CONSTITUTION



April 21, 2024

5036 W. Dobbins Rd. Laveen, AZ 85339

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PREAMBLE TO THE CONSTITUTION

Laveen Baptist Church (hereinafter "LBC") endeavors to be a church of the Lord Jesus Christ as described, established, and mandated by the New Testament. This Constitution provides general guidance to LBC on governance and operation, whose ultimate authority is God's word, the Bible, to be used when a conflict or ambiguity exists concerning this Constitution.

The New Testament teaches that church leadership authority is not granted to one individual pastor, nor is it given as democratic rule by the members. Instead, Scripture states leadership authority is conducted by a plurality of leaders who are appointed by the church and accountable to God, given both the responsibility and authority over the flock to lead skillfully and lovingly; feed the flock through accurate and insightful teaching of Scripture; care for the flock in love, concern, prayers, ministry, and have adept management of church resources; and protect the flock from harmful influences and beliefs.

These leaders are known by three titles, each of which reveals a separate aspect of their function: elder, overseer, and shepherd used in 1 Peter 5:1-2; "Therefore, I exhort the elders 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 the flock of God among you, exercising oversight not under compulsion, but voluntarily, according to the will of God; and not for sordid gain, but with eagerness;"

An elder (Greek "presbuteros") is a godly leader whose wisdom and maturity are respected by God's people. An overseer (Greek "episcopes") gives oversight and is a good manager of resources and guardian of people. A shepherd, which translates as "pastors", (Greek "poi-main") refers to the role of caring for and leading the flock.

Scripture teaches that when the elders are supported by the church, both church members and individuals within the Christian faith flourish (Heb. 13:17; 1 Thess. 5:12-13; 1 Pet. 5:1-5; Acts 20:28). Elders do not form a separate "clergy class" of Christians. Instead, the Elders, some of whom fill church vocational roles and other non-vocational roles, are brothers with the people, always seeking God's best for the members of the church (Acts 14:23; Titus 1:5; 2 Cor. 8:19).

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TERMS AND DEFINITIONS

DEACON SERVANT TEAM is defined as the team of servants set aside as defined in Acts 6:1-6. The role of deacons is to assist and serve the needs of the congregation.

ELDER EXAMINATION TEAM is defined as a temporary team established to verify and vet if each MAN, who submits his name, is eligible and called by God to serve as an Elder per the requirements in this document.

ELDER TEAM will be defined as the MEN meeting all the qualifications outlined in this document associated with this role, confirmed by the congregation, who will serve for a period of time as a plurality of leaders for LBC.

LBC will be defined as Laveen Baptist Church as detailed in ARTICLE I, IDENTIFICATION

LEADERSHIP TEAM is defined as a team that only exists temporarily to help establish this Constitution and will dissolve once this Constitution is fully in force.

MEN or MAN will be defined based on Genesis 5:2 as a biological male from birth and who also identifies as a heterosexual male.

WOMEN or WOMAN will be defined based on Genesis 5:2 as a biological female from birth and who also identifies as a heterosexual female.

MISSIONS TEAM is defined as the individuals who are nominated and affirmed to manage mission funds and mission projects of the church.

PASTOR is defined as a title reserved for a MAN affirmed by the congregation for the role of elder/overseer/shepherd of the congregation. This title should not be given out lightly and only with much care and consideration of its meaning and implications.

QUALIFIED CHURCH MEMBER is defined as an individual who has been received as a member as outlined below, is at least 18 years of age, and is not in the process of church discipline. This term is used primarily in reference to voting and meeting quorums.

SENIOR PASTOR is defined as the lead PASTOR and/or primary shepherd to the congregation, and the individual in charge of doing most of the preaching before the congregation, as well as the point of contact from the ELDER TEAM to the STAFF TEAM.

SPECIAL TEAM is defined as a team established with a specific purpose and is dissolved by a determination of the ELDER TEAM or when its specific purpose is completed.

STAFF TEAM is defined as the team of individuals who are on the payroll of LBC.

STANDING TEAM is defined as a team established by this Constitution which cannot be changed without an amendment to this Constitution.

STEWARDSHIP TEAM is defined as the team that provides support and a check and balance as delegated by the Elders in matters of church finance and buildings and grounds maintenance.

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ARTICLE I, IDENTIFICATION

Section 1. NAME

The name of the corporation is Laveen Baptist Church (hereinafter "LBC"), operating as a non-profit.

Section 2. PRINCIPAL OFFICE

LBC's principal office shall be located in Laveen Arizona.

Section 3. CONSTITUTIONAL AUTHORITY

As per Article VII of the Laveen Baptist Church Articles of Incorporation dated the 19th day of December 1960, we the members hereby adopt a Constitution as our supreme governing document, second only to the Bible as referenced in our preamble. This document can only be modified by the members as described in ARTICLE IX, AMENDMENTS. While this document will be ratified by the congregation first, its effects will not occur until the ELDER and STEWARDSHIP TEAMS are affirmed by the congregation. The ELDER TEAM will be required to review this Constitution quarterly within the first year of ratification and annually thereafter to assess its governing effectiveness and make recommendations for improvement and clarification to the congregation for consideration and affirmation.

Section 4. AFFILIATION

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The Bible teaches that local churches should seek voluntary fellowship with other doctrinally sound churches. This association is to provide help and encouragement while working together as the Lord directs. This is a voluntary association that in no way involves the surrender of the individual church's freedom or dependence upon God.

Laveen Baptist Church has chosen to affiliate itself with the Southern Baptist Convention. We continue this association, believing that it is God's will to do so. Fundamental to this affiliation is the understanding that the Southern Baptist Convention is a fellowship of autonomous, biblically sound churches that choose to work together to further God's Kingdom. This affiliation is maintained by voluntary contributions to local, state, national, and foreign mission projects. Support may also be provided by sending messengers to the annual convention for voting on doctrinal, ethical, and procedural positions. Members of Laveen Baptist Church may desire to become personally involved in Southern Baptist evangelism, education, and mission work.

Through the years, Laveen Baptist Church has also associated with other Christian ministries. All of our affiliations are to be with churches and organizations that are biblically sound in doctrine and practice.

