuses to repent, the church is to treat him as if he were outside of the fellowship. They are not to let him associate and participate in the blessings and benefits of the Christian assembly.

When a man in the Corinthian church refused to forsake an incestuous relationship with his stepmother, the apostle Paul commanded that the man be removed from their midst (1 Cor. 5:13). The believers there were not even to share a meal with him (1 Cor. 5:11), for dining with someone was symbolic of a hospitable and cordial fellowship. The one who is persistently unrepentant is to be totally ostracized from the fellowship of the church and treated like an outcast, not a brother.

As far as the welfare of the church is concerned, the purpose of putting the brother out is to protect the purity of the fellowship (1 Cor. 5:6), to warn the assembly of the seriousness of sin (1 Tim. 5:20), and to give a testimony of righteousness to a watching world. But as far as the welfare of the brother himself is concerned, the purpose of the ostracism is not to punish but to awaken, and it must therefore be done in humble love and never in a spirit of self-righteous superiority (2 Thess. 3:15).

When a church has done everything it can to bring a sinning member back to purity of life but is unsuccessful, that individual is to be left to his sin and his shame. If he is truly a Christian, God will not cast him away, but He may allow him to sink still deeper before he becomes desperate enough to turn from his sin.

The command not to have fellowship or even social contact with the unrepentant brother does not exclude all contact. When there is an opportunity to admonish him and try to call him back, the opportunity should be taken. In fact, such opportunities should be sought. But the contact should be for the purpose of admonishment and restoration and no other.

Adapted from John MacArthur, *The MacArthur New Testament Commentary: Matthew 16–23* (Chicago: Moody Press, 1988); John MacArthur, *The Master’s Plan for the Church* (Chicago: Moody Press, 1991); and Stuart Scott and George Crawford, “Restoring the Wandering Sheep,” (unpublished paper). For a fuller treatment of church discipline, consult these resources.

SECTION 9 – REMOVAL FROM ROLL: Members of this church who shall willfully, without plausible reason or excuse, absent themselves from the services of this church for a period of three (3) months shall be removed at the discretion of the Elders. Exceptions are shut-ins, those in nursing homes and active military.

ARTICLE VII: Board of Elders

SECTION 1 – ELECTION AND TERM OF OFFICE: The spiritual oversight of this church shall be known as the Board of Elders. This pastoral body shall be, upon the establishment and incorporation of these Bylaws, chosen and confirmed by the church at a monthly business meeting or at a special meeting designated for that purpose. All Pastors shall be, according to Acts 20:28, considered as Elders and will serve on the Board for an indefinite period of time and be subject to the qualifications and conditions listed in Articles VII, Section 2. All officers, councils, committees, and staff shall be responsible to this Board. All nominations for the office of Elder shall be made by the members of Eastport Baptist Church to a nominating committee designated for that purpose and confirmed by the Board of Elders at a monthly business meeting.

SECTION 2 – QUALIFICATIONS: Each member of the Board of Elders must be an active member of this church and possess the qualifications described in 1 Timothy 3:1-7 and Titus 1:6-9. He shall be:

- (a) Blameless (1 Timothy 3:2; Titus 1:6-7)
- (b) Husband of one wife (1 Timothy 3:2; Titus 1:6)
- (c) Temperate (sober, vigilant) (1 Timothy 3:2)
- (d) Sober minded (prudent) (1 Timothy 3:2; Titus 1:8)
- (e) Given to hospitality (1 Timothy 3:2; Titus 1:8)
- (f) Apt to teach (able to teach) (1 Timothy 3:2; Titus 1:9)
- (g) Not given to wine (1 Timothy 3:3; Titus 1:7)
- (h) Not violent (pugnacious) (1 Timothy 3:3; Titus 1:7)
- (i) Patient (moderate, forbearing, gentle) (1 Timothy 3:3)
- (j) Not a brawler (uncontentious) (1 Timothy 3:3; Titus 1:7)
- (k) Not covetous (1 Timothy 3:3; Titus 1:7)
- (l) Rules well his own house (1 Timothy 3:4; Titus 1:6)
- (m) Not a novice (not a new convert) (1 Timothy 3:6)

