

# CONSTITUTION OF MT. ELON

## PREAMBLE

For the more certain preservation and security of the Principles of our faith, and for the end that this body may be governed in an orderly manner consistent with the Scriptures and the Tenets of the Southern Baptist Convention, 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, we do declare and establish this Constitution and By-Laws.

## CONSTITUTION

### Article I: Name

This body shall be known as Mt. Elon Baptist Church, Inc. which is located in Darlington County, Lydia, South Carolina.

### Article II: Purpose

The purpose of this church shall be the advancement of the Kingdom of Jesus Christ. It shall seek to attain this end through the public worship of God, the preaching of the Gospel of Jesus Christ, consistent living by its members, missionary endeavors, and religious education.

### Article III: Membership Requirement

Section 1: Membership of this church requires a Profession of Faith in Jesus Christ, a favorable vote from the church, and Baptism by Immersion.

Section 2: A member of another Baptist church of like faith and order may be received by vote of the church body upon a letter of dismissal from that church.

Section 3: Anyone who has once been a member of a Baptist church, and in consequence of peculiar circumstances has no regular letter of dismissal, may be received into our fellowship upon a statement satisfactory to the church.

Section 4: Letters of dismissal may be granted to any church of like faith and order for members in good standing. When Letters are granted, membership in this church will terminate. Letters of dismissal will not be granted except to a specific church.

Section 5: When a member of this church joins a church of different faith and order, membership in this church will terminate.

Section 6: In considering the duties involved, members are expected first of all, to be faithful in all the duties essential to the Christian life; to attend regularly the services of the church; to give regularly and systematically to its support and kingdom causes; and to share in its organized work.

Section 7: In considering the rights involved, members and members only may act in the transactions of the church.

### Article IV: Church Officers

Section 1: Officers: The officers of this church shall be a Pastor, and other vocational leadership as needed, Deacons, Trustees, Clerk, Treasurer, and such other officers as shall be required for the work of the church and any of its departments or organizations. All of these shall be elected by the church and shall be members in good standing, unless in interim or temporary service.

Section 2: Election and Duties

#### A. Pastor

A Pastor shall be called by the church to serve until the relationship is dissolved at the request of either the Pastor or the church. The call of the Pastor shall take place at the meeting especially set for that purpose of which at least one week's notice has been given the membership. The election shall be upon

the recommendation of the Search Committee appointed to seek out and nominate as Pastor a Minister of the Gospel whose Christian character and qualifications fit him for the office of Pastor of this church. The Search Committee shall bring only one name at a time for consideration of the church, and no nomination shall be made except that of this committee. Election shall be by ballot with an affirmative vote of 90% necessary for a call. Should the one recommended by the Search Committee fail to receive a 90% vote, the committee will be instructed to seek out another minister, and the meeting shall be adjourned without debate.

The Pastor shall have in charge the welfare and oversight of the church; he shall be an ex-officio member of all organizations, departments, and committees. Each committee and/or organization is requested to keep the Pastor informed of all activities. He may call a special meeting of the Deacons or any committee according to procedures which may be set forth in the By-Laws, he shall conduct religious services on stated and special occasions, administer the ordinances, minister to members of the church and community, and perform other duties that usually pertain to that office; He shall have special charge of the pulpit ministry of the church and shall provide for the pulpit supply when he is absent and arrange for workers to assist in revival meetings and other special services. The Pastor shall preside at all meetings of the church except as otherwise provided in the By-Laws. He shall be the administrative head of the church and shall arrange and approve all absences and vacations of all church employees, except janitorial employees.

### B. Deacons

Deacons shall at all times consider themselves as servants of the church. With the Pastor, and as the Holy Spirit may direct, they are to consider and make recommendations to the church in all matters pertaining to its work and progress, including responsibility of the discipline of the church; establish and maintain Spiritual Fraternal Relations with all members of the church, assist the Pastor in the observance of the ordinances; Have general responsibility over the upkeep, repair and use of the church property; And supervise the financial program of the church. They shall arrange for regular meetings and such committees as are necessary to the discharge of their duties. The Pastor, or the Chairman of the Deacons, may call the Deacons into special session whenever need for such arises.

There shall be twelve Deacons for the first five hundred resident members, then as many other Deacons as the church may require. The number of resident church members will be determined by those on the roll as of the last Sunday in July.

Deacons shall be elected for a term of three (3) years with one-third of the number being elected each year. In order to be elected a Deacon, one must be a member of this church at least one year prior to election and must be a minimum of 18 years of age. The Deacons shall strive to meet all moral and spiritual qualifications set forth in the word of God (Acts 6:3-8 & 1 Timothy 3:8-13 ).

After the completion of a full three year term, no Deacon shall be eligible for re-election until after the lapse of two (2) years.

At a regular Sunday morning worship service, not later than the second Sunday in August, all church members shall vote for the four people they wish to have serve as Deacons. Selections will be from the active adult membership list. The retiring Deacons, acting as the tallying committee, shall count the ballots and contact these people to determine if they will serve as Deacons. The committee will continue this process until four people have agreed to serve as Deacons. In case of a tie, it will be determined by prayer and the casting of lots.