ARTICLE II, MEMBERSHIP

Section 1. CHURCH MEMBERSHIP DEFINED

Church membership is a commitment to actively function as an appendage of this local body of Christ, rather than merely affiliating with an organization. (Rom. 12:3-21; 1 Cor. 12).

It shall be the policy of this church to hold the scriptural right to exclude from its fellowship any member who holds to heretical doctrines or lives inconsistently with the Christian profession or in violation of its Constitution.

Section 2. RECEIVING MEMBERS

Membership in LBC shall be open to any person who professes faith in the Lord Jesus Christ as Savior, has received scriptural baptism (immersion), and is in harmony with its doctrines and practices. Membership may be requested by an individual in consultation with an Elder or those the Elders designate. The ELDER TEAM, or their designees, will interview all persons making application for church membership. Membership will be granted to anyone who meets the criteria below and is affirmed by a church vote in any regular service or church meeting. This will place them onto the church membership role.

- A. **By Baptism:** All applications for membership in Laveen Baptist Church shall give a statement of their experience of Grace, and if it is the judgment of the church that they have "passed from death to life," they shall be voted on in any of the regular services of the church.
- B. **By Letter:** All applications for membership in Laveen Baptist Church by letter from sister churches, churches of like faith and order, will be received and voted on at any regular services of the church, and letters must contain satisfactory evidence of Christian character and church standing.
- C. **By Statement:** All applications for membership in Laveen Baptist Church by statement will be voted on and received after the applicant has made clear to the church their reason for not being able to obtain a letter. They will give a testimony of faith and baptism.

Section 3. RESPONSIBILITIES OF MEMBERS

It shall be the duty of every member to be faithful in their services to God, in the attendance of church services, in the protection and preservation of the body of Christ from false teachers and false doctrine, in giving regularly and systematically to its support, and in sharing in its organized work.

- A. **Personal Holiness:** To bring to LBC a submitted and Spirit-filled life. Our relationship with the Lord is the source of everything we have to offer one another. It is impossible to help others improve their relationship with God, or others, apart from God working in us. (John 15:5)
- B. Christian Relationships: To pursue godly relationships within LBC. The Bible teaches that the Church is the Body of Christ in the world. We are appendages, members, of that Body. Each part of the Body must pursue healthy relationships, respecting and caring for the other parts of the Body. (Rom. 12; 1 Cor. 12; 2 Cor. 1:12)
- C. **The Investment of Life:** To seek to serve more than be served. We live in a society that encourages self-centeredness. As the people of God, we are called to give our time, talents, spiritual gifts, and financial resources in service to others. (Mark 10:35-45; John 13:12-15; 1 Cor. 12; Rom. 12:3-21; 2 Cor. 4:5)

Section 4. PRIVILEGES OF MEMBERS

That all members of Laveen Baptist Church in regular and just standing shall have equal rights with every other member unless specifically stated elsewhere in this Constitution.

A. **Once accepted:** the name of the new member shall be added to the LBC roll and publicized to the membership of LBC.

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- B. **Decision Making:** must be a QUALIFIED CHURCH MEMBER and in attendance at meetings, having one vote when deciding on matters before the congregation.
- C. **Office Holding:** Every QUALIFIED CHURCH MEMBER is eligible for consideration as a candidate for offices in LBC, subject to scriptural qualifications. (Acts 6:1-7; Eph. 4:11; 1 Tim. 3)
- D. **Interest in LBC Property:** Members of LBC have no rights to any property or assets of any kind of LBC and, upon termination of membership, or dissolution of LBC, shall not be entitled to any interest in LBC's assets, including anything of monetary value.
- E. Letters of Transfer: LBC grants letters of transfer to active members when the request for a letter comes from a sister church. LBC does not grant letters of transfer to non-SBC churches; each member is entitled to a letter of statement as to their standing and Christian character at any time.

Section 5. DISCIPLINE OF MEMBERS

- A. **Purpose.** The purpose of church discipline is to glorify God by maintaining purity in the church (1 Cor. 5:6), protecting believers by deterring sin (1Tim. 5:20), and promoting the spiritual welfare of the offending believer by calling them to return to biblical standards of doctrine and conduct. (Gal. 6:1)
- B. **Process.** Members and all other professing Christians who regularly attend or fellowship at LBC who err in biblical doctrine or conduct shall be subject to discipline according to Matthew 18:15-18.
- C. **Reinstatement.** If a disfellowshipped member heeds the warning, demonstrates repentance, and requests reinstatement, they shall be publicly restored to the membership through the affirmation of the ELDER TEAM and the congregation of LBC.

Section 6. CHANGE OF MEMBERSHIP

Membership at LBC shall be changed at the death of the person, transfer of the person to another church, at the written request of the person, by the ELDER TEAM as described below, or as a result of disfellowship of the person (Article II, Section 5) (1 Cor. 5:12). A change in membership for the reasons stated results in the loss of church membership privileges.

- A. The ELDER TEAM may consider changing a person's membership when, after one year, the person has not participated in the church by demonstrating any interest in attending, support in any manner, and by communication in person or writing. The change in membership will be made within the guidelines for reporting purposes.
- B. Any person may have their membership restored by demonstrating a renewed interest and participation in the church as affirmed by the ELDER TEAM and by a church vote in any regular service or church meeting.

ARTICLE III, ELDER TEAM

Section 1. GENERAL SCOPE OF ELDERS

LBC seeks to be a New Testament church committed to the teachings of the Bible. No other authority or tradition is to guide the means, faith, or structure of the Lord Jesus Christ's Church. The administrative and pastoral structure for a New Testament church is to utilize a plurality of leadership. LBC will follow this scriptural example. To achieve this New Testament model, LBC requires qualified MEN to serve as Elders on an ELDER TEAM for a term of time; after review, examination, and appointment, as noted below hereof. These MEN must meet specific moral and spiritual characteristics before they serve (1 Tim. 3:1-7 and 1 Tim 2:12). They must be publicly installed into office (Acts 14:23). They must be motivated and empowered by the Holy Spirit to do their work (Acts 20:28). To effectively perform their duties the ELDER TEAM needs the prayers, the support (1 Tim. 5:17-18), and the assent of members of LBC (Heb. 13:17). LBC is called upon to honor their ELDER TEAM and to protect them against false accusations (1 Tim. 5:19).

