CONSTITUTION AND BYLAWS
OF
THE GREATER ST. JOHN MISSIONARY BAPTIST CHURCH

486 NORTH HARVEY STREET
GREENVILLE, MISSISSIPPI 38701
PHONE: (662) - 332 - 6452
“A CHURCH OF PRAYER, A CHURCH OF PRAISE, AND A CHURCH OF LOVE”

REVISION COMMITTEE

MINISTER VAN KEMP, CHAIR SISTER JEAN A. PITTMAN
BROTHER WESLEY TAYLOR SISTER ATLEAN TOPLIN
DEACON LEE HARGROVE DEACON ERICK POWELL

REV. REGINALD D. FORTE, PASTOR
SISTER GWENDOLYN BRISBY LIDGE, SECRETARY
The Greater St. John Missionary Baptist Church Bylaws

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ARTICLE I. NAME AND PRINCIPAL OFFICE

1.1 The name of this church shall be the Greater St. John Missionary Baptist Church, and shall be hereafter referred in these bylaws as the “Greater St. John Missionary Baptist Church.” It was incorporated during 1886 and 1887. The address of principal office of this church shall be: 486 North Harvey Street, Greenville, Mississippi 38701.

ARTICLE II. PREAMBLE

2.1 We the members of the Greater St. John Missionary Baptist Church declare and establish this constitution to preserve and secure the principles of our faith and to govern the body in an orderly manner. This constitution will provide the liberty of each individual church member and the freedom of action of this body as it relates to the Baptist covenant. The Greater St. John Missionary Baptist Church shall be affiliated with the National Baptist Convention, USA, Inc.

ARTICLE III. PURPOSE

3.1 The purpose of Greater St. John Missionary Baptist Church and its congregation is to let the world know that we recognize and accept Jesus Christ as the head of the church and forever transpire our Holy Spirit. We, the governing body of the church, therefore accept the Holy Bible as the inspired word of God and is the truth of our guided faith. As Christians, we believe in the Kingdom of God and Our Heavenly Father adhering to the following beliefs:

- The salvation of lost souls;
- The edification of Christians through the teaching of God’s words;
- To encourage members to do the work of the ministries;
• The worldwide proclamation of God’s saving grace through the shedding of blood and finished work of the Lord Jesus Christ on Calvary;

• The promotion of Godly worship;

• The defense of the faith once delivered unto the saints;

• Working with Christians’ activities in harmony of God’s Holy Word until Jesus comes for His church.

**ARTICLE IV. DOCTRINE STATEMENT / ARTICLE OF FAITH**

4.1 We believe in the Holy Scripture, accepting fully the writings of the Old and New Testament as the very Word of God, without error, the all-sufficient authority in matters of faith, doctrine, and Christian living.

4.2 We believe in one God, eternally existing in three Persons: the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit.

4.3 We believe in the Virgin Birth of Jesus Christ, and that He is the true God and man. He died on the cross for our sins. He rose bodily from the dead, ascended into Heaven where He sits at the right hand of the Father and is now our High Priest and Advocate.

4.4 We believe the Holy Spirit convicts sin, make believers of the children of God through the new birth, assure them of Heaven, and by His Holy Spirit indwelling enables Christians to live a Godly life.

4.5 We believe all men are sinners by nature and choice, sinful and lost, and have within themselves no possible mean of salvation without Christ.

4.6 We believe that eternal salvation is the free gift of God, entirely apart from man’s works, and is possessed by any and all who have faith in and receive Jesus Christ as their personal Lord and Savior.
ARTICLE V. CHURCH COVENANT

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 and this assembly, most solemnly and joyfully enter into 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, holiness, and comfort; 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 through all nations.

We also engage to maintain family and secret devotions; to religiously educate our children; 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 tattling, backbiting, and excessive anger; to abstain from the sale of, and use of, intoxicating drinks as a beverage; to be zealous in our efforts to advance the kingdom of our Savior.

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 Christian courtesy in speech; to be slow to take offense, but always ready for reconciliation and mindful of the rules of our Savior to secure it without delay.

We moreover engage that when we remove from this place we will, as soon as possible, unite with some other church where we can carry out the spirit of this covenant and the principles of God’s Word.
ARTICLE VI. ORDINANCES

6.1 Baptism. We believe that all truly born-again believers are to follow the Bible example of baptism of Jesus Christ. Matthew 3:13-17, Isaiah 40:3, John 4:1-24, Mark 1:4, Romans 6:1, Ephesians 4:5

(a) We as Baptist believe that immersion in water is an outward expression of faith in the death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus Christ.

