

PROPOSED CONSTITUTION for SUNRISE BAPTIST CHURCH

Resting our faith in the Lord Jesus Christ for our salvation, and believing in the teachings and principles given to us in the Holy Scriptures and for which Converge Baptists stand, we unite as a body of baptized believers in Jesus Christ and adopt the following articles:

ARTICLE I. NAME AND AFFILIATION

The name of this church is Sunrise Baptist Church, hereafter referred to as SBC, established on July 25, 1903, incorporated in May 1950, located in North Whatcom County in the State of Washington, and affiliated with Converge Northwest, a District of Converge churches in the USA.

ARTICLE II. PURPOSE OF THE CHURCH

As a community of Christians dedicated to the corporate worship and the glorification of God, SBC exists to foster our values and priorities that enable us to fulfill our mission and vision as a church.

ARTICLE III. MISSION OF THE CHURCH

The mission of SBC is to multiply disciples who know, love, and obey the Lord Jesus Christ.

ARTICLE IV. STATEMENT OF FAITH

The SBC Statement of Faith is found as Addendum A of the church's bylaws. This is also the same as the Converge Statement of Faith, the denomination with which SBC is affiliated.

ARTICLE V. NON-PROFIT STATUS

SBC is organized as a non-profit (501(c)3) religious organization in the State of Washington.

ARTICLE VI. METHODS OF CHURCH FINANCING

Guided by biblical stewardship, we believe God's work in and through SBC shall be supported by His people through tithes and freewill offerings.

ARTICLE VII. CHURCH MEMBERSHIP

The requirements for church membership at SBC shall be a believer's baptism, approval by the Elder Team, and personal support of the SBC guiding documents. (An expression of our Membership Commitment is found as Addendum B of the church's bylaws.)

ARTICLE VIII. MEETINGS OF MEMBERS

Members of SBC shall meet weekly on Sundays for worship and other times as determined by the Elder Team. An Annual Business Meeting will be held during the fall. Other congregational business meetings may be called when needed. Unless otherwise stipulated in the SBC bylaws, twenty-five percent (25%) of church members shall constitute a quorum for all congregational business meetings.

ARTICLE IX. CHURCH GOVERNANCE

The head of the Church and SBC is the Lord Jesus Christ. Under Him, the assembled members are the highest human authority for governing SBC. Church governance is delegated by the members of SBC to the church Leadership Team. (A detailed description of our church Leadership Team, comprised of pastors, elders, and deacons, can be found in Section 4 of the bylaws.)

ARTICLE X. CHURCH OFFICERS

For legal purposes, the Elder Chairman will be considered the President of SBC, the Deacon Chairman will be considered the Vice-President, the Church Treasurer will be considered the Treasurer, and the Deacon Secretary will be considered the Secretary. These Church Officers will take their direction from the Deacon Team.

ARTICLE XI. PROPERTY RIGHTS

In the event of a division among the church members, the name "Sunrise Baptist Church" and all church property shall be retained by those members remaining and adhering to the current constitution and bylaws. In the event that SBC is dissolved or ceases to function, the assets shall become the property of the Converge Northwest District, a 501(c)3 non-profit ministry organization.

ARTICLE XII. PROVISIONS FOR BYLAWS

A supplement to this constitution, known as the SBC Bylaws, shall embody the general procedures for the operation of SBC. No bylaws may be in conflict with the principles of the Constitution. The church Leadership Team is responsible for developing other specific guiding documents for the ministry of SBC.

ARTICLE XIII. AMENDMENTS TO THE CONSTITUTION

The SBC Constitution may be amended or revised at any congregational business meeting with a two-thirds (2/3) majority of votes cast. Amendments must be submitted in writing to the Elder Team for review at least 60 days and presented in writing to the congregation at least 30 days prior to voting.

This Constitution is hereby accepted by the members of Sunrise Baptist Church on (Month/Day/Year) as indicated by the following signatures:

(Signature) _____ President of SBC
(Print Name)

(Signature) _____ Vice-President of SBC
(Print Name)

PROPOSED BYLAWS for SUNRISE BAPTIST CHURCH

SECTION 1: OUR CHURCH'S NAME AND AFFILIATION

We are Sunrise Baptist Church (SBC), located in North Whatcom County, affiliated with the Converge denomination.

SECTION 2: OUR MISSION

Our mission is to multiply disciples who know, love, and obey the Lord Jesus Christ.

SECTION 3: OUR CHURCH MEMBERSHIP

Sunrise Baptist Church is a congregational church that values the importance of church membership.

A. Relationships

A forever relationship with Christ and His Body, the Church, through salvation by grace through faith in Jesus Christ is the primary qualification of spiritual membership in Christ's Church throughout the ages.

A relationship with other believers who have become members of our church family by a commitment to one another under Christ's rule is an important aspect of membership in SBC, a local body of believers.

B. Responsibilities

Church membership at SBC carries with it the responsibility to:

- Live out the mission and vision of the church (Matt 22:34–40).
- Participate prayerfully, faithfully, financially, and fully in the life of our church; we encourage active participation in a church-sponsored small group or Sunday School class (Heb 10:23–25).
- Strive for the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace (Eph 4:1–3).
- Serve others with the heart and mind of Christ (Phil 2:1–11).
- Honor and follow our Pastors and church leaders as they follow Christ (Heb 13:7–17; 1 Cor 11:1).

C. Requirements for Membership

As a Baptist church, we require believer's baptism for membership. While our preferred and practiced mode is baptism by immersion, the Elder Team has the freedom to acknowledge another mode of believer's baptism in special circumstances.

Our church requires that all who seek to become members submit an application to the Elder Team who must unanimously approve of their membership and present them to the congregation.

Our church requires that all our members agree to our Membership Commitment and support our church guiding documents.

The processes and procedures of becoming a member are created and implemented by the Elder Team. (Please see our policy for membership for the steps to join our church community.)

D. Removal and Reinstatement of Membership

Should a member of SBC leave the church, they are responsible to notify our church in writing of the transfer or resignation of their membership status.

The Elder Team may also remove the membership of anyone who has been unsuccessfully disciplined following Scriptural guidelines and SBC's church discipline policy.*

Anyone whose membership has been removed may reapply for membership following our policy for membership.

The processes and procedures of removing a member are created and implemented by the Elder Team. (Please see our policy concerning membership removal.*)

SECTION 4: OUR CHURCH LEADERSHIP

Leadership at SBC is comprised of three teams: the Pastoral Team, the Elder Team, and the Deacon Team. These three teams together are known as the Leadership Team.

A. Our Pastoral Team

Our Pastoral Team consists of men who have been called by God to pastoral ministry. The Pastoral Team will include our Lead Pastor, other pastoral staff, and pastoral interns when applicable. The Pastoral Team serves our church and community primarily through:

- The ministry of the Word of God and prayer.
- The ministry of shepherding the congregation and overseeing the church staff.
- The ministry of church leadership and disciple-making.

B. Our Lead Pastor

1. Qualifications and Function

As a member of the Pastoral Team and the Elder Team, the qualifications and responsibilities for our Lead Pastor will first come from God's Word in 1 Tim 3:1–7, Titus 1:5–9, 1 Pet 5:1–11, Acts 20:17–33, and Eph 4:11–13.

In addition he will:

- Be a visionary, unifying leader for our church.
- Lead the Pastoral Team.
- Exercise general oversight of church leaders and staff.
- Serve as an ex-officio member of all ministry teams (i.e., boards, committees).
- Be a servant-leader who loves God wholly and loves others radically.
- Live out the God-given mission and vision of SBC in our church and broader community.
- Be known for loving Jesus and loving the body of believers at SBC.
- Be sympathetic and cooperative with Converge and in agreement with the SBC Affirmation of Faith.

2. Accountability

First, our Lead Pastor is accountable to the Lord Jesus Christ who has called him to SBC. Under God's authority, he is also accountable to the Elder Team and to the church membership as a whole.

The Elder Team will conduct an annual review of our Lead Pastor and his ministry according to the SBC Policies and Procedures.*

3. Term of Office

Our Lead Pastor is called to serve the Lord as our lead under-shepherd as long as God leads both him and SBC and he remains qualified and faithful to his calling.

4. Selection and Calling

When our church needs a new Lead Pastor, a Pastoral Search Team (PST) will be formed and approved by the Elder Team. This team, made up of seven (7) to nine (9) members who are elected and affirmed by the church membership, will include men and women and at least one (1) but no more than two (2) elders. The PST will select a qualified Lead Pastor candidate to present to the church membership for a vote. A minimum of 80% approval of votes cast by the members is required to call a Lead Pastor.

The process and guidelines for the pastoral search process are found in the SBC Policies and Procedures* for the Selection and Calling of a New Lead Pastor.

When called, a Pastor and his wife (if applicable) become members of SBC and remain so until resignation or removal from office.

5. Discipline or Termination

If church discipline or termination of our Lead Pastor is needed, the Elder Team will be responsible for guiding the church through this process. Every effort will be made to ground the process in Scripture, to consult with our Converge Northwest district leadership, and to follow the SBC Policies and Procedures.*

C. Our Other Pastoral Staff

1. Qualifications and Function

As a member of the Pastoral Team, the qualifications and responsibilities for our other pastoral staff will come from God's Word in 1 Tim 3:1–7, Titus 1:5–9, 1 Pet 5:1–11, Acts 20:17–33, and Eph 4:11–13.

2. Selection and Calling

As deemed necessary and advisable by the Lead Pastor and the Elder Team and with the approval of the church body, additional pastoral staff positions may be filled.

When called, a Pastor and his wife (if applicable) become members of SBC and remain so until resignation or removal from office.

3. Accountability

All other pastoral staff are supervised by and accountable to our Lead Pastor. They will have their ministry reviewed on an annual basis by the Lead Pastor and one other Elder Team member.

4. Discipline or Termination

The church policies for resignation and termination for the Lead Pastor will also apply to all pastoral staff. The Elder Team has the authority to discipline, suspend, or terminate any pastoral staff other than the Lead Pastor according to the SBC Policies and Procedures.*

D. Our Elder Team

1. Qualifications and Function

The Elder Team consists of men who are active members in good standing of SBC and who possess the appropriate spiritual and relational qualifications as specified in 1 Tim 3:1–13 and Titus 1:5–9. The Elder Team serves our church and community primarily through:

- The ministry of church oversight and prayer.
- The ministry of shepherding and disciple-making in partnership with the Pastoral Team.
- The ministry of overseeing church membership and carrying out church discipline when needed.

2. Selection

Members of our Elder Team will be elected by the church membership by a vote with a two-thirds ($\frac{2}{3}$) majority of votes cast at the Annual Business Meeting. Any active member of SBC may submit names to the Nominating Team for consideration. The Nominating Team processes the potential nominees, and submits their recommendation to the Elder Team for approval to the ballot. In the event of an Elder stepping down during his term of office, the Leadership Team may appoint a qualified replacement who will serve for the remainder of the vacated year.

3. Accountability

The Elder Team will serve under the authority of the Lord Jesus Christ and the Word of God and be accountable to the membership of our church which delegates church leadership and spiritual oversight to them.

If church discipline or termination of an Elder is needed, the Leadership Team will be responsible for guiding the church through this process. Every effort will be made to ground the process in Scripture and to follow the SBC Policies and Procedures.*

4. Term of Office

Our Elders will serve a 3-year term of office with provision for overlapping terms with other members. They may be elected for up to two (2) consecutive terms of three (3) years each, after which they must take a sabbatical of one (1) year before the possibility of re-election.

5. Size

The size of the Elder Team will be determined by the Leadership Team considering the needs of the church and the number of qualified nominees available. The Elder Team is designed to function with a minimum of six (6) members not including the Lead Pastor or any other pastoral staff.

6. Organization

The Elder Team will be self-organizing. They must annually select an Elder Chairman (who will be the Church Chairman), Elder Vice-Chairman, and Elder Secretary from its members. The Church Chairman must be approved by the congregation and will chair and lead congregational business meetings and serve as an ex-officio member of all ministry teams.

E. Our Deacon Team

1. Qualifications and Function

The Deacon Team consists of men who are active members in good standing of SBC and who possess the appropriate spiritual and relational qualifications as specified in 1 Tim 3:8–13. The Deacon Team serves our church and community primarily through:

- The ministry of congregational care and prayer.
- The ministry of practical support of church ministries and church administration, including finances.
- The ministry of benevolent care and the facilitation of the church ordinances.

2. Selection

Members of the Deacon Team will be elected by the church membership by a vote with a two-thirds ($\frac{2}{3}$) majority of votes cast at the Annual Business Meeting. Any active member of SBC may submit names to the Nominating Team for consideration. The Nominating Team processes the potential nominees, and submits their recommendation to the Elder Team for approval to the ballot. In the event of a Deacon stepping down during their term of office, the Leadership Team may appoint a qualified replacement who will serve for the remainder of the vacated year.

3. Accountability

The Deacon Team will serve under the authority of the Lord Jesus Christ, the Word of God, and the Elder Team and be accountable to the membership of our church. They will provide monthly and annual reports to the Elder Team with the annual report also going to the church membership.

If church discipline or termination of a Deacon is needed, the Leadership Team will be responsible for guiding the church through this process. Every effort will be made to ground the process in Scripture and to follow the SBC Policies and Procedures.*

4. Term of Office

Our Deacons will serve a 3-year term of office with provision for overlapping terms with other members. They may be elected for up to two (2) consecutive terms of three (3) years each, after which they must take a sabbatical of one (1) year before the possibility of re-election.

5. Size

The size of the Deacon Team will be determined by the Leadership Team considering the needs of the church and the number of qualified nominees available. The Deacon Team is designed to function with a minimum of six (6) members not including any pastoral staff.

6. Organization

The Deacon Team will be self-organizing. They must annually select a Deacon Chairman, Deacon Vice-Chairman, and Deacon Secretary from its members.

F. Our Legal Church Officers

For legal purposes, the Elder Chairman will be considered the President of SBC, the Deacon Chairman will be considered the Vice-President, the Church Treasurer will be considered the Treasurer, and the Deacon Secretary will be considered the Secretary. These Church Officers will take their direction from the Deacon Team.

G. Other Church Officers

Other church officers will be the Financial Secretary, the Church Treasurer, and the Financial Overseer. Each officer, either male or female, must be a member of SBC and will be nominated by the Nominating Team, approved by the Deacon Team and elected by the congregation at the Annual Business Meeting. Each officer will serve a one (1) year term and may be re-elected annually.

If church discipline or termination of a church officer is needed, the Leadership Team will be responsible for guiding the church through this process. Every effort will be made to ground the process in Scripture and to follow the SBC Policies and Procedures.

H. Our Nominating Team

The Nominating Team will consist of a minimum of ten (10) members of SBC, either male or female, and be nominated by the Nominating Team, approved by the Elder Team and elected by the congregation at the Annual Business Meeting. Members of the Nominating Team will serve a term of two (2) years and then must take a sabbatical of one (1) year before the possibility of re-election. The Nominating Team will be chaired by a member of the Elder Team.

SECTION 5: OUR MINISTRY TEAMS LEADERSHIP

A. Qualifications and Function

Ministry Team Leaders are valued men and women who provide spiritual and organizational leadership and oversight to specific ministries that support the mission and vision of SBC. They will be members of our church who reflect and live out the mission and vision of our church. They will have the spiritual gifts and passion for providing the visionary leadership and administration for their specific ministry.

These Ministry Team Leaders will be approved by the Elder Team and operate under the authority of the Leadership Team.

B. Responsibilities

- They will oversee their ministry leadership team including recruiting and developing people to assist them in ministry team leadership.
- They will ensure that their ministry team does the work of ministry (1 Tim 4:11–14).
- They will set the Spirit-led direction for their ministry with their ministry team, evaluate ministry effectiveness, and provide regular updates to their assigned church leader.
- All Ministry Team Leaders will meet together as a group regularly under the direction of the Lead Pastor, or the Elder Chairman in the absence of the Lead Pastor.

C. Number and Selection

The number of Ministry Team Leaders will be determined by need and the availability of qualified candidates. They will be appointed by the Pastoral, Elder, or Deacon Team who will also determine and approve their ministry description and tenure of service. Members of the Leadership Team may also serve as Ministry Team Leaders.

D. Organization

Each Ministry Team Leader will be responsible to organize his or her ministry team and leadership for effectiveness.

SECTION 6: CONGREGATIONAL MEETINGS

An Annual Business Meeting of the church will be held in the fall at a time determined by the Elder Team. Other congregational business meetings may be called as needed by the Elder Team throughout the year. Twenty members of the church may also petition the Elder Team in writing for a meeting. The Elder Team will then call a special meeting for the purpose or agenda requested.

The conduct and order of our meetings will be determined first by the Holy Spirit, then by the current edition of *Robert's Rules of Order*.

The quorum for all congregational business meetings will be twenty-five percent (25%) of church membership. Attendance and voting may be conducted in person or online.

SECTION 7: INDEMNIFICATION OF CHURCH OFFICERS

Any church officer who is involved in litigation by reason of his or her position as an officer of SBC will be indemnified and held harmless by our church to the fullest extent as authorized by Washington State law as it now exists or may be amended (but, in the case of any such amendment, only to the extent of any such amendment permits our church to provide broader indemnification rights).

SECTION 8: AMENDMENTS TO THESE BYLAWS

These bylaws may be amended at any congregational business meeting with a two-thirds ($\frac{2}{3}$) majority of votes cast. Amendments must be submitted in writing to the Elder Team for review at least 60 days and presented in writing to the congregation for review at least 30 days prior to voting.

*The SBC Policies and Procedures is a dynamic, working, and developing church guiding document and is available for review in the church office.

