

Halsted Road Baptist Church
3326 Halsted Road
Rockford, Illinois 61101

Constitution and By-Laws

PREAMBLE

For a more certain preservation and security of the principles of our faith, and to the end of that this body may be governed in an orderly manner consistent with the accepted tenets of the Southern Baptist Denomination, and for the purpose of preserving the liberties inherent in each individual member of this church and the freedom of action of this body, with respect to its relation to other churches of the same faith and practices, we do declare and establish this constitution.

I. NAME

This body shall be known as the Halsted Road Baptist Church of Rockford, Illinois.

II. ARTICLES OF FAITH

The scriptures as revered in “The Baptist Faith and Message,” shall govern this church and such doctrinal statement is hereby adopted by this body at the same time as the adoption on this constitution and appended hereto.

III. CHURCH COVENANT

The CHURCH COVENANT adopted by this body at the same time as the adoption of this constitution and appended hereto shall bind this church in fellowship.

IV. CHARACTER

SECTION I

Polity: The government of this church is vested in the body of believers (members) who compose it, and is subject to the control of no other ecclesiastical body; however, it recognizes and sustains the obligations of mutual counsel and cooperation, which are common among Baptist Churches. Specifically, this church will cooperate with the North Central Baptist Association, the Illinois Baptist State Association and the Southern Baptist Convention.

SECTION II

Doctrine: This church receives the Scriptures as its authority in matters of faith and practices. Its understanding of Christian truth as contained therein is in essential accordance with the belief of Baptist Churches as indicated in the “Articles of Faith” as appended hereto.

BY-LAWS

ARTICLE I – MEMBERSHIP

SECTION I

Qualifications: The membership of this church shall consist of such persons as confess Jesus Christ to be their Savior and Lord, and whom:

1. Publicly profess their faith in the Lord Jesus Christ as their Savior and Lord and have been accepted by vote of the church with full fellowship and privileges after having been baptized (immersed) will enter into this covenant relationship.

2. Having been immersed by the authority of a New Testament Baptist Church and on a profession of faith in Jesus Christ as their Lord and Savior and who have come from other Baptist churches of like faith and practices and upon certification of a letter disclosing their current status to be one of good standing, and have been accepted by vote of this church.

3. Having been immersed by a New Testament Baptist Church on a profession of faith in Jesus Christ as their Savior and Lord, but because of justifiable circumstances are not able to procure a letter of dismissal from other Baptist Churches of like faith and practices, but have given satisfactory statements of an experience of saving faith, and been accepted by vote in this church.

4. Individuals who come to us from churches other than Southern Baptist may be received into membership if they have fulfilled the New Testament criteria for membership. This requires the individual be:

- A. **The Proper Subject:** A believer who has voluntarily declared their faith in Jesus Christ as their Lord and Savior.
- B. **The Proper Mode:** The immersion of the believer in water in the name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit. It is an act of obedience symbolizing the believer's faith in a crucified, buried and risen Savior, and the believer's death to sin and burial of the old life, and the resurrection to walk in newness of life in Christ.
- C. **Eternity Security:** The believer will understand that their salvation is secured and sealed by the Holy Spirit. 2 Corinthians 1:22.
- D. **The Proper Authority:** The local church is the authority to receive members by a majority vote of the membership following their presentation to the body.

SECTION II

Duties: Members are expected, first of all, to be faithful in all duties essential to the Christian life, and also to attend habitually the services of this church, to give regularly for its support and its causes, and to share in its organized teamwork.

SECTION III

Rights: Members who are in full fellowship and of regular standing may act and vote in the transactions of this church body.

SECTION IV

Quorum: Ten percent (10%) of the active role of membership shall constitute a quorum, i.e., for the election of officers, and miscellaneous business concerns. Twenty-five percent (25%) shall be necessary for a pastoral call or for any amendments of this constitution or its by-laws.