- (n) Has a good report with outsiders (1 Timothy 3:7)
- (o) A lover of good (men and things) (Titus 1:8)
- (p) Not self-willed (Titus 1:7)
- (q) Just (fair) (Titus 1:8)
- (r) Holy (devout) (Titus 1:8)
- (s) Self-controlled (Titus 1:8)

SECTION 3 – DUTIES: The Elders are responsible for shepherding and having oversight over the flock (Acts 20:28). Specific duties of this Board shall be as follows:

- (a) To elect a chairman, vice chairman, secretary and treasurer.
- (b) To establish policies and determine practices for the church.
- (c) To hear and consider all reports and recommendations submitted by pastors, councils, committees and staff.
- (d) To assist the Pastor/Teacher in the administration of all ordinances.
- (e) To appoint and remove such pastors and staff as may be deemed appropriate (Acts 14:23; Tit. 1:5).
- (f) To exercise general oversight of financial matters of the church (Acts 11:29-30).
- (g) To exercise general oversight of the church property.
- (h) To acquire or dispose of all real or personal property of any kind.
- (i) To provide for the discipline of erring members when such is deemed necessary, while striving for reconciliation (Mat. 18:15-18; Phil. 4:1-2).

SECTION 4 – REMOVAL OF ELDERS: Any Elder may be removed from office if he becomes physically incapacitated, spiritually unqualified, or his inability to serve is established in the minds of the remainder of the Board of Elders.

SECTION 5 – OFFICERS OF THE BOARD OF ELDERS:

- (a) Chairman: The Chairman shall preside at all Board meetings which are to be conducted according to scriptural principles such as set forth in Philippians 2:2-8. The Chairman shall, in the absence of the Pastor/Teacher, be responsible for the leadership

of the church services.

(b) Vice Chairman: The Vice-Chairman shall assume all of the above-enumerated duties of the Chairman in the absence of the latter.

(c) Secretary: The Secretary shall keep the minutes of all meetings of the Board of Elders and shall attach to said minutes, all official correspondence relating to the Board. He shall be charged with the duty of giving proper notice to the congregation at the monthly and special meetings.

(d) Treasurer: The Treasurer shall be responsible for all monies collected by the Church, and he shall make financial reports each month to the Board. The Treasurer shall make a financial report at each monthly business meeting. Proper records and books concerning incoming and outgoing funds shall be kept and such records and books shall be available for auditing or inspection at any reasonable time by the Board of Elders.

SECTION 6 – MEETING AND QUORUM:

(a) The Board of Elders shall conduct regular meetings once a month and special meetings at such other times as called for by the Pastor/Teacher or Chairman of the Board. A majority of the Board membership shall constitute a quorum for the purpose of conducting church business, with the following exceptions: Whenever the business of the Board of Elders concerns calling or dismissing a Pastor, and buying or selling real estate, a quorum shall consist of not less than two-thirds (2/3) of the members of the Board.

(b) Regular meeting dates of the Board of Elders shall be determined at the first Elders' meeting of each year.

(c) Regular meetings of the Board of Elders shall be open to members of the church.

SECTION 7 – DECISIONS OF THE BOARD OF ELDERS:

(a) Decisions shall be reached after prayerful consideration by unanimous vote in a spirit of humility, with each Elder regarding one another before himself.

(b) Any person receiving compensation directly or indirectly from Eastport Baptist Church shall not be in a position to determine the nature of the amount of said compensation.

Biblical Eldership

Biblically, the focal point of all church leadership is the elder. An elder is one of a plurality of biblically qualified men who jointly shepherd and oversee a local body of believers. The word translated “elder” is used nearly twenty times in Acts and the epistles in reference to this unique group of leaders who have responsibility for overseeing the people of God.

