

# New Comers' Class



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<sup>1</sup> All Scripture reference are from the New American Standard Bible 1995 by The Lockman Foundation. Other references from "Taking the Next Step. A guide for New Church Members" by Ralph W. Hodge, 1996 Convention Press.



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# What is the Gospel?

The word Gospel means “good news.” The Gospel of Jesus Christ is good news to the whole world. God has good news to share with us about His Son Jesus Christ. What information encompasses the Gospel?

## All People Are Created By God

Genesis 1:27 says God created persons in His own \_\_\_\_\_. The word image means likeness or sameness.

In what ways are we like God/not like God?

Like God	Not Like God

We were created to be like God by reflecting His character and fulfilling His purposes in the world. In being like God, we are uniquely made to have a relationship with Him. The Westminster Catechism says that the chief end of man is to glorify God and **enjoy Him forever**. The greatest barrier to fulfilling this chief end is sin. Sin makes a barrier between us and God, making a relationship with Him impossible.

## All People Are Separated from God

All are sinners. Romans 3:23 says, “for all have \_\_\_\_\_ of the glory of God.” The Bible clearly teaches that each and every individual is by nature and by choice a sinner against God.

According to Romans 6:23, “the wages of sin is \_\_\_\_\_.” Death equals separation. When someone dies physically, their soul is separated from their body. When someone dies spiritually, their soul is separated from God.

*Illustration of sin's impact on our relationship with God*

**GOD**

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Us

### **Ways Individuals Attempt to Span the Gap**

**Examples from the Bible of Sin's Impact:** Adam and Eve, Moses and the Nation of Israel, Jesus and Simon Peter, Jesus and the Disciples, Isaiah in the Temple

### **God's Solution to Our Sin Problem**

*A Free Gift.* Romans 6:23 says "For the wages of sin is death, but the free gift of God is eternal \_\_\_\_\_ in Christ Jesus our Lord." Life equals united. When someone is alive physically, their soul and body are united. When someone is alive spiritually, their soul is united to God.

*Received through Faith.* Faith in the Son of God, Jesus Christ, is how an individual receives God's offer of the free gift of eternal life. Ephesians 2:8-9 says, "For by grace you have been saved through faith; and that not of yourselves, *it is* the \_\_\_\_\_; not as a result of works, so that no one may boast." God chooses to save us through faith so that He receives all the glory.

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*Received through Faith.* Faith in the Son of God, Jesus Christ, is how an individual receives God's offer of the free gift of eternal life. I John 5:11-12 says, “And the testimony is this, that God has given us eternal life, and this life is in His \_\_\_\_\_. He who has the \_\_\_\_\_ has the life; he who does not have the \_\_\_\_\_ of God does not have the life.” Ephesians 2:8-9 says, “For by grace you have been saved through faith; and that not of yourselves, *it is* the \_\_\_\_\_; not as a result of works, so that no one may boast.” God chooses to save us through faith so that He receives all the glory.

*Motivated by God's Love.* Romans 5:8 says, “But God demonstrates His own \_\_\_\_\_ toward us, in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.”

*Results in a Changed Life.* Luke 13:3 says, “I tell you, no, but unless you \_\_\_\_\_, you will all likewise perish.” Jesus told Nicodemus, “You must be \_\_\_\_\_.” John the Baptist says in Matthew 3:2, “\_\_\_\_\_, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.” Biblical repentance means a change of mind, heart and will, by turning our backs on living our lives the way we want and turning toward Christ by living our lives the way He wants.

*Results in a Change of Status.* John 1:12-13 says, “But as many as received Him, to them He gave the right to become \_\_\_\_\_, *even* to those who believe in His name, who were born, not of blood nor of the will of the flesh nor of the will of man, but of God.”

## God's Solution Is Permanent

*God's Promise.* John 3:16 says, “For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him shall not perish, but have eternal life.” John 6:37 says, “All that the Father gives Me will come to Me, and the one who comes to Me I will certainly not cast out.” John 10:27-29 says, “My sheep hear My voice, and I know them, and they follow Me; and I give eternal life to them, and they will never perish; and no one will snatch them out of My hand. My Father, who has given *them* to Me, is greater than all; and no one is able to snatch *them* out of the Father's hand.”

*God's Initial Deposit.* Ephesians 1:13-14 says, "In Him, you also, after listening to the message of truth, the gospel of your salvation-having also believed, you were sealed in Him with the Holy Spirit of promise, who is given as a \_\_\_\_\_ of our inheritance, with a view to the redemption of *God's own* possession, to the praise of His glory."

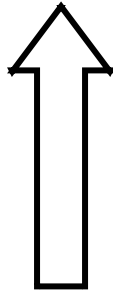
*God's Perfect Work.* Hebrews 10:14 says, "For by one offering He has perfected for all time those who are sanctified."

*God's Perfecting Work.* Philippians 1:6 says, "*For I am* confident of this very thing, that He who began a good work in you will perfect it until the day of Christ Jesus."

# God

But your iniquities have made a separation between you and your God, and your sins have hidden *His* face from you so that He does not hear.  
Isaiah 59:2

As it is written, There is none righteous, not even one.  
Romans 3:10



For the wages of sin is death...  
Romans 6:23

For all have sinned and fallen short of the glory of God.  
Romans 3:23



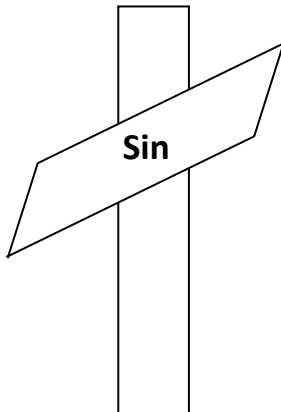
# God

He made Him who knew no sin *to be* sin on our behalf, so that we might become the righteousness of God in Him.