In the event a vacancy occurs among the active Deacons, the same procedure will be followed to fill the vacancy. The date of that election shall be determined by the Deacons. The Deacons shall elect annually their own officers with only active Deacons eligible to vote and hold office.

### C. Trustees

The Trustees shall consist of the Chairman of the Deacons, Treasurer, and Clerk. They shall, as provided by law and the action of the church, hold in trust the title to all property of the church and shall represent the church in all matters of legal responsibility regarding the purchase, improvement and

disposal of church property. They shall execute all legal papers relating to the church and to the community, as the church may direct. They shall have no power to buy, sell, mortgage, lease, or transfer any church property without a specific vote of the church authorizing such action; Neither shall they have any control over the use of the church property except by vote of the church.

#### D. Clerk

The Clerk shall be elected annually. It shall be the Clerk's duty to attend, or be represented at all church business meetings, to keep an accurate record of all business transactions, to prepare the annual association letter and when necessary, notify all officers, members of committees, and messengers of their election or appointment. The Clerk shall see that letters of dismissal as authorized by the church are issued through the church office, preserve all papers, valuable letters and records that belong to the church, and preserve a true history of the church. It shall also be the duty of the Clerk to see that an accurate roll of the church membership is kept in the church office with dates and methods of admission and dismissal, change in name, correct mailing addresses and other pertinent information.

#### E. Treasurer

The Treasurer and the Assistant Treasurer shall be elected annually. The Assistant Treasurer will fulfill the duties of the Treasurer when needed. It shall be the duty of the Treasurer to receive, keep in a bank, and disburse by check upon proper authority all money or things of value that are given to the church, and to keep at all times an itemized account of all receipts and disbursements, rendering a regular account to the church to be preserved by the church. The Treasurer shall oversee receiving empty offering envelopes after the money has been removed and counted by the teller committee. These envelopes will be held for five (5) years. The Treasurer shall give each contributor individual credit as provided in the record system approved by the church. The Treasurer's books may be audited as arranged by the Deacons, and all books, records, and accounts kept by the Treasurer shall be considered the property of the church. The Treasurer shall upon invitation meet with the Deacons. The Treasurer will be an ex-officio member of the Budget and Finance Committee.

#### Article V: Meetings

Section 1: This church shall hold regular meetings for worship, teaching, training, and fellowship.

Section 2: This church shall hold regular business meetings at which time the material and spiritual conditions of the church will be discussed, and plans projected for progress in kingdom endeavors.

Section 3: Other meetings of the church as a whole, or of authorized groups within the church, shall be set according to the needs of the congregation. In any business meeting of the church the procedure called for in Robert's Rules Of Order will be followed.

#### Article VI: General

Section 1: License: When a member announces to the church that they feel the call to the ministry, the church, by majority vote, may license them as an acknowledgment of their call to the ministry and encouragement to make preparation for it. The Clerk of the church may furnish the member with a copy of the minutes or a certificate of license as their credential. It is understood that the performance of civil duties by the member shall be governed by the state law.

Section 2: Ordination: In the event this church has been requested to Ordain a member who has been called as Pastor of a Baptist church the following procedure shall be followed: The church will express its approval by a vote of three-fourths of the members present at any regularly arranged business meeting of the church. After which the church shall invite the Association Council on Ordination to examine the candidate concerning his fitness for the ministry. In the event the association has no such council, the church shall invite representatives of neighboring churches to examine the candidate and report to the church. In the event the report of the committee is favorable, the church shall proceed with the ordination.

Section 3: Association and Convention Affiliation: We believe there is mutual helpfulness in the

association of churches of like faith. Believing the Welsh Neck Association, the Baptist State Convention of South Carolina, and the Southern Baptist Convention work to promote the spirit of the Constitution and Articles of Faith of this church, we therefore agree to participate in these organizations.

Section 4: Property Holdings: It is agreed that the securing and maintaining of real property, buildings and equipment by this church shall be for the express purpose of providing facilities for public worship and for the engagement upon the missionary, educational, and benevolent interests of this church, of the character and in the spirit of this Constitution and the Articles of Faith of this congregation.

If at any time this church shall determine to alter the quality of its beliefs and practices so that in important respects they are at a variance with the character described in this Constitution and in the Articles of Faith, and if the decision to alter the quality of such beliefs and practices is by less than unanimous vote of those present at a regular business meeting of the church, it is understood that the rights of the property of the church shall inhere in that part of the congregation which shall agree to continue to use the property for the purpose for which it was purchased and has been to that time maintained.

#### Article VII: Adoption and Amendments

Section 1: This Constitution shall be considered adopted and in immediate effect if and when two-thirds of the members present at the business meeting at which the vote is taken shall vote in favor of the same. This vote shall be taken not less than thirty days after formal presentation of the Constitution to the church.

Section 2: This Constitution may be amended, altered, or repealed by a two-thirds vote of the members present at any regular business meeting of the church. This may be done provided such amendment, alteration, or repeal be given to the Clerk in writing. This proposed change shall be presented to the church at least thirty days prior to the time the vote is to be taken.