The Office of Elder

As numerous passages in the New Testament indicate, the words “elder” (presbuteros), “overseer” (episkopos), and “pastor” (poimēn) all refer to the same office. In other words, overseers and pastors are not distinct from elders; the terms are simply different ways of identifying the same people. The qualifications for an overseer (episkopos) in 1 Timothy 3:1-7, and those for an elder (presbuteros) in Titus 1:6-9 are unmistakably parallel. In fact, in Titus 1, Paul uses both terms to refer to the same man (presbuteros in v. 5 and episkopos in v. 7). All three terms are used interchangeably in Acts 20. In verse 17, Paul assembles all the elders (presbuteros) of the church of Ephesus to give them his farewell message. In verse 28 he says, “Be on guard for yourselves and for all the flock, among which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers [episkopos], to shepherd [poimainō] the church of God.” First Peter 5:1-2 brings all three terms together as well. Peter writes, “Therefore, I exhort the elders [presbuteros] among you, as your fellow elder and witness of the sufferings of Christ, and a partaker also of the glory that is to be revealed, shepherd [poimainō] the flock of God among you, exercising oversight [episkopēō] not under compulsion, but voluntarily, according to the will of God.” The different terms, then, indicate various features of ministry, not varying levels of authority or separate offices, as some churches espouse.

A Plurality of Elders

The consistent pattern throughout the New Testament is that each local body of believers is shepherded by a plurality of God-ordained elders. Simply stated, this is the only pattern for church leadership given in the New Testament. Nowhere in Scripture does one find a local assembly ruled by majority opinion or by a single pastor.

The Apostle Paul left Titus in Crete and instructed him to “appoint elders in every city” (Titus 1:5). James instructed his readers to “call for the elders of the church” to pray for those who are sick (James 5:14). When Paul and Barnabas were in Derbe, Lystra, Iconium, and Antioch, they “appointed elders for them in every church” (Acts 14:23). In Paul’s first epistle to Timothy, the apostle referred to “the elders who rule well” at the church at Ephesus (1 Tim. 5:17; see also Acts 20:17, where Paul addresses “the elders of the church” at Ephesus). The book of Acts indicates that there were “elders” at the church in Jerusalem (Acts 11:30; 15:2, 4; 21:18).

Again and again, reference is made to a plurality of elders in each of the various churches. In fact, every place in the New Testament where the term presbuteros (“elder”) is used it is plural, except where the apostle John uses it of himself in 2 and 3 John and where Peter uses it of himself in 1 Peter 5:1. Nowhere in the New Testament is there a reference to a one-pastor

congregation. It may be that each elder in the city had an individual group in which he had specific oversight. But the church was seen as one church, and decisions were made by a collective process and in reference to the whole, not the individual parts.

In other passages, reference is made to a plurality of elders even though the word *presbuteros* itself is not used. In the opening greeting of his epistle to the Philippians, Paul refers to the “overseers [plural of *episkopos*] and deacons” at the church of Philippi (Phil. 1:2). In Acts 20:28, Paul warned the elders of the church of Ephesus, “Be on guard for yourselves and for all the flock, among which God has made you overseers [plural of *episkopos*]” (Acts 20:28). The writer of Hebrews called his readers to obey and submit to the “leaders” who kept watch over their souls (Heb. 13:17). Paul exhorted his Thessalonian readers to “appreciate those who diligently labor among you, and have charge over you in the Lord and give you instruction” (1 Thess. 5:12)—a clear reference to the overseers in the Thessalonian assembly.

Much can be said for the benefits of leadership made up of a plurality of godly men. Their combined counsel and wisdom helps assure that decisions are not self-willed or self-serving to a single individual (cf. Prov. 11:14). If there is division among the elders in making decisions, all the elders should study, pray, and seek the will of God together until consensus is achieved. In this way, the unity and harmony that the Lord desires for the church will begin with those individuals he has appointed to shepherd His flock.

The Qualifications of Elders

The character and effectiveness of any church is directly related to the quality of its leadership. That’s why Scripture stresses the importance of qualified church leadership and delineates specific standards for evaluating those who would serve in that sacred position.