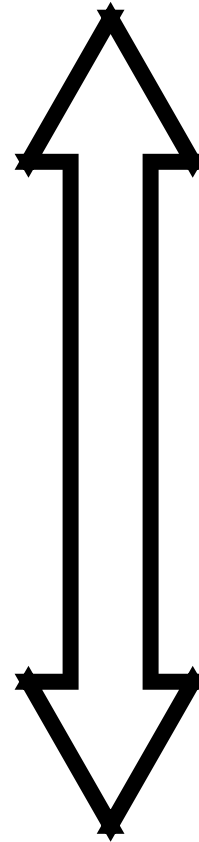
II Corinthians 5:21

...but the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.

Romans 6:23



**After Christ**



But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.

Romans 5:8



## Chapter 2

# **What are the Requirements and Expectations for Church Membership?**

### **Requirements of Members:**

Individuals may join the fellowship of Matthew Road Baptist Church upon meeting all of the following conditions:

1. Be a believer in the Lord Jesus Christ. John 6:28-29 says, “Therefore they said to Him, ‘What shall we do, so that we may work the works of God?’ Jesus answered and said to them, ‘This is the work of God, that you believe in Him whom He has sent.’”
2. Be baptized as a public profession of your faith in Christ Jesus as your Lord. Acts 2:38 says, “Peter *said* to them, ‘Repent, and each of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins; and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.’”
3. Meet with the pastor, a staff member or deacon in order to discuss the covenant nature of church membership and to answer any questions about the church and to better know the candidate for membership.
4. Agree with the Statement of Faith and the Church Covenant as found in the Constitution and By-Laws of Matthew Road Baptist Church.
5. Attend a NewComers' class. After this has been completed, the candidate will be introduced to the church for membership.
6. Be approved by a majority vote of the members present at the next business meeting.

# **What is expected of me as a church member?**

1. Participate in the life of the church by attending worship services and Bible studies on a regular basis, including a commitment to share in the Lord's Supper with the community of faith. Hebrews 10:24-25 says, "and let us consider how to stimulate one another to love and good deeds, not forsaking our own assembling together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging *one another*; and all the more as you see the day drawing near."
2. Be a learner of God's Word by studying and living out the revealed truth from God. Acts 2:42 says, "They were continually devoting themselves to the apostles' teaching and to fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer."
3. Be a witness to the saving message of salvation of Jesus Christ to the whole world, including those in our own neighborhoods, workplaces, schools and also to individuals outside of our daily experiences through missions. I Peter 3:15 says, "but sanctify Christ as Lord in your hearts, always *being* ready to make a defense to everyone who asks you to give an account for the hope that is in you, yet with gentleness and reverence."
4. Be a servant of others by using the gifts God has given through His Spirit. Galatians 5:13 says, "...through love serve one another."
5. Be a faithful giver, committed to sharing graciously as God has provided for you. II Corinthians 9:6-7 says, "Now this *I say*, he who sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and he who sows bountifully will also reap bountifully. Each one *must do* just as he has purposed in his heart, not grudgingly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver."
6. Pursue God's standards for relationships within the church by forgiving early and often, removing the log from our own eye before evaluating others, letting small offenses go and following Matthew 5:23-24 and Matthew 18:15-20.

## Chapter 3

# What Are the Purposes of the Church?

**ONE LORD.** Jesus Christ is the head of the church. As such, we submit our lives as individuals and the life of the entire community of faith to the lordship of Jesus Christ.

Colossians 1:15-18 He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of all creation. For by Him all things were created, both in the heavens and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or rulers or authorities—all things have been created through Him and for Him. He is before all things, and in Him all things hold together. He is also head of the body, the church; and He is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead, so that He Himself will come to have first place in everything.

**ONE BOOK.** Scripture is the final authority in life and in the church. We are committed to teaching, preaching, reading, studying and applying the Word of God. The Bible has been given to the church by God. Though human authors wrote the words with their own personal touch, God guided every word so that the Bible is the work of God through human agency. It comes directly from God and is absolutely, perfectly and completely true. This means that our worship, fellowship, ministry and the way we conduct ourselves must follow what is prescribed in the New Testament.

I Corinthians 1:18 For the word of the cross is foolishness to those who are perishing, but to us who are being saved it is the power of God...we preach Christ crucified, to Jews a stumbling block and to Gentiles foolishness, but to those who are the called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God and the wisdom of God.

**ONE WORSHIP.** Our goal is to worship God in everything we do. Sundays, along with other special occasions provide the entire community of faith to worship Christ together. This encourages one another while also teaching us about the God we worship.

Colossians 3:16 Let the word of Christ richly dwell within you, with all wisdom teaching and admonishing one another with psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with thankfulness in your hearts to God.

**ONE FELLOWSHIP.** The church is described as a body, an interconnected, living, functioning organism. When we gather, it is unlike any gathering of people in the world. The Spirit of God unites us to Christ and to one another through Christ. We practice church discipline according to the prescribed approach given by Jesus Christ in Matthew chapter 18.

I Corinthians 12:12-13 For even as the body is one and yet has many members, and all the members of the body, though they are many, are one body, so also is Christ. For by one Spirit we were all baptized into one body, whether Jews or Greeks, whether slaves or free, and we were all made to drink of one Spirit.

**ONE CALLING.** To know Christ and to make Him known to others. This is a personal calling and a corporate mission. We are each responsible to share the message of Jesus Christ with every individual around us. We are also to fulfill this calling as a community of faith, working together to carry the message of Jesus Christ to our community, our state, our nation and our world.

Colossians 1:25-28 ...so that I might fully carry out the preaching of the word of God, the mystery which has been hidden from the past ages and generations, but has now been manifested to His saints, to whom God willed to make known what is the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles, which is Christ in you, the hope of glory. We proclaim Him, admonishing every man and teaching every man with all wisdom, so that we may present every man complete in Christ.

We do this through participation in several areas of missions like planting churches, training and developing pastors in Mexico, supporting an orphanage, and hosting medical and dental clinics as a means of evangelism. We also participate in short-term mission trips to assist recovery efforts after natural disasters. Our church participates in the cooperative program where we, along with other like-minded churches, give to mission agencies that focus on our state, our county, North America and international missions. Ten percent of our regular giving goes to support missions. In addition, we have several special mission opportunities during the year to raise funds for specific mission endeavors.

**TWO ORDINANCES.** We practice the two ordinances, baptism and the Lord's Supper, given by Christ to the New Testament church.

### **Baptism**

Baptism is an outward expression of what God has done in a person's life. Baptism serves to demonstrate that an individual has placed their faith in Jesus Christ as their Savior and Lord.

Jesus is our example for living. As He began His public ministry, Jesus was baptized by John the Baptist, so one aspect of baptism is following Jesus' example. We also follow His command. Jesus commands his disciples to go into the world and to teach and to baptize. In

this command, the disciples are to baptize “in the name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit.” Christ commands Christians to be baptized.

Matthew 28:19-20 Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age.

Beyond these two reasons, Christians also find deep meaning in the picture that baptism paints. Baptism communicates a great message. Paul, the Apostle, told the church at Rome “Or do you not know that all of us who have been baptized into Christ Jesus have been baptized into His death? Therefore we have been buried with Him through baptism into death, so that as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, so we too might walk in newness of life.” (Romans 6:3-4) Paul points to the picture of baptism as being the way a Christian demonstrates our identification with Jesus Christ’s death, burial and resurrection. This is why we say as someone is being baptized “buried with Christ in death and risen with Christ in newness of life.” So, baptism is an outward demonstration of a Christian’s personal link with Jesus Christ. We are baptized to show that we have put our faith in Christ. We are baptized to show that our faith in Christ means that our old life has died with Christ and that we have received a new life through His resurrection.

Romans 6:3-4 Or do you not know that all of us who have been baptized into Christ Jesus have been baptized into His death? Therefore we have been buried with Him through baptism into death, so that as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, so we too might walk in newness of life.

The other meaning that is pictured in baptism revolves around the biblical idea of repentance. John the Baptist said that he was baptizing for the repentance of sins. Repentance means to change direction. When driving a car, a person repents when they stop going one direction, turn the car around, and start going another direction. The Bible describes repentance as turning from our own selfish life of sin and turning to a life of faith in Jesus Christ as our Savior and Lord. Baptism is the public way of showing that a Christian has had a change in their heart, their motives, their will and their behavior. Baptism is the public way of showing that a person has repented, turning from their selfish ways and turning toward Jesus Christ in the way they live their lives.

So the three basic reasons for baptism are...

1. To follow Jesus' example
2. To follow Jesus' commands
3. To communicate two important messages, our identity with Christ in His death, burial and resurrection and to show our repentance from sin to a life of faith in Christ Jesus as our Savior and Lord.

It is not necessary for an individual to understand every facet of baptism in order to be baptized. It is enough to be baptized because that is what God wants us to do. However, it is helpful to understand all that God is demonstrating in the act of baptism. If you have any questions concerning baptism, please do not hesitate to ask the pastor, a deacon, or Sunday school teacher.

### **Lord's Supper**

The Lord's Supper is a beautiful picture of the work of Christ on the cross. Christ instituted the Lord's Supper on the night He was betrayed. As He broke the bread and shared the cup, He instructed the disciples to continue to celebrate this meal together in remembrance of what He had done. The bread represents Christ's body which was broken in our place. The cup represents the blood that He shed while paying the price for our sin.

I Corinthians 11:23-25 ...the Lord Jesus in the night in which He was betrayed took bread; and when He had given thanks, He broke it and said, "This is My body, which is for you; do this in remembrance of Me." In the same way He took the cup also after supper, saying, "This cup is the new covenant in My blood; do this, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of Me."

We celebrate the Lord's Supper several times a year, including Good Friday and Christmas Eve. We practice semi-open communion, where all believers present are invited to participate in the Lord's Supper. However, unbelievers should not participate. The final check is the conscience of each individual present, though a word of caution is usually provided.

## Chapter 4

# Ministries of Matthew Road

## (How Can I Get Involved?)

There are many opportunities for serving in the ministry at Matthew Road Baptist Church. God gifts each person in ways that provide for the needs of the church while strengthening and blessing the one serving.

*We were created in Christ for good works.*

Ephesians 2:10 says, “For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand so that we would walk in them.”