Section 2. RESPONSIBILITIES OF ELDERS

- A. **Feed** the flock (1 Tim. 3:2; 5:17; 1 Thess. 5:12; Titus 1:9),
- B. **Provide leadership** to the flock (Acts 20:28; 1 Thess. 5:12; Heb. 13:17) in practical matters (Acts 6:1-6; 11:29-30), in matters of doctrine (Acts 15; 16:4), and in matters of discipline and character (Heb. 13:17). They are to be role models in their faith and conduct, leading by example and encouraging others to grow in their relationship with God.
- C. **Lovingly** care for the flock (James 5:14-15; Acts 20:35; Heb. 13:17); This involves counseling, praying for and with members, providing comfort in times of need, and offering guidance in personal and spiritual matters.
- D. **Protect** the flock (1 Pet. 5:2-3; Acts 20:28), especially from false teachers and/or teachings.
- E. May be involved in the **teaching** and **preaching** of the Word of God during worship services, Bible studies, and other gatherings, and ensuring biblical truths are taught accurately and applied effectively.
- F. Meet with staff, ministries, or team leaders regularly regarding their activity and effectiveness by providing training, development, and mentorship.

Section 3. CHARACTERISTICS OF ELDERS

Each Elder must have a "calling" from God to this office. The biblical characteristics of an Elder are: (1 Tim. 3:1-7 and Titus 1:6-9).

- A. Blameless as a steward of God; above reproach (1 Tim. 3:2; Titus 1:6-7).
- B. Husband of one wife, a one-woman MAN (1 Tim. 3:2; Titus 1:6).
- C. Temperate, sober, vigilant (1 Tim. 3:2).
- D. Sober-minded, prudent (1 Tim. 3:2: Titus 1:8).
- E. Of good behavior, orderly, respectable (1 Tim. 3:2).
- F. Given to hospitality (1 Tim. 3:2; Titus 1:8).
- G. Able to teach; he can exhort believers and refute false teaching. Able to communicate and explain the scriptures to others. (1 Tim. 3:2; Titus 1:9).
- H. Not given too much wine (1 Tim. 3:3; Titus 1:7).
- I. Not violent, not pugnacious (1 Tim. 3:3; Titus 1:7).
- J. Patient, moderate, forbearing, gentle (1 Tim. 3:3).
- K. Not a brawler, uncontentious, not soon angry or quick-tempered (1 Tim. 3:3; Titus 1:7).
- L. Not covetous, not a lover of money, not greedy of base gain (1 Tim. 3:3; Titus 1:7).
- M. Manages his own house well. His children are faithful, not accused of rebellion against God (1 Tim. 3:4; Titus 1:7).

- N. Not a novice, not a new convert, rather a believer whose life demonstrably shows maturity and faith to include, but is not limited to, active church participation and tithing. (1 Tim. 3:6).
- O. Has a good report or reputation with people outside the church (1 Tim. 3:7).
- P. Not self-willed (Titus 1:7).
- Q. Lover of what is good (Titus 1:8).
- R. Just, fair (Titus 1:8).
- S. Holy, devout (Titus 1:8); and,
- T. Self-controlled (Titus 1:8).

Section 4. NUMBER OF ELDERS

As God calls MEN to serve in this office of Elder, they shall be considered, examined, and utilized in service. While the Bible does not instruct as to the number of Elders a church should have, it is recognized that there must be a plurality.

A. LBC's first initial ELDER TEAM shall be comprised of six MEN, one of which shall be the SENIOR PASTOR. There shall always be a minimum of three Elders for the ELDER TEAM to operate and align with the LBC Articles of Incorporation. The minimum of three Elders cannot include the SENIOR PASTOR. Less than the required three Elders, excluding the SENIOR PASTOR, will trigger ARTICLE III, ELDER TEAM, Section 7.

Section 5. SELECTION OF ELDERS

The ELDER TEAM shall seek the Lord's leadership regarding the number of Elders needed to minister at LBC. A determination of the need for additional Elders should be based upon the work of God in the LBC family and the availability of those with a God-given call and desire to serve as an Elder.

- A. MEN who aspire to be Elders, due to the calling of God (1 Tim. 3:1), should express that desire to an Elder or the LEADERSHIP TEAM.
- B. A potential Elder will be examined by the ELDER TEAM to discover his calling and qualifications (ARTICLE III, ELDER TEAM, Section 3). If the ELDER TEAM and the MAN, in search of God's will for his life in this matter, are of like mind as to his calling, the ELDER TEAM shall recommend him to the LBC members to be voted and affirmed as an Elder. The appointment of a MAN to serve as an Elder is a solemn and serious matter (1 Tim. 5:21-22). Therefore, the ELDER TEAM shall earnestly, without any haste, bias, or partiality, seek God's will concerning the potential Elder's appointment to the ELDER TEAM.
- C. In a meeting of LBC (Article VI, Meetings, Section 2), the ELDER TEAM shall recommend the potential Elder(s) to LBC. A minimum three-fourths (75%) vote of the Qualified Church Members, by secret ballot, in attendance is required for affirmation of the recommendation. (1 Tim. 5:21, 22, 24, 25)
- D. Any staff with an official job title that includes Pastor, Elder, or Overseer is by biblical definition an Elder. Those with titles of Minister, Director, Leader, or other such titles will not be recognized as Elders. When it comes to the ELDER TEAM no more than one-third (1/3) of the seats held on the ELDER TEAM can be filled with staff (it can be less). For example: a six-person ELDER TEAM could have the SENIOR PASTOR and just one other staff Pastor on the team. The other four or five positions would have to be filled with qualified Elders from the church members who are not staff. Other than the SENIOR PASTOR who already requires a member to vote for his position, all other staff, regardless of title, are still required to go through the Elder selection process.

Section 6. TERMS OF SERVICE OF ELDERS

A. On the initial establishment of the ELDER TEAM; one-third shall be elected to a two-year term, one-third shall be elected for a three-year term, and one-third shall be elected for a four-year term. When their term ends, the Elder must rotate off the ELDER TEAM for a minimum of one year.