The qualifications for elders are found in 1 Timothy 3:2-7 and Titus 1:6-8. According to these passages, an elder must be above reproach, the husband of one wife, temperate, prudent, respectable, hospitable, able to teach, not addicted to wine, not pugnacious, gentle, uncontentious, free from the love of money, not fond of sordid gain, a good manager of his household, one who has his children under control with dignity, not a new convert, one who has a good reputation outside the church, self-controlled, sensible, able to exhort in sound doctrine and to refute those who contradict, above reproach as God’s steward, not self-willed, not quick-tempered, loving what is good, just, and devout. (For an explanation of these qualifications, see pages 215-33 of *The Master’s Plan for the Church* by John MacArthur.)

The single, overarching qualification of which the rest are supportive is that he is to be “above reproach.” That is, he must be a leader who cannot be accused of anything sinful because he has a sustained reputation for blamelessness. An elder is to be above reproach in his marital life, his social life, his business life, and his spiritual life. In this way, he is to be a model of

godliness so he can legitimately call the congregation to follow his example (Phil. 3:17). All the other qualifications, except perhaps teaching and management skills, only amplify that idea.

In addition, the office of elder is limited to men. First Timothy 2:11-12 says, "Let a woman quietly receive instruction with entire submissiveness. But I do not allow a woman to teach or exercise authority over a man, but to remain quiet." In the church, women are to be under the authority of the elders, excluded from teaching men or holding positions of authority over them.

The Functions of Elders

As the apostolic era came to a close, the office of elder emerged as the highest level of local church leadership. Thus, it carried a great amount of responsibility. There was no higher court of appeal and no greater resource to know the mind and heart of God with regard to issues in the church.

The primary responsibility of an elder is to serve as a manager and caretaker of the church (1 Tim. 3:5). That involves a number of specific duties. As spiritual overseers of the flock, elders are to determine church policy (Acts 15:22); oversee the church (Acts 20:28); ordain others (1 Tim. 4:4); rule, teach, and preach (1 Tim. 5:17; cf. 1 Thess. 5:12; 1 Tim. 3:2); exhort and refute (Titus 1:9); and act as shepherds, setting an example for all (1 Pet. 5:1-3). Those responsibilities put elders at the core of the New Testament church's work.

Because of its heritage of democratic values and its long history of congregational church government, modern American evangelicalism often views the concept of elder rule with suspicion. The clear teaching of Scripture, however, demonstrates that the biblical norm for church leadership is a plurality of God-ordained elders, and only by following this biblical pattern will the church maximize its fruitfulness to the glory of God.

Adapted from John MacArthur, *The Master's Plan for the Church* (Chicago: Moody Press, 1991). For a fuller treatment of biblical eldership, consult this resource.

The Role of Women

Although women have traditionally fulfilled supportive roles in serving the church and gained their greatest joy and sense of accomplishment from being wives and mothers, the feminist movement has successfully influenced many women to abandon these divinely ordained roles. Unfortunately, this movement has made headway even in the church, creating chaos and confusion regarding the role of women both in ministry and in the home. Only in Scripture can God's intended design for women be found.

The Old Testament and Women

In the creation account of Genesis 1, God's first word on the subject of men and women is that they were equally created in the image of God (v. 27). Neither received more of the image of God than the other. So the Bible begins with the equality of the sexes. As persons, as spiritual beings standing before God, men and women are absolutely equal.

Despite this equality, there is in Genesis 2 a more detailed account of the creation of the two human beings that reveals differences in their God-given functions and responsibilities. God did not create the man and the woman at the same time, but rather He created Adam first and Eve later for the specific purpose of being Adam's helper. Eve was equal to Adam, but she was given the role and duty of submitting to him. Although the word "helper" carries very positive connotations—even being used of God Himself as the helper of Israel (Deut. 33:7; Ps. 33:20)—it still describes someone in a relationship of service to another. The responsibility of wives to submit to their husbands, then, was part of the plan from creation, even before the curse. The first books of the Bible establish both the equality of men and women and also the support role of the wife (see Exod. 21:15, 17, 28–31; Num. 5:19–20, 29; 6:2; 30:1–16).

