**ARTICLE 5**

**VOCATIONAL PASTORS, MINISTERS, AND DIRECTORS**

**5.01 Vocational Pastors, Ministers and Directors.** Vocational Pastors are ordained Elders of the church, who in response to God's call, have devoted their vocational lives to the ministry of the Word and prayer in the service of the church. Vocational Ministers and Vocational Directors are those who, in response to God's call, serve the church vocationally. The church supports Vocational Pastors, Vocational Ministers, and Vocational Directors financially in return for their vocational labors. Qualified men shall fill positions for Vocational Elders and Vocational Ministers. Qualified male or female candidates shall fill positions for Vocational Directors.

**5.02 Duties of** **Vocational Pastors, Ministers and Directors**. Vocational Pastors, Ministers and Directors shall perform the duties determined by the Elders and approved by the church membership. The duties shall be in writing at the time of the call to service. The church's call of a Vocational Pastor is a call to the Eldership of the church. Therefore Vocational Pastors shall have all the Biblical qualifications of an Elder. Vocational Ministers and Directors are not called as Elders, but as assisting partners in the ministry, they shall be held to the same high standards as Elders in their testimony and walk with Jesus. All Vocational Pastors, Ministers and Directors shall be accountable for their vocational duties to the Elders through the Lead Pastor, who will be responsible for the day-to-day operation of the church.

**5.03 Vocational Call.**

1. Vocational Pastors. The church membership shall vote on Vocational Pastors upon recommendation by a 2/3 majority vote of the Elders. Notice of such a meeting will be given in accordance with the requirements of meeting notice in Section 2.08.
2. Vocational Ministers or Directors. The Elders shall call Vocational Ministers or Directors by:
   1. Ballot upon unanimous recommendation by the Elder officers; and
   2. At least a two-third (66.67%) majority of the Elders voting at their regular meeting or at a meeting with notice called for that purpose. If the Elders are composed of a majority of Vocational Pastors, the Deacons shall issue the call.

**5.04 Termination of Vocational Call.**

1. By resignation. A Vocational Pastor, Minister or Director may resign at any time upon the presentation of their resignation to the Elders, who will then present the resignation to the church.
2. Failure to perform vocational duties. When a Vocational Pastor, Minister or Director fails to satisfactorily discharge the duties for which they were called, the Lead Pastor may call for the Elders to proceed with the termination of the Vocational Pastor, Minister or Director’s employment. If the Lead Pastor’s performance is in question, the Elders may recommend his termination to the church according the procedure outlined below. If the Elders are composed by a majority of Vocational Pastors, the Deacons will investigate and consider termination of the Vocational Pastor, Minister or Director.
   * 1. **Vocational Pastors**. A Vocational Pastor’s employment shall be terminated when all of the following conditions are met:
        1. A simple majority of the Elders recommend termination at a regularly scheduled meeting or meeting with notice called for that purpose or deacons as defined in Article 5.04(b);
        2. A Special Meeting of the church membership shall be called by the Elders for the purpose of addressing the recommendation for termination; and
        3. A closed ballot vote of the church which confirms the recommendation to terminate the call of the Vocational Pastor. Notice of such a meeting will be given in accordance with the notice requirements in Article 2.08 of these bylaws.
     2. **Vocational Ministers or Directors.** The vocational call of Ministers or Directors shall be terminated by the Elders at a regular elder meeting or at a meeting with notice called for that purpose by a two-thirds (696.67%) majority. Notice shall be given to the church concerning the Vocational Minister’s or Director’s termination.
3. Grievance. Where a grievance exists against a Vocational Pastor, Minister or Director, either due to their preaching or teaching contrary to the beliefs of the Church or to alleged conduct on their part unfitting for their position, such grievance may be brought before the Elders by any two members of the church in good standing. If the Elders are composed by a majority of Vocational Pastors, then the grievance shall be investigated and considered by the Deacons.
   * 1. **Vocational Pastors.** If, after thorough investigation and consideration, it is believed that the grievance is true, substantial, and worthy of termination, then the vocational call of the Pastor, shall be terminated when all of the following conditions are met:
        1. A simple majority of the Elders recommend termination at a regularly scheduled elder meeting or meeting with notice called for that purpose or deacons as defined in Article 5.04(b); and
        2. By the vote of the church on the Elders’ recommendation. Notice of such a meeting will be given in accordance with the notice requirements in Article 2.08 of these bylaws.
     2. **Vocational Ministers and Directors**. If, after thorough investigation and consideration, it is believed that the grievance is true, substantial, and worthy of termination, the vocational call of the Minister or Director shall be terminated by the Elders at a regular meeting or at a meeting with notice called for that purpose by a two-thirds (66.67%) majority. Notice shall be given to the church concerning the Vocational Minister’s or Director’s termination.
4. Elder Status. Vocational Pastors whose employment is terminated for any reason, including resignation, are also terminated as Elders of the church.

**ARTICLE 6**

**LAY OFFICERS**

**6.01 Duties.** Lay officers are the Lay Elders and the Deacons of the Church. Lay Elders and Deacons shall have the duties of their offices as described in Articles 7 and 8 below.

**6.02 Calling**. The Elders shall recognize, interview, and investigate candidates for lay Elder and Deacon. At any time, the Elders shall provide for individual members of the Church either to nominate candidates or to present themselves to the Elders as candidates for office and for the Elder’s further consideration. In no instance shall any individual be considered a nominee for the office without the nominee’s consent. In those cases where the Elders conclude that a nominee is not qualified for office they shall so inform the nominee stating the reasons for this conclusion.