- B. After the terms of the initial Elders' end, all Elders may serve on the ELDER TEAM for no more than 3 years before rotating off.
- C. The ELDER TEAM can request an Elder be extended another year if the ELDER TEAM deems it necessary, but then the extended Elder must rotate off. At a minimum, the rotated Elder must stay off the ELDER TEAM for a year.
- D. If the ELDER TEAM desires to reactivate an Elder to the ELDER TEAM after a year, an affirmative vote is again required (ARTICLE VI, Meetings, Section 7).
- E. The SENIOR PASTOR's term on the ELDER TEAM includes his entire term of employment as SENIOR PASTOR.
- F. All team terms align with a calendar year. If the initial Constitution of the ELDER TEAM happens before July 1st, the year in which they are affirmed will count as their first full year, otherwise, the remaining time in the year will not count toward their term.
- G. When filling the vacancy of an Elder before the Elder's term expires, the MAN chosen will assume the remaining term of service and is eligible to be chosen to serve again if the remaining term of service is one year or less.

Section 7. INITIAL ELDERS OR RECONSTITUTION OF ELDER TEAM

A. ELDER EXAMINATION TEAM

- I. A LEADERSHIP TEAM consisting of the Deacons, Pastoral staff, and Trustees (Trustees only apply to the initial creation of the ELDER TEAM) shall recommend for affirmation to LBC a six-member ELDER EXAMINATION TEAM who are in good standing to seek the Lord's leadership in vetting the individuals that express God is calling them to be Elders.
- II. Any QUALIFIED CHURCH MEMBER or member of the LEADERSHIP TEAM not in conflict, as stated below in sections "IV" and "V", are eligible to serve on the ELDER EXAMINATION TEAM.
- III. One member of the ELDER EXAMINATION TEAM shall be the SENIOR PASTOR. In the absence of a SENIOR PASTOR, the LEADERSHIP TEAM will select a qualifying person to fill this position.
- IV. No man expressing an interest in being an Elder, or their family member, or anyone that may have a conflict of interest may be selected for the ELDER EXAMINATION TEAM.
- V. Those on the ELDER EXAMINATION TEAM or with a Family member on the ELDER EXAMINATION TEAM are NOT eligible to be considered as an Elder.
- VI. This team will review scriptural teachings about church Elders and prayerfully verify if each MAN is eligible for the initial or reconstituted ELDER TEAM, (ARITICLE III, ELDER TEAM, Section 3).
- VII. The individuals expressing a calling and being reviewed by the ELDER EXAMINATION TEAM will be shared with the LBC Church Family.

B. Elder Candidates

- I. A time will be communicated to the members for individuals who feel called by God to be an Elder on the ELDER TEAM to make their calling known to the LEADERSHIP TEAM. If a member of the church feels they would like someone to be an Elder, encourage them to pray to see if God is calling them to be an Elder, and then the called individual can make their calling known to the LEADERSHIP TEAM.
- II. The number of Elders being sought for the ELDER TEAM will be set by the ELDER TEAM based on the needs of the members at that time.
- III. LBC's first initial ELDER TEAM shall be comprised of six Men. Five elected by the LBC members and the LBC SENIOR PASTOR. In the absence of a SENIOR PASTOR, the lottery (ARTICLE III, ELDER TEAM, Section 7.C.V) will be used to fill this role on an interim basis.

- C. Selection and Election of Elder Candidates
 - I. All MEN that pass the vetting of the ELDER EXAMINATION TEAM with a minimum three-fourths (75%) agreement of the team shall be presented to the church for a vote.
 - II. An Elder candidate not passing the vetting shall receive confidential feedback from the ELDER EXAMINATION TEAM as to the reason(s) their candidacy did not move forward. Feedback must be based on the characteristic criteria listed in Article III, ELDER TEAM, Section 3, along with recommendations to the candidate in meeting these characteristics for potential future Elder consideration.
 - III. A meeting called for the election of Elder candidates shall be called per ARTICLE VI, MEETINGS, Section 1.
 - IV. A minimum of three-fourths (75%) affirmative vote, by secret ballot, of the QUALIFIED CHURCH MEMBERS attending is required to move forward each Elder candidate.
 - V. Any Elder candidate receiving at least three-fourths (75%) affirmative vote shall be placed into a selection lottery for all open-term positions, including a possible temporary interim for the SENIOR PASTOR spot, if needed. Those not chosen through the lottery may re-enter the vetting process for the next terms of service.
 - VI. After ordination, all elected Elders (ARTICLE III, ELDER TEAM, Section 10), along with the SENIOR PASTOR, shall form the ELDER TEAM. The LEADERSHIP TEAM and ELDER EXAMINATION TEAMS will be immediately dissolved, and the ELDER TEAM shall begin and carry out the duties and responsibilities as defined within this Constitution and bylaws.

Section 8. AUTHORITY OF ELDERS

As listed below, the ELDER TEAM shall have the authority and responsibility to oversee the spiritual and administrative activities of LBC, unless otherwise reserved to the LBC members elsewhere in this Constitution:

- A. Setting the church's vision and direction.
- B. Establish and administer the policies, procedures, and practices of the church.
- C. Participate in church discipline of an unrepentant member, which is a serious matter requiring collective discernment of the ELDER TEAM. In cases where spiritual discipline must be presented to the members, there must be a prior vote of the ELDER TEAM.
- D. Each Elder on the ELDER TEAM will have one vote that cannot be assigned to another Elder, person, or group to act on their behalf. Matters voted on shall be affirmed when a majority vote of the ELDER TEAM is reached. No one Elder is vested with the authority to act alone without the approval of the ELDER TEAM.
- E. All agents, positions, employees, teams, and ministries of LBC:
 - I. Administer, create, reconstitute, or dissolve any church position, ministry, or team, excluding the position of SENIOR PASTOR or any STANDING TEAM.
 - II. Establish and administer the terms of service and amounts of compensation and/or benefits.
 - III. Ensure that any person receiving compensation directly or indirectly from LBC shall not be in a position to determine the nature or amount of such compensation or remuneration.
 - IV. Replace from their position, anyone not performing their intended purpose, not adhering to spiritual doctrine, or not acting in the best interest of the LBC. For removing the SENIOR PASTOR from his position see ARTICLE III, ELDER TEAM, Section 11 and for filling positions on a STANDING TEAM see, ARTICLE IV, MINISTRY TEAMS and ARTICLE VI, MEETINGS, Section 7.

- F. Church property and finances:
 - I. Exercise fiduciary responsibility and oversight regarding the receipt, access, disbursement, use, preservation, maintenance, retention, and security of church property, assets, monies, trusts, endowments, and records.
 - a. These records may be real, intellectual, or in physical or digital form, including those posted on social media.
 - b. Elders who are pastors or staff members are not permitted to have direct access to money and are not permitted to sign checks.
 - II. Act on behalf of the members to borrow money; incur indebtedness of any kind; request, award, or cancel any contract for the church (ARTICLE VI, MEETINGS, Section 7.)
 - III. Propose and administer the financial budget of the church in collaboration with the STEWARDSHIP TEAM.
 - IV. When an individual, not on the ELDER TEAM, is approached regarding a matter within the purview of the ELDER TEAM, the individual shall refer the matter in its entirety to the ELDER TEAM for them to address.
 - V. The ELDER TEAM within the first year of ratification of this Constitution, will provide the congregation, every quarter, a verbal report regarding the effectiveness of the governance of this Constitution and, if needed, recommend improvements to the congregation for its consideration and affirmation. At least annually afterward, the ELDER TEAM will provide the congregation a verbal report on the state of the church, including the effectiveness of this Constitution with any recommended improvements and any other items requiring the consideration and affirmation of the congregation.
 - VI. The ELDER TEAM may need to perform other activities not listed in this Constitution to successfully serve the church.

Section 9. TRAINING AND EDUCATION OF ELDERS

There are no specific requirements for formal training or education to be an Elder. Becoming an Elder is a matter of God's preparation of the MAN and His call to the place of service.

Section 10. ORDINATION OF ELDERS

Elder candidates, who have been affirmed but have not previously been ordained in a Southern Baptist Church, shall be ordained (set apart for service, see Exodus 29:9), by the ELDER TEAM in the presence of the church members.

Section 11. DISCIPLINE AND REMOVAL OF ELDERS

- A. Any Elder, including the SENIOR PASTOR, may have their term of service ended by resignation, becoming incapacitated, being found spiritually unqualified, or exhibiting the inability to serve. This is established with a minimum three-fourths (75%) affirmative vote of the ELDER TEAM. The removal of the SENIOR PASTOR requires, in addition to the ELDER TEAM vote, a minimum simple majority (51%) affirmative vote by secret ballot of QUALIFIED CHURCH MEMBERS (See ARTICLE VI, MEETINGS, Section 7).
- B. The inability to serve must be clear and concise and not established based on personal bias or prejudice by any member of the ELDER TEAM.
- C. LBC has the right to rebuke or remove an Elder due to a continued lack of repentance in their life, based upon the procedure established in 1 Tim. 5:19-20. If an Elder falls into unrepentance, he must be publicly rebuked (1 Tim. 5:20).
- D. LBC reserves the right to remove any member(s) of the ELDER TEAM, in a Meeting (ARTICLE VI, MEETINGS, Section 7), with a minimum three-fourths (75%) affirmative vote by secret ballot.

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Section 12. MEETINGS AND ORGANIZATION OF ELDERS

- A. The ELDER TEAM shall establish written policies and procedures for the conducting of their activities.
- B. Meetings (excluding executive sessions of sensitive or personal matters) shall have written, or otherwise recorded minutes of the matters considered. These minutes shall become a part of the permanent records of the ELDER TEAM.
- C. A meeting will have a quorum when a majority of the ELDER TEAM members are present.
- D. Meetings are open to the members for transparency. Closed meetings will occur for privacy reasons when the topic to be discussed is highly sensitive involving persons or matters of the church.

Section 13. TRUSTEES

- A. The ELDER TEAM shall function as officers of the corporation, as required by the Articles of Incorporation for LBC, in all legal matters of the church as its Trustees and shall be held harmless from such actions. LBC shall be primarily responsible for liability arising from such actions or inaction of the ELDER TEAM. Reasonable expenses to litigate or otherwise resolve issues arising from the ELDER TEAM's performance of its duties and responsibilities shall be paid by LBC. This same indemnification shall extend to all individuals performing within the scope of their duties and responsibilities for the benefit of LBC.
- B. A member of the STEWARDSHIP TEAM or the ELDER TEAM will need to be selected and filed as the LBC registered agent.

Section 14. CONFLICT OF INTEREST

An Elder cannot participate in any decision-making where a conflict of interest exists, real or perceived. All decisions must be made by prayer first and a clear conscience with no outside or undue influence from other person(s). The affected Elders are to be excluded from meetings on topics they may have an interest in and have no vote in the decision. The meeting quorum shall be established without their presence.

Section 15. DUPLICATION OF ROLL

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No individual can be an active member of more than one of the following, ELDER TEAM, DEACON SERVANT TEAM, or STEWARDSHIP TEAM. However, an Elder whose term has expired on the ELDER TEAM may be activated as a DEACON (or vice versa) but must be removed as an active DEACON if reaffirmed later to serve back on the ELDER TEAM. Likewise, the same removal from one to join the other applies to the STEWARDSHIP TEAM.

ARTICLE IV, MINISTRY TEAMS

Section 1. GENERAL

LBC is committed to effectively accomplishing its stated goals through the ministry of its members by organizing into "Teams" where God has called individuals to participate. Team members must be members of the church as outlined in ARTICLE II, MEMBERSHIP. Teams are not policy-setting entities, rather they are the "hands and feet" of the body of Christ carrying out the actions. LBC policies and procedures provide a framework within which teams successfully operate.

There are two types of teams:

- A. Standing Teams are established by this Constitution, and their existence and powers cannot be changed without amendment as outlined in ARTICLE IX, Amendments. The initial creation of the MISSIONS TEAM and DEACON SERVANT TEAM will continue with the same individuals in place before ratification. The MISSIONS TEAM members' remaining terms will be carried forward.
- B. Special Teams are for a specific purpose under the direction of the ELDER TEAM and are dissolved by a determination of the ELDER TEAM or when the special team completes its specific purpose (see Article III, section 8E). Team size and function shall meet the needs of its ministry.