Adam and Eve's disobedience to God's command resulted in certain consequences (Gen. 3:16–19). For the woman, God pronounced a curse that included multiplied pain in childbirth and tension in the authority-submission relationship of husband and wife. Genesis 3:16 says the woman's "desire" will be for her husband but he shall "rule" over her. In Genesis 4:7 the author uses the same word "desire" to mean "excessive control over." Thus, the curse in Genesis 3:16 refers to a new desire on the part of the woman to exercise control over her husband—but he will in fact oppressively rule and exert authority over her. The result of the Fall on marriage through history has been an ongoing struggle between the sexes, with women seeking control and men seeking dominance.

Throughout the Old Testament, women were active in the religious life of Israel, but generally they were not leaders. Women like Deborah (Judges 4) were clearly the exception and not the rule. There was no woman with an ongoing prophetic ministry. No woman was a priest. No queen ever ruled Israel. No woman wrote an Old Testament (or New Testament) book. Isaiah 3:12 indicates that God allowed women to rule as part of His judgment on the sinning nation.

Jesus and Women

In the midst of the Greek, Roman, and Jewish cultures, which viewed women almost on the level of possessions, Jesus showed love and respect for women. Though Jewish rabbis did not teach women and the Jewish Talmud said it was better to burn the Torah than to teach it to a woman, Jesus never took the position that women, by their very nature, could not understand spiritual or theological truth. He not only included them in His audiences but also used illustrations and images that would be familiar to them (Matt. 13:33; 22:1–2; 24:41; Luke 15:8–10) and specifically applied His teaching to them (Matt. 10:34ff.). To the Samaritan woman at the well (John 4), He revealed that He was the Messiah and discussed with her

topics such as eternal life and the nature of true worship. He also taught Mary and, when admonished by Martha, pointed out the priority of learning spiritual truth even over “womanly” responsibilities like serving guests in one’s home (Luke 10:38).

Although men in Jesus’ day normally would not allow women to count change into their hands for fear of physical contact, Jesus touched women to heal them and allowed women to touch Him (Luke 13:10ff.; Mark 5:25ff.). Jesus even allowed a small group of women to travel with Him and His disciples (Luke 8:1–3), an unprecedented happening at that time. After His resurrection, Jesus appeared first to Mary Magdalene and sent her to announce His resurrection to the disciples (John 20:1–18), despite the fact that women were not allowed to be witnesses in Jewish courts because they were considered liars.

The Epistles and Women

In the Epistles, the two principles of equality and submission for women exist side by side. Galatians 3:28 points to the equality, indicating that the way of salvation is the same for both men and women and that they are members of equal standing in the body of Christ. It does not, however, eradicate all differences in responsibilities for men and women, for this passage does not cover every aspect of God’s design for male and female. In addition, there are many other passages that make distinctions between what God desires of men and what He desires of women, especially within family and within the church.

The Family

While Christian marriage is to involve mutual love and submission between two believers (Eph. 5:21), four passages in the New Testament expressly give to wives the responsibility to submit to their husbands (Eph. 5:22; Col. 3:18; Titus 2:5; 1 Pet. 3:1). This voluntary submission of one equal to another is an expression of love for God and a desire to follow His design as revealed in His Word. It is never pictured as demeaning or in any way diminishing the wife’s equality. Rather the husband is called to love his wife sacrificially as Christ loved the church (Eph. 5:25) and to serve as the leader in a relationship of two equals.

While husbands and fathers have been given the primary responsibility for the leadership of their children (Eph. 6:4; Col. 3:21; 1 Tim. 3:4–5), wives and mothers are urged to be “workers at home” (Titus 2:5), meaning managers of the household. Their home and their children are to be their priority, in contrast to the world’s emphasis today on careers and fulltime jobs for women outside the home.