SECTION V

Termination: The continuance of membership shall be subject to the principles and usage of Baptist Churches, and especially as follows:

1. Any member in good standing who desires to unite with another Baptist church of like faith and practices is entitled to receive a letter of dismissal and recommendation certifying their current status of fellowship to be one of good standing. The letter is sent to the requesting Baptist church and not given to the individual.
2. If any member in good standing requests to be released from their covenant obligations to this church body for reasons which the church may deem satisfactory, after it shall have patiently and kindly endeavored to secure their continuance in its fellowship, such requests may be granted, and their membership be terminated.
3. Should a member become an offense to the church and its good name by reason of immoral or unchristian conduct, or a persistent breach of their covenant vows, the church may terminate their membership, but only after due notice and hearing, and after faithful efforts have been made to bring such a member to repentance and amendment.
4. If a member in good standing wishes to unite with a church not of like faith and practices, a letter of dismissal to the church will be granted stating that the person's membership has been terminated.
5. The membership of no person shall be terminated (except by letter) at a business meeting when the recommendation for such action is made
6. All requests for termination of membership or action looking thereto (except by letter) shall first be considered by the deacons and / or the Worship/Administrative team. A recommendation shall then be made to the church for the churches action.

SECTION VI

Restoration: Any person whose membership has been terminated for any offenses may be restored by vote of the church upon evidence of their repentance and amendment.

ARTICLE II – Church officer

The elected officers of Halsted Road Baptist Church shall be as follows:

SECTION I

Pastor

Selection: In the event of a pulpit vacancy, a team will be selected to conduct a search to fill the vacancy. A search team shall be appointed by the church to seek out a suitable Pastor. The team shall consist of three (3) men, one being an active deacon, and two (2) women who are active representatives of the church. The team shall be elected by paper ballot at a business meeting of the church body. The members with balloted majority that follow the above criteria shall make up the search team. At the same time as the search team election, two (2) alternates, one (1) man and one (1) woman shall be selected who also follow the above criteria.

Calling: The search team's recommendation will then constitute a nomination for the vacancy; however, any church member in good standing has the privilege of making other nominations. The search team shall have the authority to negotiate a contractual agreement with the pastoral candidate, which shall include moving expenses with at least two (2) bids. The team will then bring for consideration only one (1) candidate at a time to the church body for approval. The selection of the pastoral candidate shall take place during the Sunday morning worship service, called for that purpose after at least seven (7) days notice. Voting shall be done by paper ballot. An affirmative vote of seventy-five percent (75%) of active church members present shall constitute a call. The pastor, thus elected, shall then become a member of the church.

Responsibilities: The pastor shall be in charge of the welfare of overseeing of the church. He is the ex-Officio member of every team. He shall preside at all meetings (i.e. Worship services etc. of the church, and as hereby-stated under Article I-Membership section II, Duties.

Termination: A pastor can be terminated for perceived ineffectiveness, or for the violation of the rules and guidelines of moral conduct listed in, but not limited to, 1 Timothy Chapter 3 (Qualifications for overseer). This can include the conduct of members of the pastor's family living in his home and attending this church.

It is always hopeful, for the good of the church body, that should the church be at a point where such action is likely to be taken by the church that the pastor would step aside and place the church in the hands of the LORD. The pastor may resign his position in the church by verbal resignation in the presence of more that 2 elected church leaders or by written notice.

Upon termination of the pastor's responsibilities, either by the pastor, the church body or by mutual consent, thirty (30) days notice shall be given. In the case of the pastor being removed by vote of the congregation, this thirty (30) days notice shall be conducted in the form of a continuance of the pastor's pay for that thirty (30) day period. However, the pastor shall cease the performance of his duties immediately upon release by the church and the pulpit will be declared vacant.

Process:

The initial complaint shall be evaluated by the deacons of the church. Should there be cause found by the deacons, they will approach the pastor and ask for his resignation. Should he decline and demand that it be voted on, the deacons shall call a special meeting for a vote of no confidence.

The vote for termination of the pastor shall take place in a special meeting during Sunday morning worship service. This meeting must be announced from the pulpit with a minimum of seven (7) days' notice to the congregation. Voting shall be by paper ballot. Twenty-five percent (25%) of the active membership must be present to make a quorum. Those unable to attend the meeting do to travel or illness, may vote by proxy ballot, with a minimum of two (2) witness signatures. At this meeting, a simple majority vote will determine if the pastor stays or leaves.