Although Teams are acting on behalf of the ELDER TEAM and doing work delegated to them by the ELDER TEAM, all signatures on contracts, creating or dissolving relationships, or any other decisions that legally bind LBC must be done by the ELDER TEAM and cannot be delegated.

Section 2. STANDING TEAMS PURPOSE

There are four standing teams: the STEWARDSHIP TEAM, the MISSIONS TEAM, the STAFF TEAM, and the DEACON SERVANT TEAM.

A. STEWARDSHIP TEAM

The primary purpose of this team is to work under the leadership of the ELDER TEAM with a primary focus on monitoring the use of all LBC property both real, personal, and intellectual. This team will create a check and balance to ensure LBC is a good steward of all assets. (Proverbs 3:6, 9-10; 1Tim 6:17-19; Luke 12:42-44). The finance members of the STAFF TEAM will provide monthly financial reports and bank statements needed to fulfill this purpose and their access to all financial systems and reporting shall not be impeded in any way. If any areas of concern or irregularities arise that cannot be satisfactorily resolved by the ELDER TEAM, it will be this team's duty to bring the matter before the LBC body per ARTICLE VI, MEETINGS.

Additionally, their purpose includes:

- I. To help church members grow as Christian stewards by developing and recommending methods for using the appropriate channels of the church to introduce biblical stewardship concepts.
- II. Assisting the ELDER TEAM with proposing to LBC an annual budget.
- III. Take steps to ensure that sound procedures are used for receiving, accounting, safeguarding, and disbursing funds.
- IV. Establish a benevolence fund and work with the DEACON SERVANT TEAM to aid the members of LBC in need. The DEACON SERVANT TEAM along with the SENIOR PASTOR will have sole responsibility for who receives monies from the benevolence fund.
- V. Assists the church with all matters related to the administration of all church properties.
 - a. Maintaining all Church properties for ready use.
 - b. Recommend policies for properties and equipment.
 - c. Determine and make recommendations for needed maintenance personnel.

- d. Develop and maintain a service record of all operational equipment such as, and not limited to, air conditioning, kitchen, and office.
- e. Establish and maintain regular inspections of all properties and equipment, report and/or take any action necessary.
- f. Develop and maintain a program of preventative maintenance for all properties, buildings, and equipment, such as painting of inside and outside, equipment service, and/or replacement.
- VI. In conjunction with the ELDER TEAM, report annually to the congregation the state of the church concerning all church property, equipment, and the outlook on stewardship.
- VII. The ELDER TEAM may also choose to seek the support, advice, and expertise of this team to assist with any tasks they choose to delegate involving LBC's property and finances. As a possible example: the ELDER TEAM may choose to delegate the selection of contractors, groundskeepers, housekeepers, or others, but the ELDER TEAM makes the final decisions on signing and/or ending all contracts.
- VIII. To avoid a conflict of interest, no member of the STAFF TEAM can be a member of the Stewardship Team since the team's role is to be an independent check and balance for LBC's financial operation. However, STAFF TEAM members may attend meetings to supply information.

B. MISSIONS TEAM

The primary purpose of this team is to follow God's calling on His people by fulfilling the Great Commission (Matt 28:16-20) both locally and abroad and to show the love of Christ to the lost. (Prov 19:17, Matt 22:36-40)

- I. This team will have full discretion in using any funds in the mission's account. This includes designated and any other funds in the mission account coming from percent allocation voted by the church with the annual budget. The budget dollar amount can vary as donations are variable, but their allocated percent of income and designated funds are not to be withheld from them or used without the team's approval.
- II. To assist the church in being on mission in all that we do by organizing leaders, making studies of community needs, recommending plans, and administering assigned work.
- III. Work with the ELDER TEAM to coordinate the mission work of the church by recommending, planning, and coordinating mission work.
- IV. Obtain and administer resources according to the church's assigned policies and procedures. Establish and maintain communication with the appropriate groups outside the church.

C. DEACON SERVANT TEAM

The DEACON SERVANT TEAM will be MEN and WOMEN to fulfill the biblical role of servants. The precedent for a WOMAN deacon is found in Romans 16:1-2. Both shall serve under the leadership of the SENIOR PASTOR and assist him in performing duties throughout their time of service. Deacon servants are to be members whose characteristics are as specified in 1 Timothy 3:8-13 and Acts 6:1-6 being ministering servants of the church freeing up the leaders and teachers to do their role within the body. DEACON SERVANT TEAM members shall have no authority regarding policy, administration, or leadership responsibility of the church other than required to fulfill their role as servants.

- I. It is the desire that the description of a deacon servant reflect that of the Bible, being the primary source of truth and guidance.
- II. Deacon servant selection and vetting will be governed by LBC's deacon servant handbook, and all new deacon servants will need approval from the ELDER TEAM and a minimum three-fourths (75%) affirmative vote of QUALIFIED CHURCH MEMBERS (Article VI, MEETINGS, Section 7).

- III. The focus of WOMEN deacon servants is serving women with the MEN deacon servants focusing on the men of our congregation. Both deacon servants can serve married families in the manner determined by the DEACON SERVANT TEAM, without the perception of impropriety.
- IV. Deacons were first appointed to manage the distribution of resources to the needy. The DEACON SERVANT TEAM will work with the STEWARDSHIP TEAM and SENIOR PASTOR to be good stewards of the LBC benevolence fund to help members in need. The SENIOR PASTOR may also access and use these funds for members in need and keep the DEACON SERVANT TEAM apprised of his activity.

D. STAFF TEAM

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This team is usually the first point of contact with the public in answering questions about LBC. Staff team members serve in different paid positions of LBC performing day-to-day activities to ensure the smooth and orderly operation of the church. STAFF TEAM members assist all members of the congregation and the other teams of the church.

- I. The ELDER TEAM will select, supervise, evaluate, and take appropriate disciplinary action for all STAFF TEAM members according to the LBC policies and procedures.
- II. The SENIOR PASTOR will be the main point of contact and communication for the ELDER TEAM regarding the work of the STAFF TEAM.
- III. The relationship of a team member to the STAFF TEAM may end by resignation, death of the team member, disability, or incapacity of a team member, or by the Elder TEAM if a STAFF TEAM member is not performing or acting in the best interest of the church in carrying out their duties, or the need for the relationship is no longer necessary.

