

Seaford Baptist Church Proposed Constitution & Bylaws Revision Executive Summary

**This document provides commentary only and is not part of the
Proposed Constitution and Bylaws**

The most noticeable change in the proposed documents is the split of the existing Constitution into two documents, the Constitution and Bylaws. This is the format most commonly used today by churches and is recommended by the Southern Baptist Convention. The Constitution provides a description of the church's theological beliefs. The Bylaws are an administrative document that defines how the church will operate and carry out the mission that Christ has given it.

Much of these proposed documents are derived from the current Constitution and placing the current wording into this revised format with some editorial and structural changes. In an effort to develop these documents, the Committee has also researched Constitution development guides provided by the Southern Baptist Conservatives of Virginia, numerous existing Constitutions of similar sized churches, The Baptist Faith and Message, and Seaford Baptist Church documents such as the Employee Handbooks and other documents. These draft documents have been reviewed by the Pastoral staff, all Church Committees, the Church Council, and the Deacons with their comments being incorporated in this current draft that is presented to the Church body.

Statement of Faith – With the division of the two documents and since the Constitution describes the foundation of the Church's beliefs, we felt that it is appropriate to expand this section of the document to better describe the Church body's core beliefs. All of the descriptions shown in this section are from The Baptist Faith and Message which is referenced in the current Constitution and is the foundational document of the Southern Baptist Convention. The Church Covenant has also been added at the Pastors request

Church Governance – An effort is made in this article to eliminate confusion as to how the church will be governed. This article seeks to explain the function of the various leadership groups and how they interrelate.

Church Council – The current constitution provides for the establishment of a Church Council in para 9.1.8. These proposed Bylaws expand on this church structure while maintaining the same spirit. We feel that this will provide a more unified church management approach and a more transparent governing process. Since all groups in the church are represented on this council, all parties will be provided information about the activities that each group is undertaking. It will also provide an opportunity for unified planning, vision setting, conflict resolution, and committee interaction.

Committee Tenure – The documents make an effort at having all committees governed under the same format with regards to length of service and qualifications for committee members. The Trustee section is rewritten to conform to this tenure process.

Church Conferences – In the Bylaws the name for the Church Business meetings has been changed to Church Conferences. In view of the Health Committees survey results showing the low ratings given the Church Business Meetings, we felt this was a first effort to revamp the Business meeting environment.

The Constitution and Bylaws Committee would appreciate your comments and insights into these documents. We ask that you make comments on the attached comment form or electronically on the same form which is posted on the Church Website with instructions for responding. Submit these forms to the Church office or email to constitution@sbc-va.org and they will forward it to the Committee for review. The committee will then review all comments and make any necessary revisions prior to presenting these documents to the Church body for approval by vote at a future Church Conference. If you provide your contact information (preferably email address) the committee will let you know the response to each comment.

Date submitted: _____ Comment received from: _____
Document affected: _____ Paragraph affected: _____
Your Comment:

Changes made:

Committees comments/reasons for change / no change:

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My Comment:

Changes made:

Committees comments/reasons for change / no change: