

Policies and Procedures

Sycamore Baptist Church

Table of Contents

<i>PURPOSE</i>	1
<i>POLICY</i>	1
<i>PROCEDURE</i>	1
<i>POLICY ON ADDITIONS AND CHANGES TO THIS MANUAL</i>	2
Church Membership	2
<i>THE SCRIPTURAL CALL TO CHURCH MEMBERSHIP</i>	2
<i>GENERAL QUALIFICATIONS AND PROCEDURES:</i>	3
<i>MEANINGFUL MEMBERSHIP</i>	3
<i>MEMBERSHIP PROCESS</i>	4
<i>CHURCH COVENANT</i>	4
<i>CATEGORIES OF MEMBERSHIP</i>	5
<i>RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF MEMBERS</i>	6
<i>TERMINATION OF MEMBERSHIP</i>	6

PURPOSE

This manual has as its purpose to set forth in an orderly fashion the Policies and Procedures of Sycamore Baptist Church. It is authorized by the Constitution of the Church to be in existence and to outline the specifics of how the church will conduct itself in its ministry and business administration. It is a reference guide to the functions and the operations of the church. It lists routine duties and answers questions that arise as duties are performed.

POLICY

Policy is a statement of how the church will handle situations and circumstances to provide a direction for the church to take. It defines the authority required, boundaries set, responsibilities delegated and guidelines established to carry out a function of the church. Policies tell who does the task, why it is done, and under what circumstances it is done.

Policies provide uniform treatment of a situation, thus achieving continuity of operation. Policies take personalities out of the picture. Decisions are based on the church policy, not on the individual and each situation is treated the same.

PROCEDURE

Procedure is an outline of the method by which the church will carry out its functions.

POLICY ON ADDITIONS AND CHANGES TO THIS MANUAL

This manual is intended to contain all the policies and procedures of this Church to aid in the day-to-day operations of the Church. Unlike the Constitution of the Church, proposed changes to this manual can be approved at any regular business meeting as defined in the Church Constitution. No special notice is required.

1. Any active member, team, committee or organization may propose additions and/or changes to this manual.
 - a. Although not required, it is strongly encouraged that all proposed additions and/or changes be presented in writing to aid in clarity and understanding.
2. Any proposed addition and/or change to this manual shall be submitted to the Pastor to review with the appropriate Team.
 - a. In the absence of a Pastor, proposed additions and/or changes shall be submitted to the Chairman of the Deacons to review with the appropriate team.
3. Following the review, the Pastor, Chairman of the Deacons or said team shall present the proposed change to the church at a regular business meeting with a recommendation to approve, disapprove or approve with modification.
4. Substantive changes to this manual require approval of two thirds of the active members present at the Business Meeting when the changes are presented for approval.
 - a. A substantive change is an alteration to the currently approved Policy and Procedures Manual that actually changes policy, adds policy or removes policy.
 - b. Examples of changes that are not considered substantive are grammar and spelling changes, changes or additions of forms that implement existing policy.
 - c. The Pastor (or Chairman of the Deacons in the absence of a Pastor) will monitor all non-substantive changes on behalf of the church.

Sections of this manual regarding church organization should be kept up to date as teams and organizations are added and/or removed from the church organization.

Church Membership

THE SCRIPTURAL CALL TO CHURCH MEMBERSHIP

At Sycamore Baptist Church, we believe the following regarding the church:

1. The church is built by Jesus (Matt. 16:18; Acts 20:28; Eph. 5:25).
2. Jesus is the head of His church (Eph. 5:22-23).
3. Jesus personally identifies with the church He builds (Acts 9:4).
4. The church provides a means for believers to exercise their individual spiritual gifts, which results in the building up of the body of Christ (Eph. 4:7-16; 1 Cor. 12; Rom. 12).
5. Believers are not to forsake the assembling together with one another (Heb. 10:25)

6. Church members are to submit to and honor their Pastors who are accountable to God to look after their souls (Heb. 13:17; 1 Tim. 5:7).

We also believe:

1. Jesus has called out men to be Pastors of His Church (Eph. 4:11-16; Heb. 13:17)
 - a. Current Pastors of Sycamore Baptist Church would include the pastoral staff.
2. He has entrusted to them a specific group of believers (Eph. 4:11-16; Heb. 13:17; 1 Pet. 5:1-5)
3. The Pastors are then to shepherd and protect those that have been entrusted to them (Eph. 4:11-16; Acts 20:28-30)
 - a. We believe this is accomplished through teaching, counseling, discipleship, caring for the widows and orphans, and exercising church discipline (Eph. 4:11-16; 1 Pet. 5:1-5; Acts 20:28-30; 1 Tim. 5:3-16; 1 Cor. 5:1-12; Matt. 18).

For these reasons, Sycamore Baptist Church believes church membership is scriptural.

GENERAL QUALIFICATIONS AND PROCEDURES:

Sycamore Baptist Church is a sovereign and democratic Southern Baptist church under the lordship of Jesus Christ. The church membership reserves the exclusive right to determine who shall be members of this church and the conditions of such membership.

At Sycamore Baptist Church, we believe membership is reserved for those who:

1. Profess Jesus Christ as their Lord and Savior.
2. Have been baptized as believers by immersion, which accords with New Testament teaching on baptism (Matt. 3:5-6; 3:16a; 28:18-19; Mark 16:16 Acts 2:37-38; 8:12; 9:18; Colossians 2:11-12), as well as like faith and practice among Baptists.