Addendum A
STATEMENT OF FAITH

- I. The Word of God. We believe that the Bible is the Word of God, fully inspired and without error in the original manuscripts, written under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, and that it has supreme authority in all matters of faith and conduct.
- II. The Trinity. We believe that there is one living and true God, eternally existing in three persons, that these are equal in every divine perfection, and that they execute distinct but harmonious offices in the work of creation, providence, and redemption.
- III. God the Father. We believe in God, the Father, an infinite, personal spirit, perfect in holiness, wisdom, power, and love. We believe that He concerns Himself mercifully in the affairs of , that He hears and answers prayer, and that He saves from sin and death all who come to Him through Jesus Christ.
- IV. Jesus Christ. We believe in Jesus Christ, God's only begotten Son, conceived by the Holy Spirit. We believe in His virgin birth, sinless life, miracles and teachings. We believe in His substitutionary atoning death, bodily resurrection, ascension into heaven, perpetual intercession for His people, and personal visible return to earth.
- V. The Holy Spirit. We believe in the Holy Spirit who came forth from the Father and Son to convict the world of sin, righteousness, and judgment, and to regenerate, sanctify, and empower all who believe in Jesus Christ. We believe that the Holy Spirit indwells every believer in Christ, and that He is an abiding helper, teacher, and guide.
- VI. Regeneration. We believe that all people are sinners by nature and by choice and are, therefore, under condemnation. We believe that those who repent of their sins and trust in Jesus Christ as Savior are regenerated by the Holy Spirit.
- VII. The Church. We believe in the universal church, a living spiritual body of which Christ is the head and all regenerated persons are members. We believe in the local church, consisting of a company of believers in Jesus Christ, baptized on a credible profession of faith, and associated for worship, work, and fellowship. We believe that God has laid upon the members of the local church the primary task of giving the Gospel of Jesus Christ to a lost world.
- VIII. Christian Conduct. We believe that Christians should live for the glory of God and the well-being of others; that their conduct should be blameless before the world; that they should be faithful stewards of their possessions; and that they should seek to realize for themselves and others the full stature of maturity of Christ.
- IX. The Ordinances. We believe that the Lord Jesus Christ has committed two ordinances to the local church: baptism and the Lord's Supper. We believe that Christian baptism is the immersion of a believer in water into the name of the triune God. We believe that the Lord's Supper was instituted by Christ for commemoration of His death. We believe that these two ordinances should be observed and administered until the return of the Lord Jesus Christ.

- X. Religious Liberty. We believe that every human being has direct relations with God, and is responsible to God alone in all matters of faith; that each church is independent and must be free from interference by any ecclesiastical political authority; that therefore Church and State must be kept separate as having different functions, each fulfilling its duties free from dictation or patronage of the other.

- XI. Church Cooperation. We believe that local churches can best promote the cause of Jesus Christ by cooperating with one another in a denominational organization. Such an organization, whether it is the Conference or a district conference, exists and functions by the will of the churches. Cooperation in a conference is voluntary and may be terminated at any time. Churches may likewise cooperate with interdenominational fellowships on a voluntary independent basis.

- XII. The Last Things. We believe in the personal and visible return of the Lord Jesus Christ to earth and the establishment of His kingdom. We believe in the resurrection of the body, the final judgment, the eternal felicity of the righteous, and the endless suffering of the wicked.

Addendum B
MEMBERSHIP COMMITMENT

Having been led by the Holy Spirit to receive Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord, and having confessed this by baptism, we commit to the purpose of Sunrise Baptist Church. We will actively participate in this community of Christians and dedicate ourselves to the corporate worship and the glorification of God.

We commit to increasingly value **truth** as revealed in the Bible and embodied in Jesus Christ.

We commit to increasingly value **community** that authentically lives out our life in Christ with one another.

We commit to increasingly value the **multiplication** of disciples by intentionally living like Jesus and helping others do the same.

We commit to prioritize the following Christian practices which lead to godliness:

- **Relationships:** Pursuing loving relationships inside and outside our church family.
- **Gratitude:** Cultivating grateful hearts in response to God's kindness.
- **Transformation:** Transforming spiritual minds by growing in the grace and knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ.
- **Instruction:** Seeking gospel instruction from others and for others.
- **Generosity:** Modeling generous giving as a steward of God's many gifts.
- **Service:** Upholding humble service as an expression of God's love.
- **Prayer:** Practicing persistent prayer depending on God, always.

We commit to fulfilling our mission and vision together of Multiplying Disciples who Know, Love, and Obey the Lord Jesus Christ by Loving God Wholly and Loving Our Neighbors Radically.