(b) Baptism is regarded as an outward expression of an inward belief.

(c) Baptism instruction:

- Physical surroundings are attractive, convenient, and clean.
- Fill baptistery with water at proper temperature.
- Deaconess (Mothers) brief candidates on clothing and supplies to wear and bring.
- All procedures for entering the water, being baptized, and leaving the baptistery should be explained in detail by the deacons.
- Deacons and / or Mothers help candidates prepare before the baptism.
- Candidates should be thoroughly instructed in the meaning of baptism. Baptism is a symbolic act of obedience in which the believer turns from sin and selfishness to serve the Lord. The religious rite of immersion of the body in water, symbolizing purification or regeneration and admission to the Baptist Church. This ritual is significant because it represents the forgiveness and cleansing from sin through faith in Jesus Christ. The treat in experience of going through the baptismal water is a reminder of the price Jesus paid for their redemption.
- Baptism service should take place during or following worship service. Candidates should be robed and ready for baptism before they enter the sanctuary for worship service. The Pastor can conduct the opening of the worship service from the baptistery, if necessary, and change clothing during the hymn or anthem.
6.2 Lord’s Supper. We believe the Lord’s Supper should be observed as memorial of the Savior every month.

(a) Only baptized believers have the right to partake in the Lord’s Supper.


(c) Preparation for the Lord’s Supper include making certain that the linen is clean and ironed, the bowl and napkins are ready for the Pastor, the trays and glasses (if used) are clean and polished, the elements are freshly prepared, the table arranged, the offering plates in place, and the chairs are ready. These services will be performed by the Mothers and Deacons in order. Mothers will not take part in serving. Deacons will serve with the Pastor, Associate Ministers, and Visiting Ministers. The Deacons will assist the Pastor; those not serving will sit on the front pews. After the Deacons have served the congregation, the Pastor serves the Mothers, Deacons, and Visiting Ministers. An Assisting/Associate Minister will served the Pastor. All eat and drink together following the Pastor’s instruction.

(d) The Lord’s Supper should be exclusively observed by the baptized believers. It should be observed in according with the scriptures. It is generally observed every first Sunday. If not, then time will be set by the Pastor, Trustee Board, and Deacon Board jointly. Communion will be observed near the end of worship service.

(e) Communion will be served by the Deacons. Communion should be observed by attending members.

(f) There shall be no walking or talking during the Lord’s Supper.

(g) No one can enter the sanctuary during the observation of the Lord’s Supper.

Article VII. Government

7.1 Vested Members. The government of Greater St. John Missionary Baptist Church is vested in its members. The membership retains unto itself the right of exclusive self-government in all parts of its life and
organization. It recognizes the needs for mutual counsel and cooperation, which are common among Baptist churches. This church will cooperate with and mutually work with the National Baptist Convention, USA, Inc.

7.2 **Marriage.** We believe that marriage according to the Bible is that of a man and a woman in a single, exclusive union, at Greater St. John Missionary Baptist Church.

7.3 **Church Records.** All church’s records are to be kept at the church. The Pastor, Deacons, and Trustees shall have access to said Books and Records at all times.

7.4 **Identification Number.** All church’s property and equipment each should have an identification number.

7.5 **Equipment.** All church’s equipment, property, and materials (computer, van, utilities, music equipment, tithes envelopes, and furniture) are to be used for Greater St. John Missionary Baptist Church’s business only. There is to be no personal usage of any equipment, property, and materials of Greater St. John Missionary Baptist Church at the discretion of the Trustees in conjunction with the Pastor. All church’s equipment, property, and materials are to be kept at the church.

7.6 **Church Rental (The Building).** All church rentals should include a house cleaning fee that may or may not be reimbursed according to the standing of Greater St. John Missionary Baptist Church after rental. A member of Greater St. John Missionary Baptist Church must be on the property to monitor usage during time of rental. The rental fee of Greater St. John Missionary Baptist Church will be determined by the discretion of the Pastor, the Deacons, and the Trustees.

7.7 **Fundraisers.** Greater St. John Missionary Baptist Church shall have at least two or more fundraisers each year. The church must maintain copies of all fundraiser financial records, transactions, and activities.