Section 3. STEWARDSHIP TEAM and MISSIONS TEAM STRUCTURE

- A. The number of members on each team will be six members.
- B. Terms of service for each standing team will be a three-year term to be staggered so that approximately one-third of the team will be replaced each year.
- C. The chairman of each team will be elected from within the ranks of the team and serve for one year. The chairman may serve consecutive years if reelected.
- D. A member may be chosen again by the ELDER TEAM and reaffirmed by the congregation after being off that committee for one year.
- E. If someone becomes unable to complete their term of service and is not replaced before they are able to return, then they shall be able to resume their duties.
- F. If someone is chosen to fill an uncompleted term of service, they are eligible to be chosen again if they have not served for more than one year.
- G. Members of these teams will be nominated by the ELDER TEAM but must be accepted by vote of the congregation.
- H. Standing teams must regularly meet with and consult with the ELDER TEAM

Section 4. STANDING TEAMS EMPOWERMENT

Any Team Member making a purchase for the church shall check with the church Financial Secretary to ensure funds are available.

- A. If the money is budgeted and available the Financial STAFF TEAM member will issue a check for the purchase, or the team member will make the purchase and be reimbursed by the Financial Secretary.
- B. In the case of a question of authority of the person following this procedure, the question involved will be reviewed by the ELDER TEAM to determine payment.

ARTICLE V, THE SENIOR PASTOR

Section 1. DUTIES

The SENIOR PASTOR shall serve on the ELDER TEAM as one of its members, shepherd the congregation in the maturing of their faith through Biblical truths equipping them to be the true "ministers" of the body and devote himself to prayer along with the teaching and ministry of the Word of God. Because of these primary roles, the SENIOR PASTOR will need to prioritize his time focusing on these duties first. (Eph. 4:11-12)

As shepherds of the flock, the Elders are responsible for appointing others, with complimentary spiritual gifts, to undertake areas and aspects of the ministry that cannot be filled by the SENIOR PASTOR.

Section 2. TERM OF OFFICE

He shall remain in his office and serve as a member of the ELDER TEAM for an indefinite period. Removal of the SENIOR PASTOR is described in Article VI Meetings, Section 2, and Article III, ELDER TEAM, Section 11. Severance compensation shall be determined by the ELDER TEAM.

Section 3. SELECTION

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The ELDER TEAM will act as the search team, or delegate this function to a special team, in seeking the Lord's will regarding the SENIOR PASTOR. When the ELDER TEAM is unanimous in their recognition of God's leadership toward a candidate, they will seek the affirmation of the members of LBC in a Meeting (Article VI, MEETINGS, Section 2). If a special team is formed, it will seek the affirmation of the ELDER TEAM, who will then seek the affirmation of the congregation.

ARTICLE VI, MEETINGS

Section 1. MEETINGS OVERVIEW

There shall be planned meetings of the LBC members at its principal place of worship in Laveen, Arizona. They will be planned quarterly, and the last one will be held within forty-five (45) days of the end of its fiscal year. That meeting will include voting on and finalizing the following year's budget and filling vacant positions. Additional meetings can be called as needed or items added onto the already planned meetings by the SENIOR PASTOR, an Elder on the ELDER TEAM, a Deacon on the DEACON SERVANT TEAM, or by agreement of twenty-five (25) LBC members. The twenty-five members should work with a Deacon or an Elder to go through the process required in Section 3, NOTICE OF MEETINGS below.

Section 2. MEETINGS FORMAT

The ELDER TEAM will facilitate meetings to include general information about the progress and activities of the church, difficulties of the church, finances, and needs within the fellowship for the current and future years. These are to be family-style meetings acting as a time of encouragement for the church, question and answer time with the ELDER TEAM, presentation of new members, and other appropriate information. LBC members shall have the opportunity to discuss such issues as they may consider important at this meeting. The ELDER TEAM will provide explanations, insights, and comments as appropriate. The ELDER TEAM shall seek counsel, insights, and guidance from the members of LBC, carefully considering their opinions and desires. (See Article VI, MEETINGS, Section 7, Matters That Must Be Voted on by LBC Members). The minutes of this meeting will be published to the LBC members by the ELDER TEAM and approved by vote at the following meeting.

Section 3. NOTICE OF MEETINGS

Notice of the time, place, and purpose of these meetings shall be published in writing in a church-wide publication, to allow each member an opportunity to reasonably know of the meeting. This official notice must be published at least fourteen (14) days and not more than thirty (30) days before the meeting.

Section 4. PRESIDING OFFICIAL OF MEETINGS

The ELDER TEAM shall provide moderation of all such meetings.

Section 5. VOTING IN MEETINGS

The ELDER TEAM will present information calling for a decision of the LBC members. These decisions shall be voted upon by the QUALIFIED CHURCH MEMBERS in attendance, each having one vote. (Article II, Section 4). The method of seeking affirmation shall be determined by the moderator of the meeting with a majority rule unless otherwise stated in this document.

Section 6. QUORUM IN MEETINGS

A quorum for decision-making at an LBC meeting shall consist of 25 QUALIFIED CHURCH MEMBERS attending such meetings or the number of Qualified Church Members equal to 10% of the people in LBC's worship services on the Sunday morning just before the meeting, whichever is the greater number.

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Section 7. MATTERS THAT MUST BE VOTED ON BY LBC MEMBERS

- A. Requiring a minimum three-fourths (75%) vote
 - I. Final approval of any candidate who will hold in their title the word "PASTOR" as selected and presented by the ELDER TEAM.
 - II. Election and affirming of candidates to the ELDER TEAM or the DEACON SERVANT TEAM.
 - III. Election and affirming of members to STANDING TEAMS.
 - IV. Borrowing money and incurring indebtedness of any kind to a person, organization, agency, or financial institution.
 - V. Construction and/or renovation or demolition of church buildings and facilities.
 - VI. Changes with the affiliation with the Southern Baptist Convention or Statement of Beliefs.
 - VII. Amending the Constitution and Bylaws (Article IX AMENDEMENTS, Section 1).
- B. Requiring a simple majority vote (at least 51%)
 - I. Spending in any amount (including the addition of staff) above 5% of the church's previous 12 months of income that is not already in the current year's approved budget. Exceptions will be made for emergency repairs from vandalism or acts of God but must be shared with the members at the next meeting.
 - II. Removing the SENIOR PASTOR from his position. This action will also require a minimum of three-fourths (75%) vote of the ELDER TEAM.
 - III. Other matters in which the ELDER TEAM feels led to seek the members' advice and counsel.
 - IV. Approval of Financial budgets for LBC.
 - V. Affirmation of new members.