SECTION II

Associate Pastors: When a request for associate pastor is made by the church the Personnel/Nominating team shall act as the Search Team. The Personnel/Nominating Team acting as a search team shall follow the guidelines for selection as required for the pastor. Selections for areas of ministry include youth, education, music, visitation, worship and others as the need arises. Job descriptions will be developed by the Personnel/Nominating team with the pastor's cooperation as the personnel need arise.

The job descriptions shall be reviewed and approved by the church body. The Personnel/Nominating team shall bring forward for the church's consideration one person at a time for each area of ministry. The Personnel/Nominating team shall have negotiating authority for contractual agreement with the candidate as to the moving expenses and other concerns, subject to the approval of the church body, after a written notice of seven (7) days has been given to the church. All voting shall take place during the Sunday morning worship service.

SECTION III

Deacons

Number: The church shall endeavor to have one deacon for every 10 to 12 resident families for a total of nine (9) deacons. Three (3) additional deacons shall be elected for every 100 additional resident members.

Term of Service: The following rotation system will become effective after the desired number of deacons to the ratio of members has been accomplished. One third of the total number of deacons shall be elected each year for a term of three years. Those retiring as active deacons shall be ineligible for the re-election for the period of one year. Deacons becoming eligible for re-election shall be contacted before being put on the ballot to determine their desire to serve in this office.

Election Criteria: The deacon candidates shall be nominated by paper ballot. One method of obtaining the candidates to place on the ballot is as follows:

The criteria for a deacon will be given to the church members and on a designated Sunday morning, the members will be asked to write out the names of five (5) men in the fellowship who meet the criteria. The men receiving at least twenty-five percent (25%) of the votes cast shall be considered as deacon nominee. These men shall be interviewed one at a time, by the pastor and/or other ordained leadership and the active deacons, to discuss their qualification and to secure their response regarding their willingness to serve.

The nominees meeting the criteria will have their names submitted to the church for election by paper ballot. Those receiving the majority of fifty-one percent (51%) or more of the votes being cast shall be deacon electives.

In the case of death, removal or incapacity to serve, the church may elect to fill the un-expired term.

There is no obligation to elect as an active deacon, a deacon who comes from another church.

No man shall be ordained or serve as a deacon until he has been a member of this church for one (1) year. He should be at least twenty-one (21) years of age and active in the church. If a deacon is selected who is not ordained, he shall be ordained at the earliest possible time.

Qualifications/Duties: The qualifications and duties of a deacon are incorporated in the "Deacon Covenant" and appended hereto.

SECTION IV

Trustees: The trustees shall be three (3) in number, one third of whom shall be elected at the annual church business meeting to serve for three (3) years as feasible, or until a successor trustee is elected. The trustees shall be selected by the Personnel/Nominating team. The trustees will hold in trust the property of the church. The leader of the trustees shall be the one serving in their third year. The trustees shall have the authority to buy, sell, mortgage, lease, or transfer any property of the church by a specific vote of the church authorizing such action. The trustees are members of the Physical Ministries Team and the leader is a member of the Worship/Administrative Team.

SECTION V

Church Clerk: The church clerk shall keep accurate written records of all business sessions of the church. These records shall be filed in the church office. The clerk shall keep the membership rolls and render proper statistics as called by the denomination. The clerk will obtain the information of additions to the church and send for letters as applicable. The clerk shall prepare the annual associational letter for presentation to the church for approval before it is sent to the clerk of the North Central Baptist Association. The clerk shall be selected by the Personnel/Nominating Team and elected at the annual business meeting of the church. The clerk is a member of the Worship/Administrative Team.

SECTION VI

Treasurer: The treasurer shall keep records of all the money belonging to the church and shall, without special vote or authority, pay out of the church funds available all church salaries, fixed charges, interest, water, rent, telephone, electric and fuel expenses. The treasurer shall pay other bills (as feasible) only after purchase orders/vouchers have been properly signed. During business meetings of the church, the treasurer or designee shall present a report of receipts and disbursements showing the financial condition of the church. The treasurer shall bring any unusual concerns to the Stewardship Team. The treasurer shall be bonded. The treasurer is selected by the Personnel/Nominating team and voted on at the annual business meeting. The treasurer shall be a member of the Worship/Administrative Team.