7.8 **Separation of Church Membership.** If for any reason that Greater St. John Missionary Baptist Church decides to split, all finances will remain at 486 N. Harvey Street.
7.9  **Bidding.** Any work on equipment or property of Greater St. John Missionary Baptist Church must first receive at least two bids and be presented before the assigned committee before necessary work can be performed.

**Article VIII. Officers**

8.1  All officers must be members and in good standing and regularly contribute to the support of the ministry with Greater St. John Missionary Baptist Church.

**Article IX. Pastor**

9.1  **Qualifications and Duties.** The qualifications for the Pastor shall be consistent with those in 1 Timothy 3: 1-7; his training, skills, and experiences are needed in this area of leadership. The Pastor shall be the Chief Administrative Officer in the church, moderator of all church meetings, ex-officio head of all departments of church work and all activities. He shall serve on a permanent basis. The Pastor shall be the only leader of the flock (under-shepherd). There can never be two leaders. It shall be the duty of the Pastor to preach the Word and administer ordinances, to take and have charge of all services, and to watch over the spiritual interests of the church. The Pastor is to protect the “flock” from “wolves” that would slip in “sheeps” clothing to devour the “flock.”

9.2  **Responsibilities.** The responsibilities of the Pastor generally fall into the following areas: Preaching, teaching, pastoral counseling, administration, planning, and guiding the church to grow and fulfill its purposes.

(a)  He shall lead the church, the organizations, and all leaders of the church in performing their tasks in worship, proclamation, education, and evangelism.

(b)  He shall assist the Deacons in securing the pulpit in times of his absence.
9.3 **Service.** The chosen pastor of Greater St. John Missionary Baptist Church shall serve until his relationship is terminated by either his request or that of the Church. At least sixty (60) days’ notice shall be given unless otherwise mutually agreed.

9.4 **Vacation.** Greater St. John Missionary Baptist Church will provide the Pastor a vacation package according to years of service as follows:

- 1 - 5 years – 1 week
- 5 - 10 years – 2 weeks
- 10 years or more – 3 weeks.

(a) The Pastor must take off the Sunday in question in order to receive the vacation package. The vacation package can not be sold back to the Church.

(b) The Visiting Minister or Associate Minister, who delivers the word of God, shall receive the pay of $125 per service, except for Revivals.

9.5 **National Baptist Convention Insurance**

9.6 **Benefit Package**

**ARTICLE X. DEACONS**

10.1 **Election and Qualifications.** Deacons shall be elected and ordained upon the basis of qualifications set forth in the New Testament, 1 Timothy 3:8-16.

(a) The number of Deacons to be elected shall be determined by the Pastor as needed.

(b) The Pastor of Greater St. John Missionary Baptist Church will nominate qualified members for the deaconship to be elected by the church membership.

(c) The Deacon shall be elected from among these members, who have proven themselves to have spiritual qualifications set forth in the New Testament and by a majority vote of the membership present at a regular or special conference meeting.
Upon nomination by the Pastor and Deacon for “proving period” and after said “proving period” has expired, the name of the prospective Deacon shall be submitted to the congregation for approval.

The Deacon shall serve an unlimited tenure to be terminated only by death. In some churches deacons are elected for a definite period, and by this method a man whom the church does not find useful as a deacon may be succeeded by another at the will of the church. Deacons are ordained and should always be men of honestly, spiritually and wisdom. The ordination is much like that of the minister. The church authorizes the pastor to call a council for that purpose.

10.2 Duties. The principal duties of the Deacons consist of administering the temporal affairs of the church; these includes the relief of the poor, the support of public worship, the care of church property, the care of the membership, and the proper provision for the due administration of the ordinances. To serve the “Tables”

- The Table of the Poor
- The Table of the Church
- The Table of the Pastor.

Deacons shall at all times regard themselves as servants of the Church.

The Deacons shall, along with the Pastor, and as the Holy Spirit may direct, consider to make recommendations to the Church-body in all matters pertaining to its works and progress, including the disciplining of the Church membership.

The Deacons shall assist the Pastor in the observance and administration of the ordinances of the Church (Holy Communion and Baptism).

The Pastor or the Chairman of the Deacon Board shall call the Deacons into special session whenever a need arises.

Deacons shall be eligible to serve on the budget committee.