ARTICLE VII, RECORDS AND REPORTS

Section 1. RECORDS

LBC shall maintain adequate and correct accounts, books, and records of its business and properties. All such books, records, and accounts shall be kept at its principal place of business in Laveen, Arizona. The adequacy and accuracy of the books and records shall be overseen by the ELDER TEAM. The location of the principal place of business of LBC may be changed from time to time as determined by the ELDER TEAM.

Section 2. INSPECTION OF BOOKS AND RECORDS

Every member shall have the absolute right, at any reasonable time, to inspect all books, records, and documents of every kind (except personnel and contribution records) and the physical properties of LBC. The ELDER TEAM, if necessary to maintain good order, may restrict and limit the number of inspections or establish an orderly manner for such to be conducted. But, in no event should a reasonable inspection of the books and records be denied to a member.

ARTICLE VIII DISSOLUTION

Upon dissolution of LBC, the ELDER TEAM shall cause the assets herein to be distributed to another Southern Baptist church(s) within Arizona.

ARTICLE IX AMENDMENTS

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Section 1. AMENDMENT PROCESS

This Constitution may be amended at any time by the ELDER TEAM with an affirmation of such change, as reflected by a minimum three-fourths (75%) vote of the QUALIFIED CHURCH MEMBERS voting.

Section 2. RECORD OF AMENDMENTS

Whenever an amendment or new Constitution or Bylaws is adopted, it shall be copied into the books and records of LBC along with the original Constitution or Bylaws, and the date of the meeting at which the repeal or amendment was confirmed by LBC.

CONSTITUTION CERTIFICATION

We the undersigned, being members of Laveen Baptist Church and serving as its current officers, do consent to and hereby adopt, as voted, and affirmed by the congregation of Laveen Baptist Church, the aforementioned Constitution in total as the second amended, the provisions of which supersede any previously adopted Constitution or bylaw.

Trustees	Deacons	Church Staff
Aice Trulul	Pachs	L. Harry Sexton
Rick Hornback, Chairman	Dana Desko, Chairman	Harry Sexton, Associate Pastor
Paul Brooks	Ermet Chy	Tina Truley
Paul Brooke, Trustee & Deacon	Ernie Chavez, Deacon	Tina Freeberg, Church Clerk
animio L Creekurur		
Jimmie Creekmur, Trustee	Bill Pulley, Deacon	Cesar Aleman, Music Leader
Du Co Com	AROTTE	Maxima Shawing
David Williams, Trustee & Deacon	Sam Thompson, Deacon	MaLinda Johanning, Treasure
Mike Williams, Trustee	Scott Winter, Deacon Steve Worley, Deacon	

MEMBER ACCEPTANCE

Having been led, by the Spirit of God, to receive the Lord Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord and, on the profession of our faith, having been Baptized in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and the Holy Spirit, do now, in the presence of God and this assembly, most solemnly and joyfully enter with one another as one body in Christ.

I have received, read, questioned, and sought guidance on this Constitution, do hereby agree, as a member of Laveen Baptist Church, to its provisions and will to the best of my ability endeavor to follow its provisions so long as I am a member of this church.

Printed Name Les/ee Steinmann	Signature Leglee Steinmann
Printed Name Melinda Brooke	Signature Neluda Brooke
Printed Name Mark Souver 3	Signature Musik Susser (
Printed Name Richard Freeberg	Signature De las Anna
Printed Name MONIQUE CORILLED	Signature Junious Junious
Printed Name Dona Pulley	Signature
Printed Name Thannon Pena	Signature
Printed Name Lisa Valdivia	Signature Signature
Printed Name AS UNCION H. Sosa	Signature <u>Asenceon</u> Sosa
Printed Name Faven Yohannes	Signature A
Printed Name Michelle Harry	Signature Mulianian Signature
Printed Name ANDY HARRY	Signature Roll Harry
Printed Name Myben Becessa	Signature 4

CONSTITUTION OF LAVEEN BAPTIST CHURCH		
Printed Name Jonnes Horn	Signature Amel Char	
Printed Name Lena Hertel	Signature Leva Hertel	
Printed Name Rosanna Hornback	Signature Rosanna Dornback	
Printed Name Paroly N Sue Hasdy	Signature arolyn Ske Hardy	
Printed Name Am A /A BROWN	Signature Crow Brown	
Printed Name PAT SMITH	Signature Lat Smech	
Printed Name Kris Williams	Signature Trus Willer	
Printed Name George Mungen	Signature	
Printed Name Brenda Holmeyer	Signature Brenda Holmeys	
Printed Name Ofelia MUNTE	/ /	
Printed Name @Meed Billo	Signature Ass	
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Printed Name Albandra Bumm	Signature Signature	
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Printed Name Juanita Braga	Signature Juaneta Braga
Printed Name Kathleen Seavers	Signature Kattleer Leavery
Printed Name Bettunne L. Desko	Signature Strann Solva
Printed Name Heark Teferra	Signature III ?
Printed Name Cynthia L. Sexton	Signature Cylling Sexton
Printed Name Burnett Flint	Signature Burnett Flut
Printed Name Janis VIIIa	Signature Janis Villa
Printed Name Justin C- Walls	Signature And CML
Printed Name Laura A. Wolfz	Signature fram les Maffe
Printed Name Tom ComBS	Signature Tour Cours
Printed Name Vesus-Sosa	Signature
Printed Name LISAR. (Navez	Signature
Printed Name NICOLAS M. PENA	Signature M. 15
Printed Name TESSA Stotts	Signature Signature
Printed Name Collin Anderson	Signature Cli C
Printed Name Debron Level 5	Signature Colonia Court
Printed Name	Signature