SECTION VII

Financial Secretary: The financial secretary shall obtain and record all gift and money records. The records shall be distributed at the beginning of each year to the individual contributor for the purpose of income tax deductions or other concerns. The Financial Secretary is selected by the Personnel/Nominating team and voted on at the annual business meeting. The Financial Secretary is a member of the Stewardship team.

SECTION VIII

Moderator: The moderator shall be the pastor, unless the pastor prefers to have the church elect a quailed member. If the pastor does not serve as the moderator, the church shall elect the moderator annually. In the absence of the moderator, the associate pastor or pastors shall preside. In their absence the deacon leader shall preside, and in their absence, the clerk shall call the meeting to order and a moderator pro-tem be elected.

ARTICLE III – CHURCH ORGANIZATIONS

Team Design: Halsted Road Baptist Church has adopted the team concept for the functioning of the church body in carrying out the Great Commission of the Lord. Each team shall have leaders. These leaders are elected at the annual August business meeting. All elected leaders may designate others to lead as the occasion or required task may warrant. The Personnel/Nominating team shall be kept informed of leadership changes within the teams or resignation of leaders. The Personnel/Nominating team shall keep the church body informed of the changes of leadership and any changes shall be brought to the church for vote. The team leaders and their respective roles shall be posted on the “Team Information Board”.

Duties: The duties of all leadership personnel shall be designated in the approved denominational standard. The literature and material used in the department will be of such nature as that following denominational standard.

SECTION I

The Personnel/Nomination Team:

Team selection: The Nominating/Personnel Team shall consist of six (6) members, of which at least two (2) shall be women. The team shall rotate, with the election of two (2) new members each year. To initiate the process the pastor or designee will select the two (2) new members each year. The new members selected shall be voted on at the annual church business meeting. The Personnel/Nominating team leader is a member of the Worship/Administrative Team.

Functions: The team assists the church in matters related to:

- 1) **Employed personnel:** the Personnel/Nominating team determines staff concerns, obtaining employment of personnel (except Pastor), developing job descriptions and determines contracted service needs and other related concerns. The Personnel/Nomination team reviews salaries and benefits, including pastor's, and makes recommendations to the Stewardship team. This is done by October to give time for annual budget preparation.
- 2) **Volunteer Personnel:** Teams and their leaders are made up of volunteers. The leaders are presented to the church for approval at the annual August business meeting / or when a vacancy occurs. The Personnel/Nominating team continues to encourage members who have not joined a team to be a part of the church family team activity. They shall consult with all new church members and inform the new members of the team concept and encourage the new members to select the team or teams of their choice. The choices are to be given to the team leader of the member's choice or choices of ministry. The team shall select a recorder who will work with the team leader to keep a current record of each team member, and of persons who may wish to change teams. The team shall make a quarterly posting of all teams and members. The team's minutes shall be posted as soon as possible after each meeting on the Team Information Board. The team receives all resignations of elected personnel and employed Personnel (excluding the pastor). The team will work with team leaders who need assistance in getting personnel e.g. education leadership.

SECTION II

Worship/Administrative Team; this team is led by the pastor, or his designee.

Duties: This team may be divided into sub teams. The team is responsible for:

- 1) Vision and assisting teams with goals
- 2) Worship experiences of the church. (Sunday morning, Sunday evening and Wednesday services)

- 3) Evangelism, assisting the leader in obtaining revival leaders and other soul winning emphasis.
- 4) Promoting a program of enlistment and visitation.
- 5) Assisting in obtaining pulpit supply as warranted.
- 6) Assisting pastor in developing counselors for the services.
- 7) Assisting pastor in preparation of “The Lord’s Supper” and assisting candidates’ preparation for baptism.
- 8) Organizing publicity and related information.
- 9) Promoting special events
- 10) Developing greeters and ushers to care for the worship services.
- 11) Assisting in obtaining and development of deacons and other ordained personnel
- 12) Overseeing the Children’s Worship service when developed.