A Deacon shall act as a moderator for a business meeting in the absence of the Pastor.
(g) A Deacon shall make provisions for midweek prayer services and/or Bible Study in the absence of the Pastor.

(h) To share with the Pastor in the Spiritual oversight of the Church.

(i) Deacons should assist the Pastor in visitation and the serving of the Lord’s Supper to the sick and shut-ins. Communion should not be taken to sick and shut-ins just because they are confined, but only because they desire and request it.

(j) The Deacons of Greater St. John Missionary Baptist Church can hold the offices of Deacon and Trustee unless changed by the Pastor and a vote from the congregation.

(k) The Pastor is the shepherd, the guide, the overseer of the entire church, and should always be recognized as such by the Deacons and membership. The recommendation comes from the Pastor and affirmed by the members the position of Chairman of the Deacon Board.

The Board of Deacon shall consist of the following officers:

- **Chairman** - The Chairman shall preside over the meeting of the Committee. He shall be responsible for notifying each member when a meeting is to take place.

- **Vice-Chairman** – The Vice-Chairman shall preside in the absence of the Chairman.

- **Recording Secretary** – The recording secretary shall record and maintain in writing all of the minutes of the meeting of the Deacon Board and make reports of each meeting to the Pastor, Deacon Board, and Church membership when required to do so.

**Article XI. Trustees**

11.1 **Election.** Trustees shall be recommended to the Church Conference by the Pastor and shall be approved by the Church Membership.
Trustees shall be elected for a two-year term. Having served as a trustee during a previous term will not disqualify a member for re-election. Each Trustee will hold office until his/her successor is duly elected by the Church Conference.

There shall be two Trustee positions eligible for re-election every two years by establishing a rotation system.

Position for re-election shall be slot-to-slot every other year by selection until the rotation system is established.

11.2 Duties. The Trustees shall be empowered to execute all deeds, deeds of trust, mortgages, and other instruments when authorized to do so by the Church in Conference.

The Trustees shall be empowered to buy, sell, mortgage, lease or transfer any property belonging to the Church only with the specific vote of the Church Membership authorizing each action.

All financial matters greater than $500.00 (outside of the approved fiscal budget) must be submitted to the church body for approval before expended.

The Trustees shall maintain the following officers:

- **Chairman** - The Chairman shall preside over the meeting of the Committee. He or she shall be responsible for notifying each member when a meeting is to take place.

- **Vice-Chairman** - The Vice-Chairman shall preside in the absence of the Chairman.

- **Secretary** – The duties of the secretary are those of the hereinbefore set out.

**ARTICLE XII. CHURCH SECRETARY**

12.1 The Secretary shall be present or represented at all Church business meeting and maintain a written record of actions and activities of such meeting.

The Secretary shall issue letters of dismissal as authorize by the Church and shall preserve all valuable records and letters that belong to the Church in an appropriate place in the Church office.
(b) The Secretary shall keep accurate records of all church business transactions.

c) The Church Secretary shall keep an accurate roll of the Church membership; the dates and the methods of admission and dismissal; change in name; status of each member; correct mailing address; and other pertinent information about each member.

(d) All books and records kept by the secretary shall be the property of the Church and kept on the premises of the Church and properly secured. The Pastor, Deacons, and Trustees shall have access to said books and records at all times.

(e) The Secretary, or his or her designee, shall read the announcement during the Sunday Morning Service.

**ARTICLE XIII. FINANCIAL SECRETARY**

13.1 The church financial secretary shall be elected and shall be responsible for seeing that offerings are properly received, counted, and deposited in the church’s bank account.

(a) He or she shall properly credit each contributor and their offerings.

(b) He or she shall be responsible for preparing and mailing a quarterly or annual record of contribution to donors.

(c) The secretaries are to keep all accounts up-to-date at all times.

**ARTICLE XIV. RECORDING SECRETARY**

14.1 The recording secretary shall be elected and be responsible for keeping an accurate record of all business meeting transactions of the church and preparing the annual report to the church.

14.2 The recording secretary shall be responsible for weekly bulletins for Sunday Morning Worship Service.

14.3 The Secretary shall handle such correspondence of the Board of Trustee. He/she shall keep all records and minutes of Board meetings. Minutes of each meeting shall be kept in accordance with the Robert’s Rules of Order. These minutes include, but are not limited to, discussed motions, seconds, votes and decisions made.
Minutes will be written (legibly) or typed and disseminated to the Board members and will be kept on file at Greater St. John Missionary Baptist Church and are available for members to review.

**14.4** All of Greater St. John Missionary Baptist Church business meeting minutes shall be recorded into a separate ledger.

**ARTICLE XV.  SUNDAY SCHOOL SECRETARY**

**15.1** The Sunday School Secretary shall be responsible for keeping the records and minutes of the Sunday school. In order to receive pay, Sunday school secretary can only miss two Sundays out of a month. All reports should be turned in to the finance secretary at the end of each Sunday school.

**ARTICLE XVI.  MEMBERSHIP**

**16.1** Qualifications. A person is eligible for membership at Greater St. John Missionary Baptist Church upon expressing faith in Jesus Christ as Savior either by letter (baptized by immersion), Christian experience, or a candidate for baptism.

- A person commitment of faith in Jesus Christ for salvation.
- Baptism by immersion as a testimony of salvation.
- Completion of the Church’s membership class and requirements.
- Basic agreement with the Church’s statement of faith.

**16.2** Associate Members. An associate member shall be identified on this church’s membership roll for those who desire the fellowship of this church and who yet desire to maintain active membership in a like body of believers outside this city. An associate member shall not be entitled to hold any office or vote in church matters.

The qualifications and process for associate membership are identical to those for regular members outlined hereinabove (Article XVI, Section 1).
16.3 **Termination.** A member’s name may be dropped from the roll of Greater St. John Missionary Baptist Church for the following reasons:

- Transfer of membership to another church of like faith and practice.
- Death of a member
- As a result of becoming inactive by not maintaining financial obligation, attending worship service for at least three months in which each inactive member should receive a letter from the church’s secretaries. Six months in which each inactive member shall receive a letter to be dropped from the church’s roll.
- By personal request of the member

16.4 **Inactive Members.** The Trustees may place on the inactive membership list any member who absents himself / herself financially from the service of this church for an entire quarter (three consecutive months). Before any member is placed on the inactive membership list, he will be served with a notice of violation of this Section of these Bylaws by certified mail, within thirty (30) days, after being financially absent from the service of this church for an entire quarter (3 consecutive months).

The Trustees may remove from the membership of Greater St. John Missionary Baptist Church any individual whose name remains on the inactive list for a period of six months, with the exception of identified sick and shut-in members, college students, college students whose parents are financially current and members of the Armed Forces.

Any member placed on the inactive membership list shall not be permitted to participate in the activities of any auxiliary of this church until he/she is renew as a member in good standing according to Article 16.1. Inactive members forfeit all voting rights and benefits offered by Greater St. John Missionary Baptist Church as long as they remain on the inactive list.

16.5 **Renewal of Membership.** Inactive members desiring to be reinstated on the active membership roll may do so upon qualifications as outlined in Article 16.1.
16.6 **New Members.** New members shall be expected to participate in the new members’ orientation program.

16.7 **Benefits.** Greater St. John Missionary Baptist Church will only help (aide) a household twice a year (if necessary). Member must present proper documentation of need at hand. Proper documentation may include the present bill in question or doctor’s prescription for medication.

(a) **Benevolent Fund.** The Benevolent fund will strictly be handled at the discretion of the Deacons and the church budget.

(b) **Illness / Hospitalization.** If a member is hospitalized for at least three (3) days, he/she will receive a floral arrangement, or fruit basket, or fifty dollars ($50). If the hospitalization occurs again within six (6) months, the member will receive a card and get-well wishes from the church.

(c) **Funeral Service.** A deceased member’s funeral can be held at Greater St. John M. B. Church without any cost to the family.

- If a family member of the deceased member chooses to have the funeral service at another venue, the deceased member’s family is responsible for the rental fee and all other cost incurred at that venue.
- Greater St John will furnish a repast for the deceased member’s immediate family (50 to 75 people) in the church’s fellowship hall. Greater St. John will donate 100 obituaries.
- If a family member of the deceased member chooses to have the repast at another venue, the deceased member’s family is responsible for the rental fee and all other cost incurred at that venue.
- The church will donate $150 to the deceased member’s family to assist with the food cost for the repast at that venue.
- If someone would like to rent the church for a funeral. Contact must be made through the Trustees in an agreement of rental and cleaning fees.