*We serve for the good of all.*

I Corinthians 12:4-7 says, “Now there are varieties of gifts, but the same Spirit. And there are varieties of ministries, and the same Lord. There are varieties of effects, but the same God who works all things in all persons. But to each one is given the manifestation of the Spirit for the common good.

*Each person has been gifted uniquely by God to serve in the church.*

Romans 12:4-6 says, “For just as we have many members in one body and all the members do not have the same function, so we, who are many, are one body in Christ, and individually members one of another. Since we have gifts that differ according to the grace given to us, each of us is to exercise them accordingly.”

*There is a wide variety of gifts which help build up the church.*

I Corinthians 12:7-11 says, “But to each one is given the manifestation of the Spirit for the common good. For to one is given the word of wisdom through the Spirit, and to another the word of knowledge according to the same Spirit; to another faith by the same Spirit, and to another gifts of healing by the one Spirit, and to another the effecting of miracles, and to another prophecy, and to another the distinguishing of spirits, to another various kinds of tongues, and to another the interpretation of tongues. But one and the same Spirit works all these things, distributing to each one individually just as He wills.”



*All of these gifts work together in cohesive unit for the glory of Christ.*

I Corinthians 12:12 says, “For even as the body is one and yet has many members, and all the members of the body, though they are many, are one body, so also is Christ.”

*The wide diversity, the functioning together in cohesion, reflects the significance of each individual member.*

I Corinthians 12:14-20 says, “For the body is not one member, but many. If the foot says, 'Because I am not a hand, I am not a part of the body,' it is not for this reason any the less a part of the body...But now God has placed the members, each one of them, in the body, just as He desired. If they were all one member, where would the body be? But now there are many members, but one body. ”

## **Ministries at Matthew Road**

**The Preschool Ministry** knows that children are a priority to Jesus; so they are a priority to us. No one is too young to learn the importance of a personal relationship with Jesus Christ. We know children learn best when they are having FUN in the process. Through creative programming and numerous special events, the children at MRBC have FUN learning about God's plan for their lives. The schedule for our Preschool Ministry is as follows:

### **Sunday Mornings:**

**8:30 AM Service:** We offer childcare for children 3 years and under during this time.

**9:45 AM Sunday School:** We offer Sunday School for preschool children at every age.

**11:00 AM Service:** We offer childcare for 2 years and under. Children that are 3 years old through Kindergarten will attend "Big Church" during the welcome and singing. When it is time for Children's Church, they will be dismissed from the service, at which time they will enjoy age appropriate Biblical teaching. We believe this allows the children to transition into attending Worship with their families when the time comes. These children will need to be picked up by a parent from Sunday School.

### **Sunday Evenings:**

**5:00 PM Sunday School:** We offer Sunday School for preschool children at every age.

**6:15 PM Service:** We offer childcare for 3 years and under during this time.

**Wednesdays:**

**6:30 PM Discipleship:** We offer childcare for children 2 years and younger. Children that are 3 years by September 1st and potty trained will participate in our Cubbie AWANA program during the school year. During the summer months we offer age appropriate Bible teaching.

**The Children's Ministry** at Matthew Road is committed to providing safe and fun activities that will build friendships and lead kids toward a personal relationship with Jesus Christ. Sunday School classes for each grade level, K-6th, are offered on Sunday mornings at 9:45 AM. During this time, children participate in large group worship and age-graded Bible studies centered on a Bible lesson and a challenge for the week ahead. Classes meet in the Education Building. During the 11:00 AM worship service, Children's Church is offered for children who are three - six years old and have not yet entered first grade. Each week, children participate in worship that is specifically geared toward them. On Sunday evenings at 5:30 PM, we offer a children's Bible study called MD2. Children begin with games on the front lawn (weather permitting) and then move to the Education building for boys and girls small group Bible studies. On Wednesday evenings, children ages three through 12 (pre-K3 - 6th grade) participate in Awana. During this time, kids participate in exciting and challenging games as well as Bible study and Scripture memory. Spring Break and Summer time are packed full with activities, so be sure to keep up with us online.

**The Student Ministry** at Matthew Road includes Roots, (our Youth Sunday School), Collide (mid-week worship for students), Heartbeat (an annual Youth Weekend), retreats, conferences, camps, and mission trips. Each of these activities is designed to introduce teenagers to Jesus, fellowship with other believers, and practice making more of others than ourselves.

**The Young Adult Ministry** is a growing group of adults in their 20's and 30's who spend time together year round. We study His Word, and seek to leave a lasting impact on the world around us every day. We gather together several times a week to encourage one another in our faith. Please join us for Bible study and fellowship at one or all of the following times: Sunday mornings @ 9:45 AM and Wednesday evenings @ 6:45 PM.

**The Adult Ministry** includes Sunday School, Discipleship Programs, Adult Choir, Women's Ministries and Men's Ministries.

**The Senior Adult Ministry** (Young at Heart) includes Tuesday morning fellowship, special events and other activities.

**The Women's Ministry** reaches out to women of all ages. Encouraging them to love God & love people, equipping them to become fully developed women of the Word, and building community will sustain us as we journey through this life. We have Bible study throughout the week, and many events and activities throughout the year. Please check us out at on our webpage.

**The Men's Ministry** is dedicated to developing Kingdom-minded men to be servant leaders in the home, the church, and in their communities. The Men's Ministry is focused on developing men to make an eternal impact for this generation and those to come. We accomplish this mission through Bible study, evangelism training, leadership development, accountability, mentoring, retreats, mission trips and special events.