Members: All elected leaders of teams, and officers such as: the treasurer, clerk, leader of trustees, deacon leader, publicity leader, extended nursery worker leader, music director and nominating/Personnel team leader.

(This team takes the place of the Pastor’s support team and the church council:
(see Article VI)

Other members who sign on the Worship/Administrative team are members of the Worship Team.)

SECTION III

Stewardship Team: The stewardship team shall consist of at least five (5) members. Members who sign up on the stewardship team become a part of the team. The team shall include the treasurer and financial officers. The Stewardship Team leader is a member of the Worship/Administrative Team and is voted on at the annual August business meeting.

Duties: The Stewardship Team shall be responsible for instruction and development of church members in Biblical perspective of their time, talents and tithe. They shall have at least one annual promotion. The treasurer shall receive all signed vouchers given by the teams for their expenses. The teams are asked to operate within the bounds of their annual set budgets. The Stewardship Team shall work with the teams and officers to plan the proposed annual inclusive budget with each item identified by an account code of the amount needed and the challenge for growth of each perspective team and ministry. The proposed budget is to be presented not later than October. This will allow time to present a stewardship promotional challenge. The final draft of the budget will be submitted in December for the churches approval. The new budget process will begin on January 1st. Any deviation from the budget amount must be brought before the Stewardship Team. The Stewardship Team will consider the request before presenting for a church vote. The church recognizes and adopts the Scriptural method of “Tithes and Offerings” as the church plan for financing its needs. All bills shall be paid when due, as is possible. Money designated in the budget for denominational causes shall be paid monthly, unless otherwise indicated. No special offerings other than those recommended by the Southern Baptist Convention shall be taken except upon recommendation of the Stewardship Team and by vote of the church unless there is an urgent need and time does not permit a vote. Individuals may give special offerings or give a designated amount at any time. The treasurer or a designee voted on by the church shall disburse all funds. All funds shall be properly recorded. The Stewardship Team shall have a yearly audit of the financial books by the end of January and present the report to the church in the February business meeting.

Sub-Team: Money Counters: The money counters are a sub team of the Stewardship Team. They are presented to the church by the Nominating/Personnel Team for election at the annual business meeting in August of each year and are bonded by the church.

Duties: There shall be no less than two (2) individuals to receive and count all monies received by the church. Counters will generate an accurate record for the treasurer with a duplicate copy to be kept in the record book and stored in the church office. Any and all empty gift envelopes will be supplied to the financial secretary for recording.

SECTION IV

Physical Ministries Team: The team is responsible for all the physical aspects of the church. These tasks are related to the environment and care of the facilities of the church body. The delineation of the tasks is in the Policy and Procedures Guide Book. The leader is a member of the Worship/Administrative Team and is voted on at the annual August business meeting.

Duties: The team is subdivided into the following groups and their duties are as follows:

- 1. Building and grounds**
 - a. General maintenance
 - b. Maintenance of septic system
 - c. Painting and repair
 - d. Maintenance of electrical system
- 2. Custodial**
 - a. Parking lot attendants
 - b. Cleaning and maintenance of church buildings
 - c. Opening and closing doors for church events
 - d. Security
- 3. Services**
 - a. Maintenance of baptismal tank
 - b. Maintenance of church sign(s)
 - c. Maintenance of the sound system
 - d. Purchase and maintenance of electronic equipment
 - e. Distribution of church keys
- 4. Kitchen**
 - a. Preparation of meals for potlucks and special occasions
 - b. Decoration of building
 - c. Ordering of flowers for special occasions
- 5. Trustees**
 - a. Serving as church representative on legal matters
- 6. Utilities**
 - a. Maintenance of all heating and cooling equipment

SECTION V

- **Music Team:** The music team shall consist of the music director as the leader, unless otherwise designated by the leader and with the teams input. The accompanist of the instruments shall be team members, unless special accompanists, who are guests, are asked to participate by the director. The team shall also consist of the members who sign on the team. Guests may be included in the music programs of the church. The Music Director is selected by the Personnel/Nominating Team and is elected annually at the church's August business meeting. The Music Director is a member of the Administrative / Worship team.