(d) **Weddings.** If someone would like to rent the church for a wedding. Contact must be made through the Trustees in an agreement of rental and cleaning fees.
ARTICLE XVII.  CHURCH AUXILIARIES

17.1  All church auxiliaries shall be elected by the church from nominations presented from the floor with the consent of the nominee. There shall be a minimum of three (3) committee members with a chairperson. Any committee member is elected to a 2 year term. If the position is vacated, then another elected member shall serve the unexpired term.

(a)  **Deacons.** SEE ARTICLE X.

(b)  **Mothers.** This committee serves primarily as a supportive role for the pastor, young congregants, and church families. They are generally spiritually mature older women with many years of experience and service in the church.

(c)  **Mission.** This committee has pledged by daily reading, meditation and communion with my Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, to live an upright Christian life. To practice His teaching in my dealings with my fellow man; to dedicate my talent and give of my time, influence, and means to teaching or spreading the Christian religion at home and abroad; to win souls through personal service for Christ; to encourage and help in the enlistment of young people in the Christian work, and to make my home a center of Christian light and love. To these ends------ I pledge ---to devote myself and seek divine aid and guidance daily that I might become a living witness and a bright and shining light for my Lord.

(d)  **Minister’s Ministry.** SEE ARTICLES X –XIII.

(e)  **Usher.** This committee is responsible for preparing the church and sanctuary to receive the congregation, and welcome each person who attends worship. Ushers are to welcome attenders to the sanctuary and assist with seating and other needs. Ushers are to assist the worship leaders and the collecting offering during worship service.

(f)  **Men Ministry.** This committee is a United Brotherhood inspired by God with the purpose of helping others Spiritually, Financially, and Physically!!!
(g) **Women Ministry.** This committee is a United Sisterhood inspired by God with the purpose of helping others Spiritually, Financially, and Physically!!!

(h) **Media Ministry.** Oversees the communications that go from the congregation to its members and to the community the use of our website. He will collaborate with the church leadership team and church staff to develop and produce video resources.

(i) **Music Department.** This department will plan and evaluate the music program of the church, in the formation of choirs in the church and planning special musical programs throughout the year. It is responsible for recommending people for the song leader and in assisting the pastor with special music in the regular and other services of the church.

(j) **Youth Department.** This committee is responsible in planning and coordinating youth programs and activities inside and / or outside of the church. These activities are to be correlated with the activities of the church program organization in attaining objectives set forth by the church.

(k) **Drama Ministry.** The Drama Ministry is for the Glory of God. This ministry attracts members that have the desires to understand the Word of God in a form other than written or verbal. This ministry links spiritual gifts, professional training, natural skills and creative abilities together, all for the Glory of God.

(l) **Kitchen Committee.** This committee shall have general supervision of the supplies, equipment, and use of the church kitchen adhering to the church rules and regulations. It shall enforce state and local codes necessary to properly maintain the kitchen in a clean, orderly, and acceptable condition.

(m) **New Members Committee.** This committee shall be composed of one member from each auxiliary of the church and/or a committee selected by church members. **Pre-orientation information** - There will be an entering period prior to fellowship and becoming a member of Greater St. John Missionary Baptist Church. This period is when an individual expresses his or her desire to become a member of the
church. This committee’s responsibility is to make known to prospective members information regarding the church. This committee shall:

- Serve basic information from the church clerk on the prospective member, name, address, telephone number, e-mail address, etc.
- Meet with the prospect/prospects as soon as possible.

Each prospect should receive a new member orientation kit. The kit should include such items: Church Covenant, Baptism procedures, financial obligations, schedule of church worship services, calendar of events (if available), any other church related materials, and the Articles of Faith. **Post – orientation information** - After full membership has been given, the committee’s responsibilities will include:

- Provide a time for fellowship between the new members (fellowship banquet) and current members.
- A session should be scheduled with the Pastor and the new members to discuss the following: Lord’s Supper (including sick and shut-ins), illness, death, hospitalization, home visitation, weddings, worship service, and website,
- Each new member should be provided a copy of the church’s By-laws.
- Provide each new member a chance to express his or her desire to serve in the auxiliary of choice by filling out a special proposed form.

Notation to the Committee – There should be a time set for this orientation (one month, six weeks, etc.).