**The Music Ministry** believes that worship ministry at Matthew Road Baptist Church should follow the example found in Isaiah 6. As God reveals Himself to us, we must respond with faithful devotion and obedience. Our Sunday services provide a chance for all of us to join together in song, word, and deed, as we celebrate our Lord and respond to His work in our lives. We would love for you and your family to join us as we prepare for our weekly services. Please contact our Music Minister, Jeff, at [jeff@matthewroad.org](mailto:jeff@matthewroad.org), if you are an instrumentalist and would like to join one of our praise bands.

### **Mission Ministries**

- 1) Local mission projects
  - a) Serving on Committees
  - b) Church Work Days
  - c) Community Outreach
- 2) Pastor training all over the world

**Other Ministries** Volunteer opportunities include the following...

Hospitality  
Bereavement  
Building & Grounds

And much, much more...

## Chapter 5

# History of Matthew Road

Matthew Road Baptist Church started out as Florence Hill Baptist Church. Florence Hill was organized in 1943 and was located on Beltline Road just south of Interstate 20. In the mid-1970's, Florence Hill was changed forever with the beginning of the Trailwood Addition. In 1979, membership slowly declined and help was sought from the Dallas Baptist Association.

Simultaneously, Dr. Berl Cavin, Director of Missions for the Dallas Baptist Association, recognized the growth trends of Grand Prairie and identified a potential location for a church in the midst of that new growth. A seven and a half acre parcel was identified on Matthew Road just north of Polo Road as an ideal location. The Association put money down to reserve the land for a Baptist congregation.

Florence Hill Baptist Church, the Dallas Baptist Association and Fairview Baptist Church came together as only God can manage things. In February 1980, the members of Florence Hill Baptist Church became the Matthew Road Baptist Mission. The pastor of Florence Hill, John Allen, remained as interim pastor until August of 1980. The church then called Jim Haskell as its first pastor.

In July of 1981, ground was broken and the building was finished in December 1981. Growth was almost instantaneous; Matthew Road Baptist Mission led the Dallas Baptist Association in percentage increase in Sunday school attendance and membership for the years 1982-83 and 1983-84. On July 3, 1983, Matthew Road Baptist Mission ceased to exist and Matthew Road Baptist Church was constituted.

Growth has been steady. In 1988, eight Sunday school classes were meeting in homes. In 1989 the two-story education building was completed.

The twenty-first century has been a time of exponential growth for Matthew Road Baptist Church. This dynamic growth has led to an 8:30 AM service in 2002 and a third service at 9:45 AM in 2006. Though we no longer have the 9:45 AM service, we do now hold an additional contemporary service in the evenings at 6:45 PM. In the fall of 2001, the Preschool Academy of Westchester was established for our growing community, offering quality Christian preschool education 2 days a week. In October of 2006, we completed construction of a new worship center to welcome the people of our community into the family of God. In the fall of 2012, we established two separate schools to join with parents in providing Christian education for their students. The Primary Academy was created for Kindergarten through second grade, and Matthew Road Academy began for third grade through seniors in high school. Both schools are

a blend of traditional education provided in the classroom two days a week and independent (or parent led) education the remainder of the week.

We have a firm foundation for future growth. We have a full-time College Minister, Zach Van Veldhuizen; a full-time Youth Minister, Matt Brown; a full-time Music Minister, Jeff Morris; a full-time Associate Pastor, Phil McGlothlin, a full-time Children's Minister, Brittany Harley; a full-time Preschool Minister, Cyndi King; and a full-time Minister to 20Somethings, Rachel Sullenger.

Missions are a big part of our ministry here at Matthew Road. We engage in local mission opportunities, such as Brighter Tomorrows, a domestic violence shelter for women and children. We support Mission Arlington both financially and by volunteering on occasion. We support the Dallas Baptist Association's Cooperative Program, along with the Texas Baptists and the North American Mission Board. We are committed to an orphanage in Constitución, Mexico along with two church plants, one located in Juárez and the other in Flores Magón. We are also committed to training pastors and furnishing supplies to churches not only in Mexico but also in Kohima, Nagaland. We have had numerous construction, dental and medical mission trips to Mexico, Nagaland, Haiti and Sudan. We participate with Make Way Partners in an orphanage in Nyamlel, Sudan. We support Bible translation work in Cameroon, Papua New Guinea and China.

Our pastoral history:

<b>Pastor</b>		<b>Interim</b>
Jim Haskell	August 1980 - February 1984	Ebbie Smith
Ron Proctor	November 1984 - February 1987	Ebbie Smith
Roger Ferguson	September 1987 - August 1996	Tom Ruane
Malcolm Stuart	March 1997 - August 2000	Jerry Poteet
Daniel Sweet	March 2001 - Present	