Duties:

- The team will have a choir or music worship leaders, as the director deems necessary.
- The director will plan the music for the worship services,
- The team will promote development of music choirs and other music learning experiences as long range goals.

SECTION VI

Missions Ministry Team: The missions Ministry team is divided into two sub-teams. The main functions of Missions Ministry for both sub-teams are to:

1. Have knowledge of the missionary message of the Bible and utilize studies that pertain to missions.
(Emphasis studies are provided in the fall for International Missions and in the spring for North American studies these and other resources are available through the International Mission Union. Many other studies are also provided, e.g. state and associational studies.)
2. Support missions through prayer and giving.
(Resources are provided for prayer emphasis and the giving of offerings.)
3. Participate in action plans to carry out the Great Commission.
4. Interpret the work and be active in your local church.

Sub-team No. 1 – Brotherhood Ministry: The Brotherhood team is divided into adult men called B-Men and boys. The men are responsible for the development of youth and boys in ministry service. The young people are called R.A.'s (Royal Ambassadors). These are subdivided into age levels. The leaders are members of the Worship/Administrative Team and voted on at the annual August business meeting.

Sub-team No. 2 – Women's Missionary Union: The Women's Missionary Union team is divided into adult and young women called Women on Missions. The women are responsible for the development of the girls' youth group called Acteens.

1. The older girls are called G.A.'s (Girls in Action).
2. All younger children are called C.I.A.'s (Children in Action).
3. Pre-schoolers, are called Mission Friends.

SECTION VII

Christian Education Team: The Christian education team is divided into two sub-teams, Sunday School and Discipleship Education. The education team shall be voted on by the church at the annual business meeting, and be members of the Worship/Administrative team.

Sub-Team No 1- Sunday School: All newly appointed/hired personnel who are to work with children from nursery age through high school and/or who will be working with money, shall be properly and legally vetted including (but not limited to) official background checks through the appropriate legal authorities. This team is responsible for the teaching of the Bible.

- The literature and material used in the Sunday School will be of such nature as those following denominational standards.
- The organizational structure shall be based on age levels.
- The class leaders shall be approved by the Educational/Sunday School team and be presented to the church body at the annual business meeting for approval or as the need is determined

- There shall be an annual promotion emphasis the first Sunday of the incoming church year (the 1st Sunday in September).
- A yearly installation of the incoming personnel is recommended.
- Room changes and other changes shall be under the advisement of the team in cooperation with the pastor, and be publicized to the church body.
- The record system of participation is promoted and encouraged through the use of stewardship envelopes provided for the members by the stewardship team.
 - a. this is an accountability process for participants to view the stewardship of their Christian growth.
 - b. the actions on the envelopes are recorded in a class book and given to the office for record keeping.

Sub-Team No.2- Discipleship Education:

Duties:

- Assist the church body to follow the Command of Jesus
 - Matthew 28:19 (“Therefore go and make Disciples (learners) of all nations...” NLT), and Paul’s admonition to Timothy in II Timothy 2:15 (“Study to show thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the Word of truth.” KJV).
- Develop organized curriculum design tracks to adjust for future needs.
- Plan for the development of new Christians and members with classes and appropriate literature.
- Develop the New Members Packet with necessary material for the new members information:
 - Pastoral welcome letter
 - Sunday school director welcome letter and an invitation form their particular Sunday school class leader.
 - Copy of the team formats, functions and a form for them to complete to serve on a team.
 - Copy of the constitution, including “Baptist Faith and Message” tract, and church covenant
 - Copy of the budget with explanation about the functioning of our stewardship program
 - Box of stewardship envelopes.
 - A copy of the current Discipleship team curriculum.
 - A copy of the directory

ARTICLE IV – MEETINGS

SECTION I

Worship Services: The church fellowship shall hold regular services of worship on Sunday morning, Sunday evening and a weekly meeting, preferably on Wednesday evening. The church shall observe the Lord’s Supper each quarter as directed, preferably the first Sunday of the quarter. (Not the educational quarter based on Spring, Summer, Fall and Winter).

SECTION II

Business Meetings: The monthly business meeting of the church shall be held on the Wednesday following the second Sunday of the month, unless directed by church vote. The annual

business meeting shall be held on the last Wednesday in August, unless otherwise directed by church vote.