**Article XVIII. BUSINESS MEETINGS**

**18.1 Rules of Order.** The Pastor, or in his absence, the Chairman of the Deacons, shall act as moderator of all business meetings of this Church, or he shall appoint another member of the Deacons to act as moderator.

(a) It shall be the duty of the moderator to keep order.

(b) The meeting shall be opened and closed with prayer.

(c) The order of the business shall be:
- Reading of the minutes of the previous meeting
- Reports of committees
- Unfinished business
- New business.

(d) Robert’s Rule of Order (revised edition) is adopted as the authority for parliamentary rules of procedure for all business meetings of the church and for all other meetings that demand voting of the church members, including committee meetings.

(e) Any member who wishes to speak must be recognized by the moderator first before allowing to speak.

(f) The church in conference shall entertain no proposal for discussion which has not been presented for the consideration to the Pastor / Deacons.

(g) For a specific point of order a member may appeal to the moderator and the moderator will appeal to the Church, whose decision shall be final.

(h) All motions shall be carried by the vote of the majority of voting members present, unless stated otherwise in the By-laws.

18.2 Qualifications of Voters. All financially active members of Greater St. John Missionary Baptist Church are considered to be qualified voters. No one will be allowed to vote by proxy and/or absentee ballots.

18.3 Vacancies. Vacancies of elected officers will be filled for the remainder of that officer’s term by appointment of the Pastor in counsel with the Deacons.

18.4 Amendments. These By-laws may be amended in any regular business meeting of the church by a two-third majority of the votes cast, provided a quorum is present (See Article XVIII, Section 5 hereinbelow) and provided it does not infringe upon the doctrinal principles; the covenant; the independence of this Church as stated in this Constitution. A provision of such amendment, stating the proposed change, shall have been given from the pulpit two weeks before.
18.5 **Quorum.** A quorum is necessary only:

(a) To call a Pastor. For this purpose a quorum is two-thirds of the qualified voters of the church membership. (Article IX, Section 1).

(b) For amendments to this Constitution. For this purpose a quorum is two-thirds of the qualified voters of the Church membership. (Article XVIII, Section 4).

**ARTICLE XIX. WORSHIP**

19.1 The church shall meet regularly each Sunday morning for the worship of God, for preaching, instruction, evangelism, and on Wednesday, or another day, designated for prayer and Bible study. These meeting will be open for the entire membership of the church and for all people and shall be conducted under the direction of the pastor or designated church officer in the absence of the pastor.

19.2 Deacons should test the public address system to equalize voices and permit all to hear well.

19.3 In the absence of a Pastor, it is the responsibility of the Deacons to see that the pulpit is occupied at each worship service according to Article 9.2 C.

19.4 New members should be visited soon after they have received the right hand of fellowship. A regular schedule of visitation of each member should be drawn up and followed. Every member should be visited at least one time a year.

**ARTICLE XX. MEETINGS**

20.1 No church meeting can be called without the Pastor’s approval.

20.2 The Board shall hold at least one (1) meeting monthly at a time, date and placed designated by the Board of Trustee. All members shall be notified (via telephone/mail) at least three days in advance of all meetings.
20.3 Special meetings may be called by the Chairman. A special called business meeting may be called by the Pastor, and with other church officers, or by action of the church to consider special matters of significant nature. A one-week written notice or announcement must be given for the especially called business meeting.

20.4 A Quorum shall consist of at least half plus one (1) of the total membership of the Board of Trustees.

ARTICLE XXI. VOTING

21.1 Each member of the Board shall be allowed to vote on all questions to come before the Board and shall be entitled to one (1) vote on each issue presented. The Ex-official shall be the tie breaker in case of a tie.

21.2 Voting shall be done by device or hand vote.

ARTICLE XXII. ELECTION

22.1 All auxiliaries are responsible for electing officers and if not the officers will be appointed by the Pastor in counsel with the Deacons.

22.2 Officers shall be nominated by the auxiliaries at one of the regular meetings at least one (1) month prior to the election date.

22.3 Nominations shall be permitted from the floor. Those receiving majority of the votes casted, shall be the newly elected officer of the Board.
ARTICLE XXIII. PARLIAMENTARY

23.1 Robert’s Rules of Order shall govern the conduct of business in all cases in which the same are applicable and not in conflict with the By-laws of the Board or the Laws of the State of Mississippi.