**God's history for Matthew Road has just begun; the best is yet to come.**

## Chapter 6

# Weekly Schedule at Matthew Road

<b><i>Sundays</i></b>	
Morning Worship - Blended Service	8:30 AM
	Nursery for 3 & under
Morning Bible Study	9:45 AM
Morning Worship - Contemporary Service	11:00 AM
	Nursery for 2 & under
Children's Church (for ages 3 through K)	Release from Worship Service
Evening Bible Study	5:00 PM
Evening Worship - Contemporary Service	6:15 PM
<b><i>Mondays</i></b>	
MRBC Primary Academy (during the school year)	8:45 AM
PAW Program	9:00 AM
<b><i>Tuesdays</i></b>	
MRA (during the school year)	8:30 AM
Young @Heart	9:45 AM
<b><i>Wednesdays</i></b>	
MRBC Primary Academy (during the school year)	8:45 AM
PAW Program	9:00 AM
Adult Choir (during the school year)	6:30 PM
AWANA (children)	6:30 PM
AveNew (Youth)	6:30 PM
Nursery (2 & under, if parents on campus)	6:30 PM
Adult Bible Study	6:45 PM
<b><i>Thursdays</i></b>	
MRA (during the school year)	8:30 AM

## Chapter 7

# Bible Study at Matthew Road

<b>Sunday Mornings at 9:45 AM</b>	
<b><i>Children</i></b>	
Infant	Worship Center (Boat Room)
Toddlers & 2 Year olds	Worship Center (Bus Room)
3 year olds / Pre K	Education Building (Green Room)
Kindergarten	Education Building (Blue Room)
1st Grade	Education Building (Orange Room)
2nd & 3rd Grade	Education Building (Red Room)
4th Grade	Education Building (Upstairs)
Area 56 (5th & 6th Grade)	Education Building (Upstairs)
<b><i>Youth</i></b>	
Junior High Boys	CommonGrounds (Behind Coke Machine)
Junior High Girls	CommonGrounds (To the Right of the Stage)
9th & 10th Grade	CommonGrounds (Back Area)
11th & 12th Grade	CommonGrounds (Behind Coke Machine)
<b><i>Adults</i></b>	
Boomers Class	Fellowship Hall West
Hedin/Bickston Class	Fellowship Hall Center
DeLaTorre Class	Fellowship Hall East
Senior Adult Class	Conference Room
Sanctuary Class	Sanctuary
Men's Class	Teller Room
Lydia's Legacy	Library
Women of Grace Class	Choir Room
College Class	2nd Floor Ed. Bldg
Cross Seekers Class	2nd Floor Ed. Bldg
Young Adult Class	2nd Floor Ed. Bldg

<b>Sunday Evenings at 5:00 PM</b>	
<b><i>Children</i></b>	
MD <sup>2</sup> (Making Disciples Making Disciples)	Education Building
<b><i>Youth</i></b>	
Bible Study	Common Grounds
<b><i>Adults</i></b>	
Couples Class	Library
Young Married Class	Fellowship Hall West
Adult Class	Choir Room
College/Singles Class	Fellowship Hall Center
Ladies Bible Study (ongoing)	Conference Room
Ladies Bible Study (topical studies throughout the year, please see Rachel Sullenger for more info)	Teller Room
<b>Wednesday Evenings at 6:30 PM</b>	
<b><i>Children</i></b>	
AWANA or Wacky Wednesdays*	E
<b><i>Youth</i></b>	
Collide	Common Grounds
<b><i>Adults (actual start time 6:45 PM)</i></b>	
Adult Class	Library
Ladies Class	Conference Room
College/Singles Class	Fellowship Hall

\*Wacky Wednesdays are during the summertime



## Chapter 8

# Matthew Road Baptist Church Staff

Pastor	Daniel Sweet	214-681-4213	daniel@matthewroad.org
Associate Pastor	Phil McGlothlin	972-742-2757	phil@matthewroad.org
Music Minister	Jeff Morris	817-948-9877	jeff@matthewroad.org
Minister of Outreach & Young Adults	Junior Muñoz	682-262-7951	junior@matthewroad.org
Minister to College	Dante James	469-987-9905	dante@matthewroad.org
Minister to Youth	Ben Vernier	409-330-5303	ben@matthewroad.org
Minister to Children	Brittany Harley	214-454-3551	brittany@matthewroad.org
Minister to Pre-School	Cyndi King	214-762-9437	cyndi@matthewroad.org
Minister of Business Administration & Women	Rachel Sullenger	972-965-9970	rachel@matthewroad.org
Financial Secretary	Crystal Costabile	817-994-2782	crystal@matthewroad.org
Church Secretary	Christy Martinez	972-841-9597	christy@matthewroad.org
Church Secretary	Taylor James	972-641-2717	mrbcinfo@matthewroad.org
Building & Maintenance Manager	Rose Strachn	972-641-2717	ps733@yahoo.com