MEANINGFUL MEMBERSHIP

Not only do we believe church membership is scriptural, we also believe it should be meaningful. At Sycamore Baptist Church we believe the church is the New Covenant community of believers who are assembled under biblical leadership to hear the Word preached and joyfully submit, participate in the covenant ceremonies together, bear one another's burdens and scatter to proclaim the gospel until Christ comes again. In order for the church to act in the manner described, it must be comprised of believers who gather together regularly and care for one another. The best way for this to occur is if we view membership as meaningful.

We believe, in order for membership to be meaningful, there needs to be:

1. **A Covenant Community** - When we desire membership in a local church, we desire to covenant with its members and leadership. In covenanting with its members we are

agreeing to serve, minister to, and care for them, in addition to allowing them to care for us both physically and spiritually. In covenanting with the leadership we are allowing them to care for us by looking after both our physical and spiritual needs.

2. **Church Covenant** - All members of Sycamore Baptist Church hold to and abide by the church covenant.
3. **Accountability** - It is biblical for church members to submit to and desire accountability from one another and the church. Accountability should be biblically based; exercised with wisdom, discernment, and love; and will occur through, personal individual relationships, preaching, teaching, counseling, or by the church enacting church discipline if necessary.

MEMBERSHIP PROCESS

Since we believe church membership is meaningful, we have outlined a process that we believe will help facilitate meaningful membership. Our process is as follows:

1. If someone desires membership at Sycamore Baptist Church, they can show their desire by coming down front after one of our Sunday Services.
2. The candidate will then be presented to the church for affirmation.
 - a. The Pastoral Staff, or a Deacon in their absence, will confirm that one of the following requirements for membership has been met:
 - i. A profession of faith and Baptism.
 - ii. A promise of a letter of recommendation from another Baptist Church.
 - iii. A statement of faith and prior Baptism by immersion after review by the Pastor and Deacons when no letter is attainable
 - iv. People that profess faith in Christ Jesus but lack baptism by immersion due to extenuating physical circumstances (baptism might prove physically harmful).

CHURCH COVENANT

Members of Sycamore Baptist Church hold to and abide by the church covenant, which is as follows:

Having been led, as we believe, by the Spirit of God, to receive the Lord Jesus Christ as our Savior, and, on the profession of our faith, having been baptized in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, we do now, in the presence of God, angels and this assembly, most solemnly and joyfully covenant with one another as one body in Christ.

We engage, therefore, by the aid of the Holy Spirit, to walk together in Christian love, to strive for the advancement of this church in knowledge and holiness; to promote its prosperity and spirituality; to sustain its worship, ordinances, discipline and doctrines; to contribute cheerfully and regularly to the support of the ministry, the expenses of the church, the relief of the poor, and the spread of the gospel to all nations.

We also engage to maintain family and personal devotions; to educate our children in the Christian faith; to seek the salvation of our kindred and acquaintances; to walk circumspectly in the world; to be just in our dealings, faithful in our engagements, and exemplary in our deportment, to avoid all gossip, backbiting and excessive anger; to seek God's help in abstaining from practices that bring unwarranted harm to the body or jeopardize our own or another's faith.

We further engage to watch over one another in brotherly love; to remember one another in prayer; to aid one another in sickness and distress; to cultivate Christian sympathy in feeling and courtesy in speech; to be slow to take offense, but always ready for reconciliation and mindful of the guidelines of our Savior to secure it without delay.

We moreover engage that when we move from this place, we will, if possible, unite with a church where we can carry out the articles of this confession and the spirit of this covenant.

CATEGORIES OF MEMBERSHIP

Active Member

Any persons whose name is on the membership roll of the church, who shows interest in church activities, and supports its ministries, shall be considered active.

Inactive Member

Any person whose name is on the membership roll of the church, who has not within a three (3) month period shown any interest in its activities, or who has not attended any services, or who has not supported its ministries, or who has moved out of the knowledge of the church shall be considered inactive. Exceptions include but are not limited to extended illness, homebound, nursing home, away for school, business, or missions and military deployed members.

Reinstatement for Inactive Members

Inactive members seeking reinstatement will speak with a Pastor explaining their situation, repentance, or circumstance. Upon review of the situation, a Pastor will determine if restoring active member status is appropriate. If active member reinstatement is determined appropriate, it will be announced at the next business meeting.

RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF MEMBERS

1. **Voting** - Every member of the church, who has attained the age of 16 and is active, is entitled to vote at all elections and on all questions submitted to the church in conference. Active members may submit an absentee vote, unless otherwise stated, to the Pastoral Staff or Chairman of the Deacons prior to the church vote.
2. **Lord's Supper** - Every member in good standing or visiting Christian of like faith and practice, who has examined themselves and finds themselves worthy, may participate in the Lord's Supper as administered by the church.
3. **Elective Positions** - Every member of the church, who has attained the age of 18 and is active, is eligible for consideration by the membership as candidates for elective position in the church.
 - a. Elective positions are positions filled by church vote.

TERMINATION OF MEMBERSHIP

The following are ways membership at Sycamore Baptist Church may be terminated:

1. **Transfer:** Members who have united with another Baptist church.
2. **Erasure:** Members who have united with a church of another conviction and desire their names removed from our roll.
3. **Death:** Name will be transferred to a permanent record of deceased church members.