ARTICLE XXIV. LICENSING AND ORDAINING

24.1 Licensing: Any member of the church, who has shown by his or her life and has felt the call to gospel ministry may by vote of the membership, at a regular meeting be licensed by the church to the Christian ministry.

24.2 Ordination: When a church of life, faith, and order shall have called as its Pastor a member of this church who possesses scriptural qualifications and as demonstrated by his skills and training for ordination, a special committee shall be elected to conduct the process of his ordination. Deacons of the church may be ordained as Deacons upon the recommendation of the church. The church shall consider such request. The pastor shall assemble an ordaining council for the ordination of qualified and recommended candidates.

ARTICLE XXV. ADOPTION AND AMENDMENTS

25.1 These By-laws shall considered adopted and in-immediate effect if and when two-third (2/3) of the members present at the business meeting shall vote in favor of same. This vote shall be taken not less than thirty (30) days after formal notice and presentation of the Bylaws to the Church. Notice of such meeting in which the vote is to be taken shall be given at least two weeks in advance.

25.2 These By-laws may be amended, altered, or repealed by a two-third (2/3) vote of the members present at any regular business or specially called meeting of the Church, with a quorum; provided such amendment, alteration or repeal shall have been given to the Clerk in writing and a vote is taken.
ARTICLE XXVI. WAIVER

26.1 These By-laws are intended to be comprehensive as they relate to the operating procedures of Greater St. John Missionary Baptist Church; however, they may be amended at which time deemed necessary by the Pastor in cooperation with the Deacons.

These By-laws were adopted by Greater St. John Missionary Baptist Church membership after due notice and with a quorum present on this

________________________, day of _______________________, 2017
________________________, day of _______________________, 2018

Public Notice: for public viewing and for the record. Notice to agents is notice...

________________________, day of _______________________, 2018.

Signed this ______________, day of _______________________, 2018.

_____________________________________, CHURCH SECRETARY
_____________________________________, CHURCH SECRETARY

These By-laws were approved and adopted by the Board of Trustees of the Greater St. John Missionary Baptist Church on the ______________ day of _________________ 2018.

___________________________________
PASTOR

___________________________________
CHAIRMAN

___________________________________
BY-LAWS SECRETARY
These By-laws were approved and adopted by the Board of Trustees of the Greater St. John Missionary Baptist Church on the ______________ day of __________________ 2018.

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DEACCONS

These By-laws were approved and adopted by the Board of Trustees of the Greater St. John Missionary Baptist Church on the ______________ day of __________________ 2018.

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REVISION COMMITTEE
**ARTICLE XXVII. AGREEMENT TO AMEND**

27.1 As a part of our application for recognition of exemption from federal income tax, we agree to make the following amendment to our organizing document. Since we are incorporated, the amendment will be filled with and approved by the appropriate state official.

a. Said organization is organized exclusively for charitable, religious, educational, and scientific purpose, including, for such purposes, the making of distributions to organizations that qualify as an exempt organizations under section 501 (c) (3) of the Internal Revenue Code, or corresponding section of any future federal tax code.

b. No part of the net earnings of the organization shall inure to the benefit of, or be distributable to its members, trustee, officers, or other private persons, except that the organization shall be authorized and empowered to pay reasonable compensation for services rendered and to make payments and distributions in furthermore of the purpose set forth in the purpose clause hereof. No substantial part of the activities of the organization shall be the carrying on of propaganda, or otherwise attempting to influence legislation, and the organization shall not participate in, or intervene in (including the publishing or distribution of statements) any political campaign on behalf of any candidate for public office. Notwithstanding any other provision of this document, the organization shall not carry on any other activities not permitted to be carried on (a) by an organization exempt from federal income tax under section 501 (c) (3) of the Internal Revenue Code, or corresponding section of any future federal tax code, or (b) by an organization, contributions to which are deductible under section 170 (c) (2) of the Internal Revenue Code, or corresponding section of any future federal tax code.

c. Upon the dissolution of the organization, assets shall be distributed for one or more exempt purposes within the meaning of section 501 (c) (3) of the Internal Revenue Code, or corresponding section of any future federal tax code, or shall be distributed to the federal government, or to a state or local government, for a public purpose. Any such assets not disposed of shall be disposed of by the Court of Common Pleas of the
county in which the principal office of the organization is then located, exclusively for such purposes or to such organization, as said Court shall determine, which are organized and operated exclusively for such purposes.