## Deacon Ministry

Deacons	Home Phone	Cell Phone	Email
Curtis Fischer	972-206-1259	214-924-4558	<a href="mailto:curtis.fischer@att.net">curtis.fischer@att.net</a>
Carlos Ontiveros	972-641-1910	972-375-5851	<a href="mailto:gpontiveros@sbcglobal.net">gpontiveros@sbcglobal.net</a>
Charles Fry	972-264-6286	214-808-9239	<a href="mailto:chazfry3@gmail.com">chazfry3@gmail.com</a>
Chris de Wolfe		469-223-8006	<a href="mailto:taxmanchris@sbcglobal.net">taxmanchris@sbcglobal.net</a>
Daniel Stover	817-495-5301	817-501-0730	<a href="mailto:danielstover72@yahoo.com">danielstover72@yahoo.com</a>
Greg Trihus	972-213-1450	972-855-8547	<a href="mailto:gtryus@gmail.com">gtryus@gmail.com</a>
John Galbraith	972-602-3473	214-729-8179	<a href="mailto:johnrg35@hotmail.com">johnrg35@hotmail.com</a>
Nick Watson		214-486-9679	<a href="mailto:njw0890@gmail.com">njw0890@gmail.com</a>
Michael Laws	972-264-6833	469-223-9032	<a href="mailto:mslaws261@att.net">mslaws261@att.net</a>
Richard Taylor	214-458-5789	214-323-7681	<a href="mailto:rt1241@hotmail.com">rt1241@hotmail.com</a>
Ruben de la Torre	- -	817-223-1193	<a href="mailto:rmazf@att.net">rmazf@att.net</a>
Steve Hines	817-994-7875	817-994-7875	<a href="mailto:sk_hines@yahoo.com">sk_hines@yahoo.com</a>
Thomas Halsell	972-824-8937	214-601-3280	<a href="mailto:halsell@sbcglobal.net">halsell@sbcglobal.net</a>
William Sullenger		214-876-7145	<a href="mailto:wsullenger@yahoo.com">wsullenger@yahoo.com</a>
Chris Frazier		682-552-2431	<a href="mailto:chrisjedi@hotmail.com">chrisjedi@hotmail.com</a>
Eli Moreno		817-727-9576	<a href="mailto:elian.am@prodigy.net">elian.am@prodigy.net</a>
Paul Nelson		425-802-8332	<a href="mailto:Paul_Nelson1@wycliffe.org">Paul_Nelson1@wycliffe.org</a>
Bryan Hartline		817-914-2039	<a href="mailto:bryanhartline@msn.com">bryanhartline@msn.com</a>
Junior Muñoz		682-262-7951	<a href="mailto:junior@matthewroad.org">junior@matthewroad.org</a>

## Chapter 9

# Constitution and By-Laws

## CONSTITUTION

### Article I. Name

This body will be known as Matthew Road Baptist Church (MRBC) and is located at 4601 Matthew Road, Grand Prairie, Texas 75052. The business address can be changed by a majority vote of the Deacons.

MRBC is not organized for profit, and has been recognized by the Internal Revenue Service as a nonprofit, tax exempt institution under Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code.

If Matthew Road Baptist Church ever dissolves its membership, the property known as Matthew Road Baptist Church will be gifted to the Dallas Baptist Association, a religious organization with which we are affiliated.

### Article II. Statement of Faith

We believe that there is one eternal triune God, the maker and supreme ruler of heaven and earth; inexpressibly glorious in holiness and worthy of all honor, obedience, confidence, and love; revealing Himself in three persons, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, without division of nature, essence, or being. All three persons are infinite and without beginning.

We believe that Jesus Christ is the only begotten Son of God, God in flesh, fully human, fully God, maker of all that is made. We believe in His virgin birth, sinless life, miracles, substitutionary death, burial, bodily resurrection, and visible ascension into heaven, where He now rules with the Father at the Father's right hand.

We believe that God the Holy Spirit exalts Christ, illuminates humans to understand truth, convicts humans of sin, of righteousness, and of judgment; calls people to the Savior, effects regeneration, and baptizes every believer into the Body of Christ. He indwells believers, provides them with spiritual gifts, and empowers them to bear good fruit. He seals believers unto the day of redemption.

We believe the Bible is the Word of God, written by men under the influence of the Holy Spirit, and given as final authority to reveal the nature of God and His purposes, and the final authority over all faith and practices. The Bible is fully inspired by God and is, thus, free of error.

We believe all humans are specially created by God, made in His image, male and female, possessing infinite worth, for the express purpose of bringing glory to God and to enjoy God. Adam and Eve sinned against God,

thereby bringing sin upon the entire human race. Since that day, every human being has continued to sin by nature and by choice.

We believe that God in His infinite mercy, through the substitutionary death and resurrection of Christ, reconciles to Himself every person who receives the gift of salvation by repenting of one's sins and believing in the atonement of Jesus Christ for sin. This is the only means of salvation. Humans, being dead in sin, are made alive by the power of the Holy Spirit, whereby they are enabled to exercise this faith and be justified by God.

We believe God's gracious purpose for people is their sanctification, which includes repentance characterized by a changed life and saving faith evidenced by kingdom service and good works.

We believe that the church is a universal body of believers in all ages from all parts of the world. We also believe that there is a local church, an autonomous local congregation of baptized believers, associated by covenant. We believe the purpose of the church is to honor Christ's life, death, and resurrection for us by worshipping, preaching the Word of God, celebrating the ordinances, giving of our resources, caring for widows and orphans, and seeking the salvation of the lost in our communities and around the world. Our congregation is the interpretive authority on the Bible's meaning and application for purposes of MRBC's faith, doctrine, practice, policy, and discipline. The Lead Pastor, in consultation with the Ministerial Staff and the Deacon Body, will provide interpretive leadership to the congregation.

We believe that Christ instituted two church ordinances. Baptism is the immersion of a believer in water in the name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit. It is an act of obedience, in which a believer identifies with Christ's death, burial, and resurrection, and is requisite for church membership. The Lord's Supper is a symbolic act of obedience whereby believers, through partaking of the bread and the fruit of the vine, memorialize the death of Christ and anticipate His second coming. Neither of these ordinances has any ability to save.

We believe that the family is the first human institution given by God. Marriage is the uniting of one man and one woman in a loving covenant relationship for life. Any sexual expression outside the covenant relationship between husband and wife violates God's standard. The relationship between husband and wife should be a portrayal of the relationship of Christ and His church. Children are to obey their parents, and parents are to lovingly raise their children to know God and honor Him with their lives.