SECTION III

Quorums: In all business meetings ten percent (10%) of the active resident membership reported in the latest church letter to the association shall constitute a quorum, except in special meetings for business such as calling a pastor, the sale or purchase of property, or assumption of financial responsibility by the church. For these special meetings twenty-five percent (25%) of the active resident membership as directed above shall be required for a quorum.

SECTION IV

Conduction of Regular Business Meetings: Robert's Rules of Order shall govern all questions involving parliamentary form not provided for in the By-laws. The order of proceedings in the meeting for business may be as follows:

1. Devotion
2. Reading minutes of the last meeting (if required)
3. Treasurer's report
4. Reports of teams
5. Old business
6. New business
7. Receiving and dismissing members
8. Adjournment followed by closing prayer.

SECTION V

Special or Called Business Meetings: The Pastor and/or designated moderator with the knowledge of the pastor, shall, when requested by the deacons, trustees or elected members of the Worship/Administrative team call from the pulpit special business meetings. The particular object of the meeting is to be clearly stated in the notice. The church may decide by a seventy-five percent (75%) majority vote of those present to have a special business meeting. The granting of new members during a worship service is excluded from this requirement.

SECTION VI

Amendments: These articles may be amended at any regular business meeting of the church by vote of seventy-five percent (75%) of the active members present provided that

1. Two weeks' notice have been given with announcements made at a regular worship service of the church
2. Each active resident member is notified in writing.

SECTION VII

Licensing and Ordaining: Any member who, in the judgment of the church, gives evidence by his spiritual life, his zeal, and aptness to teach that he is called by God to the work of the ministry, after having preached in the hearing of the church, may be licensed to preach for one year. At the end of one year, if he is still pursuing the ministry, the license will become permanent. A vote of seventy-five percent (75%) of the active church members present at any regular business meeting must agree thereto.

If the church unanimously decides that one of its licensed preachers possesses the Scriptural qualification for full ordination, the church shall call a council of ministers and brethren from the North Central Baptist Association to examine the qualification of the candidate, to which council, the propriety of ordaining shall be referred.

SECTION VIII

Financial and Organizational Operations of the Church Year: The financial operation of the church year shall be January 1st through December 31st. The organizational operations shall be September 1st through August 31st.

ARTICLE V - DISCIPLINE

SECTION I

Differences: Should any unhappy differences arise between members; the aggrieved member shall follow, in a tender spirit, the rules given by the Lord in Matthew chapter 18.

SECTION II

Breach of Covenant: Should any case of gross breach of covenant, or public scandals occur, selected members, i.e. deacons, counselors from the Worship/Administrative team shall, endeavor to remove the offense, and if such effort fails, shall report to the church.

SECTION III

Written Complaints: If the church votes to entertain a complaint, which must be made in writing, it shall appoint a reasonable time and place of hearing and notify the person in question thereof, furnishing, him/her with a copy of the charges.

SECTION IV

Hearings: At such hearings, the accused member may call to his/her aid any member of the church as counsel. If he/she is not present at the time appointed, and fails to give satisfactory reasons for neglecting to do so, the church may precede in his/her absence.

SECTION V

Church Decisions: A spirit of Christian kindness and forbearance shall pervade all such proceedings. However, should an adverse decision be reached, the church may proceed or admonish or declare the offender to be no longer in the membership of the church.

SECTION VI

Advice Seeking: In case of grave difficulty, the church will be ready, if required, to ask the advice of an acceptable council from neighboring Baptist churches, the director of missions or the Illinois State Baptist Association.

ARTICLE VI – CHURCH WORSHIP/ADMINISTRATIVE TEAM (formerly called the church council)

SECTION I

Duties: The Worship/Administrative team upon being established by authorization of the church shall seek to correlate and coordinate the team activities of the church but with advisory powers only.

SECTION II

Personnel: The worship/Administrative team, unless otherwise determined by vote of the church, shall be composed of the elected members of the Worship/Administrative team and other volunteer representatives as reflected in the Worship/Administrative role descriptions.

SECTION III

Church Approval: All matter agreed upon by the council shall be referred to the church for their approval or disapproval.