The Church

From the very beginning, women fulfilled a vital role in the Christian church (Acts 1:12–14; 9:36–42; 16:13–15; 17:1–4, 10–12; 18:1–2, 18, 24–28; Rom. 16; 1 Cor. 16:19; 2 Tim. 1:5; 4:19), but not one of leadership. The apostles were all men; the chief missionary activity was

done by men; the writing of the New Testament was the work of men; and leadership in the churches was entrusted to men.

Although the Apostle Paul respected women and worked side by side with them for the furtherance of the gospel (Rom. 16; Phil. 4:3), he appointed no female elders or pastors. In his letters, he urged that men were to be the leaders in the church and that women were not to teach or exercise authority over men (1 Tim. 2:12). Therefore, although women are spiritual equals with men and the ministry of women is essential to the body of Christ, women are excluded from leadership over men in the church.

Men and women stand as equals before God, both bearing the image of God Himself. However, without making one inferior to the other, God calls upon both men and women to fulfill the roles and responsibilities specifically designed for them, a pattern that can be seen even in the Godhead (1 Cor. 11:3). In fulfilling the divinely given roles taught in the New Testament, women are able to realize their full potential because they are following the plan of their own Creator and Designer. Only in obedience to Him and His design will women truly be able, in the fullest sense, to give glory to God.

ARTICLE VIII: OTHER COUNCILS AND COMMITTEES

SECTION 1 – COUNCILS AND COMMITTEES: To enable efficient handling of Board matters, the Board may appoint various Councils and Committees from within its membership, the staff and from the Church at large. These Councils and Committees shall perform tasks solely in accordance with the duties and with powers specifically delegated by the Board. The general functions of the Councils and Committees are:

- (a) To bring considered recommendations to the Board concerning ministries.
- (b) To provide a wider base of counsel to the Elders having the oversight of specific Ministries.

All Councils and Committees shall exist for the period specified by the Board.

SECTION 2 – DEACONS: The Deacons shall consist of members possessing the qualifications described in 1 Timothy 3:8-13 and shall be elected at the monthly business meeting or a special meeting for this purpose. The Deacons shall assist the Elders in the shepherding of the saints, assist the Pastor-Teacher at the communion and baptismal services, aid in the general spiritual care of the church, and perform other duties as assigned by the Board of Elders. A Deacon shall be a man of dignity, not double-tongued, not addicted to much wine, not fond of sordid gain, holding to the mystery of the Faith with a clear conscience, first tested and found beyond reproach.

SECTION 3 – USHERS: The Ushers shall consist of members to be elected at the monthly business meeting or a special meeting for this purpose for a term of one (1) year. They shall act as church ushers, greeters at the doors, church collectors and assist the Pastor-Teacher in the services in such matters he deems necessary. They shall also be responsible for the safety and security of all church property during the services. An Usher shall meet the qualifications enumerated for a Deacon.

SECTION 4 – REMOVAL FROM OFFICE: Any Deacon or Usher may be removed from office if he becomes physically incapacitated, spiritually unqualified, or his inability to serve is established with the Board of Elders.

ARTICLE IX: ORDINATION, LICENSING AND COMMISSIONING

SECTION 1 – ORDINATION: Ordination refers to the unanimous recognition by the Board of Elders of a man's call to the ministry, preparation as a Shepherd and qualification to serve. Ordination shall be conferred for life, so long as the man continues to manifest the qualifications of the office.

SECTION 2 – LICENSING: The license is issued by the Board of Elders and is given in recognition of a man's call to that ministry. Its aim is to allow a man to perform the ecclesiastical duties and functions of the church. Licenses will be evaluated and issued on a yearly basis.

SECTION 3 – COMMISSIONING: When local church certification is required for ministry where ordination would be unnecessary or inappropriate, a person is commissioned by the Board of Elders to minister. This authorization continues as long as the opportunity to minister remains in effect.

ARTICLE X: MONTHLY AND SPECIAL BUSINESS MEETINGS

SECTION 1 – MONTHLY BUSINESS MEETINGS: The monthly business meeting of the church shall be held the second Sunday of each month. Notice of the time and place of the meeting, as determined by the Board of Elders, shall be given from the pulpit by the Pastor-Teacher for two successive Sundays prior to the meeting. In addition thereto, notice shall be published in the regular church bulletin for two successive Sundays prior to such meeting.