The Elders shall present a ballot of candidates for calling or reaffirmation as Elders and the calling of Deacons to the congregation at the annual meeting, provided that the written ballot of nominees is available for review in the central office at least ten (10) days in advance of the meeting. Notice of such a meeting will be given in accordance with the notice requirements in Article 2.08 of these bylaws. The Elders may also nominate candidates for affirmation to office at a special meeting called in accordance with Article 2.05 of these bylaws, provided that the written ballot of nominees provided to the church as stated above.

**6.03 Removal.**

* + - * 1. Resignation. An officer may resign his office at any time if he finds he is no longer able to discharge the duties of the office.
        2. Grievance. Where a grievance exists against a lay officer of the Church either due to the adherence to and propagation of beliefs contrary to the beliefs of the Church as set forth in Article 3 of its Constitution or to alleged conduct on his part unfitting an Elder or Deacon, such grievance may be brought before the Elders by any two members in good standing, following the procedures prescribed in Article 5.04(c) of these bylaws of this Church. If the Elders, after thorough investigation and consideration, believe the grievance to be true and substantial, then the lay officer may be removed from office upon the recommendation of the Elders when supported by church vote (see Article 2.05). Notice of such a meeting will be given in accordance with the notice requirements in Article 2.08 of these bylaws.
        3. Lack of reaffirmation. If a Lay Elder stands for reaffirmation and fails to be reaffirmed, the Elder shall be removed from office.

**ARTICLE 7**

**ELDERS**

**7.01 Composition, Term, and Calling**. The Elders shall be composed of the men who are called by the church to serve as Vocational Elders and Lay Elders. The number of Elders at any time will be determined by the needs of the ministry and by the call of qualified men in the church. Vocational Elders shall serve for as long as they are in the employment of the church. Lay Elders shall be called by the membership of the Church to an indefinite number of three year terms. That call and any reaffirmation(s) shall be conducted as provided in Article 6.02 of these bylaws.

**7.02** **Qualifications.** Elders and nominees for Elder shall be qualified for the office as specified in the Bible. Relevant texts include 1 Timothy 3:1-7, Titus 1:6-9 and 1 Peter 5:1-4. Prospective Lay Elders must be members in good standing of Blue Valley Baptist Church for no less than two (2) years. Elders are also required to be in agreement with the Blue Valley Baptist Church beliefs as described in the constitution of the church.

**7.03 Responsibilities.** The fundamental responsibility of the Elders is to devote themselves to prayer and the Word. The Elders are responsible for, but not limited to:

* + - 1. Governing the Church;
      2. Teaching the Word and tending the flock of God;
      3. Examining prospective members of the church;
      4. Overseeing the process of Church discipline;
      5. Examining prospective candidates for lay officers;
      6. Examining prospective candidates for vocational service in the church;
      7. Providing for reporting and recording of official Church business;
      8. Overseeing the work of the Deacons;
      9. Overseeing appointed church teams and offices;
      10. Overseeing the work of the vocational church staff through the Lead Pastor including conducting annual performance reviews;
      11. Hiring and termination of non-ministerial support staff;
      12. Administering the ordinances of the Gospel;
      13. Equipping the membership of the Church for the work of the ministry;
      14. Teaching the whole counsel of God both formally and informally;
      15. Correcting error;
      16. Overseeing, coordinating and promoting the ministries of the Church; and
      17. Mobilizing the Church for world missions.

**7.04** **Organization.** The Elders shall organize themselves however they determine to be best to achieve the mission of the Church. The Elders shall be equal in authority but may be specialized in function. The Elders should meet at least once per month. Meetings of the Elders may be held at any location and may be conducted by means of electronic communication through which the Elders may simultaneously hear and interact with each other. Meetings of the Elders may be held immediately upon notice. A quorum for meetings of the Elders is defined as at least one-half of the membership, plus one. The Elder officers shall consist of Elder Chairman, Vice-Chairman and Recording Secretary. The Lead Pastor of Blue Valley Baptist Church shall serve as the Chairman of the Elders. The Elders shall annually select their Vice-Chairman and Recording Secretary from among its Lay Elders. If enough Lay Elders do not exist to fill both of these positions, the Vice-Chairman shall be selected from among the Lay Elders and the position of Recording Secretary will be filled by a Vocational Elder.

**7.05 Extraordinary Actions.** The Elders may from time to time recommend certain actions which they as a body have determined should not be taken without first being presented to the Church and approved by a vote of the members.

**7.06 Initial Lay Elders**. A five-member Elder Examination Team shall be chosen from the church membership who are in good standing to seek the Lord’s leadership regarding the first Lay Elders. The Vocational Elders shall recommend this team to the Deacons for its affirmation. The Deacons shall then ask the church to approve the Team according to Article 2, Section 2.05, Rights of Members. Notice of such a meeting will be given in accordance with Article 2.08. The Lead Pastor shall serve as one of the members of the Elder Examination Team. This team will review scriptural teachings pertaining to church elders and prayerfully recommend men to the Church to serve as the first Lay Elders. That call shall be conducted as provided in Article 7 of these bylaws. Once the initial Lay Elders have been called, the Elder Examination Team shall be dissolved.

**7.07 Reconstitution of Elders**. In the event that it is necessary to reconstitute the Elders, an Elder Examination Team shall be recommended to the Churchby the Deacons. Church approval shall be by vote according to Article 2.05. Notice of such a meeting will be given in accordance with the notice requirements in Article 2.08 of these bylaws. This team will review scriptural teachings pertaining to church elders and prayerfully recommend men to the Church to serve as Elders. That call shall be conducted as provided in Article 7.01 of these bylaws. Once the Elders have been called, the Elder Examination Team shall be dissolved.