ARTICLE VII – MERGERS

SECTION I

Requests: Halsted Road Baptist Church shall, upon a request from another church body seeking to unite with our fellowship, bring the request before the church body. At this time, the church shall select a team to make a systematic inquiry into the request. On the assumption of good faith, and with a belief that the request came as a result of imminent failure of the requesting church, this process will be taken on quickly and with concern for those who have seen they are in need. At the same time, in order to protect Halsted Road Baptist Church from unscrupulous dealings and a possible hostile takeover, the following requirements and restrictions shall be in place.

SECTION II

Guidelines: Merger inquiry guidelines for the team shall be as follows:

1. Doctrinal soundness.
2. Demonstration of cooperation with the agenda of the Southern Baptist convention.
3. Observance of the Constitution of Halsted Road Baptist Church
4. Friendly invitation to the seeking group to attend any services and meetings of Halsted Road Baptist Church as guests.
5. The Halsted Road Baptist Church selected team, in cooperation with the requesting body, shall after much prayer, inquiry and fellowship wait one year following the initial request before the two bodies are united.
6. During the year's time the Halsted Road Baptist Church selected team shall once a month inform both congregation of the progress and concerns of each body.
7. Following a review with both bodies involved, Halsted Road Baptist Church, in a special called business meeting, following proper notification of both congregations, shall vote to accept or deny the merger. The vote shall be taken by paper ballot.

Each member can join the church as an individual. However, having first approached the church as part of a group or congregation wishing to merge with the church, individuals shall be subject to the same restrictions as those of a merging congregation.

ARTICLE VIII – USE OF HALSTED ROAD BAPTIST CHURCH FACILITIES AND EQUIPMENT

1. The church reserves the right to refuse the use of our facilities without explanation or reason or cause. All those making requests shall be informed of all these aspects of this chapter of the by-laws
2. The use of the Halsted Road Baptist Church building and assets shall be limited to those events that are deemed morally compatible with the tenants of the Southern Baptist Faith and Message, the Holy Bible and our interpretation of the scriptures. Each request will be evaluated to determine its moral and Biblical implication and suitability as something to take place on property dedicated to the service of Jesus the Christ.
3. Each request for the use of our facilities must come in writing with detailed information of the event and activity, the names of all organizers (and participants where possible).
4. All requests for use of the facility must be submitted to the Administrative/Worship team through one of the members of that team, preferably the pastor, with ample time for clarifications.
5. No private use of the facilities will be allowed without prior approval by the Administrative/Worship team.
6. The church reserves the right to end any event that is not in keeping with the constitution or the parameters agreed upon in the initial request.

ARTICLE IX – MARRIAGE, INTIMACY AND APPROPRIATE BEHAVIOR

SECTION I

Guidelines: Halsted Road Baptist Church operates on a strongly-held belief that the marriage relationship has been established by God as a solemn union between a man and a woman (Genesis 2:24; Ephesians 5:30). Halsted Road Baptist Church further holds that, in accordance with Scripture, sexual intimacy and sexual activity is appropriate only within the marriage relationship, between husband and wife. (I Corinthians 7:2; Hebrews 13:4).

Accordingly, the following are view by Halsted Road Baptist Church as inappropriate and contrary to Scripture:

1. Any marriage or civil union that is not between a man and a woman.
2. Any sexual intimacy or sexual act between individuals who are not married to one another.
3. Any other activity, teaching, or behavior that is contrary to a biblical view of marriage, and appropriate behavior as outlined in this provision.

All individuals involved in Halsted Road Baptist Church operations, activities, and events are expected to uphold the ministry's perspective on marriage, sexual intimacy, and appropriate behavior as set forth in this provision. Individual and organizations who desire to use Halsted Road Baptist Church facilities must also act in accordance with the provision.

The revised constitution was presented to the church body by the Nominating /Personnel / Constitution team and voted on by the members of the Halsted Road Baptist Church on February 14, 2007.

The Constitution Team

Lynn Watson.....Leader
Shirley Cramlett
Jack Hastings
Margaret Logan
Bonnie Martin
Sue McNece
Lois Payne
Julie Rubendall