SECTION 2 – SPECIAL BUSINESS MEETINGS:

(a) Special business meetings may be called by the Pastor-Teacher or by the Chairman of the Board of Elders or by a quorum of the members of the Board of Elders.

(b) Notice of such meetings shall be given from the pulpit by the Pastor-Teacher at least seven (7) days prior to the meeting and shall also be published (7) days prior to the meeting and shall also be published in the regular church bulletin on the Sunday immediately preceding the meeting. The notice shall specify the date, time and place and the general nature of the business to be transacted.

SECTION 3 – QUORUM: All members present at a monthly business meeting or special meeting shall constitute a quorum.

ARTICLE XI: ELECTIONS

SECTION 1 – TIME: The appointment of the Elders, Deacons, and Ushers of this church enumerated in Articles VII and VIII of these By-Laws shall be at the monthly business Meeting.

SECTION 2 – NOMINATIONS: The Board of Elders shall appoint a Nominating Committee of not less than three (3) active members of the church. The Board shall designate a Chairman.

Nominations shall be submitted by the congregation to the Committee. The Committee shall review all nominations and determine each nominee's qualification. A proposed slate of nominees shall be submitted to the Board of Elders for their consideration and review. Members of the Nominating Committee may be nominees, but no Committee member shall nominate himself for any office. The Secretary of the Board of Elders shall supply and publicly post the list of nominees for each office in alphabetical order at least three (3) weeks prior to the monthly meeting. After the list has been posted and not less than seven (7) days before the monthly meeting, any member may submit any additional nominations to the Board of Elders for their consideration.

SECTION 3 – INTERIM VACANCIES: In the event that any of the offices becomes vacant during the interim between the monthly business meetings, the Board of Elders shall fill such vacancies which may exist in the church.

ARTICLE XII: THE PASTOR-TEACHER

Ephesians 4:11 says that Jesus gave some men to be "pastors and teachers." This is one

office in the church. It should be translated “pastor-teachers” which emphasizes teaching as his primary ministry. At Eastport Baptist Church, though all pastors are pastor-teachers, we recognize the Senior Pastor as The Pastor-Teacher who shall officiate all services, business meetings and ordinances. He shall be selected according to Article XIII, Section 1.

ARTICLE XIII: ALL PASTORS

All pastors are a gift from Jesus to the Church (Eph.4:8) who teach (Eph.4:11) and equip the saints for the work of the ministry (Eph.4:12).

SECTION 1 – ELECTION: All Pastors must be men who are gifted as teacher (Eph. 4:11; 1 Tim 3:2). They shall be selected by the Board of Elders. They shall remain in office for an indefinite period of time subject to the following reservations:

(a) The Board of Elders reserve the right to dismiss any Pastor upon giving him one month’s written notice of its intent to dismiss.

(b) The Pastor must give one month’s notices if he intends to resign

(c) The time limit of any Pastor’s resignation or dismissal is subject to a lesser time if both the Pastor and the Board of Elders by mutual agreement provide otherwise.

ARTICLE XIV: SETTLEMENT OF DISPUTES

In any dispute arising between church members, pastors, or staff pertaining to any matters of spiritual teaching or practices, church finances. Or title to property purchased with church contributions, the dispute shall be resolved by the Board of Elders of the church. A decision shall be reached after prayerful consideration in the spirit of humility, with each Elder regarding one another before himself.

ARTICLE XV: AMENDMENTS

These By-laws may be changed by a unanimous vote of the Board of Elders and the members of Eastport at a monthly or special meeting for that purpose. New and additional By-laws may be adopted from time to time at any time by the Board of Elders.

Whenever an amendment or new By-law is adopted, it shall be filed in the book of minutes with the original By-laws.¹

¹ Eastport Baptist Church BYLAWS, 5/2020.