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 joy of the believer and the endless punishment of the unbeliever.

### **Article III. Church Covenant**

God places His people in fellowship in local congregations by His sovereign will in order to worship and to serve, to love and care for others, to pray, to learn, to give, and if necessary, to die, all for the sake of the Gospel. Church membership conveys both privilege and responsibility, both sacrifice and reward, both serving others and being served.

Because God gifts us all as He sees fit and adds us to His church as He sees fit, we all have roles to play in the life of the church - places of service and places of ministry. Every member, properly living out his faith and diligently using his gifts and resources, is important to the life and mission of the church.

Because God includes members in the local church by His volition, membership is not a casual thing, neither to be entered into nor ended casually. Church membership is covenantal in nature.

Therefore the responsibilities of Matthew Road Baptist Church to its members are as follows:

1. We covenant to seek God's will for our church body, teaching, preaching, studying, and following the Holy Spirit, under the authority of the Bible.
2. We covenant to care for each other, our fellow members, and seek the growth of each member as a disciple of Christ, in part by equipping each member for service and praying for each other regularly.
3. We covenant to be on guard together against false teachers and false doctrine.
4. We covenant to practice Biblical standards for relationships in the church, to forgive early and often, to let small offenses go, and to utilize church discipline when necessary for the protection of each individual member and for the protection of the unity and purity of the church.
5. We covenant to set an example for each other and join together in fulfilling the responsibilities of church membership.

And the responsibilities of members of Matthew Road Baptist Church are as follows:

1. We covenant to maintain a close relationship with the Lord Jesus through regular Bible reading, prayer, fellowship, and practice of spiritual disciplines. Our relationship will be evident through our participation in weekly worship services, Lord's Supper, MRBC community life, service, and lives that glorify Jesus.
2. We covenant to be in agreement with the MRBC Statement of Faith and will not be divisive to its teaching.
3. We covenant, by God's grace, to walk in holiness as an act of worship to Jesus Christ, who has saved us from our sin, so that we can live new lives. We covenant to renounce sinful behavior in accordance with the convicting work of the Holy Spirit. Should we sin in such a manner, we agree to confess our sins to Christian brothers or sisters and seek help to put our sin to death. We covenant to be faithful, purposeful, regular, and joyful givers of our time, energy, money, and gifts, with a desire to share graciously with others for the common good and the advancement of the Gospel.
4. We covenant to be submissive to church leadership and will be diligent to preserve unity and peace within the body. We covenant to submit to church discipline as outlined in Scripture.
5. We covenant to fellowship with other believers as a source of encouragement, hope, accountability and strength, and renounce attitudes and actions such as malice, slander, anger, gossip, envy, bitterness, and jealousy. We will forgive early and often, examining ourselves before examining others. We covenant to accept the responsibility to notify MRBC leadership if, at any time, we can no longer commit to this covenant, or if we have any questions, comments or concerns regarding

covenant membership in the church. We also covenant that if we should discontinue our membership at MRBC for any reason, we will enter into a covenant relationship with another like-minded church.

## **Article IV. Statement of Purpose**

MRBC is a New Testament church. As such, we purpose to devote ourselves to teaching, studying, and living out the Bible, to fellowship, to the ordinances, and to prayer (Acts 2:42, Matthew 28:19). We purpose to pursue the Great Commission - to witness and make disciples of all nations (Matthew 28:18-20, Acts 1:8). We purpose to love one another and to encourage and build each other up (1 John 3:11, 1 Thessalonians 5:11). We purpose to offer acceptable worship to God (Romans 12:1). We purpose to glorify God (Romans 15:5-6, 1 Corinthians 6:19-20).

## **BYLAWS**

### **Article I. Membership**

#### **Section 1. Conditions of Membership**

Individuals may join the fellowship of Matthew Road Baptist Church upon meeting all the following conditions:

1. They must have professed faith in Jesus Christ.
2. They must have been baptized according to Scripture, consistent with our Statement of Faith.
3. They must meet with an authorized representative of MRBC to discuss the covenant nature of church membership as required by MRBC.
4. They must attend a new member's class.
5. They must agree with the MRBC Statement of Faith and the Church Covenant.
6. They must be presented to the church as affirming their faith in Christ and their covenant relationship with MRBC.
7. They must be approved by a majority vote of the members present at the next business meeting.

Members in Good Standing have the right to serve the church and vote at church business meetings. To be a Member in Good Standing, a member must

- Conduct oneself in accordance with this Constitution and Bylaws
- Attend worship services regularly
- Not be under church discipline

#### **Section 2. Rights of Members**

Every Member in Good Standing is entitled to one vote (per issue requiring a vote) at Business Meetings. This vote cannot be exercised by proxy. Only Members in Good Standing are entitled to vote.

Members in Good Standing may serve the church as opportunity and gifting align.

### **Section 3. Termination of Membership**

Membership can be terminated in the following ways.

1. Members, unless under discipline, can, in writing, request to terminate their membership. Upon receipt of the request, they will be removed from membership.
2. Members who move their fellowship to another church will be considered to have terminated their membership.
3. Members who are under church discipline, upon recommendation of the Pastors and Deacons and a majority vote of the church, can have their membership terminated.
4. Members failing to attend worship services over an extended period of time may have membership terminated. After a reasonable effort to contact them, the Pastors and Deacons may recommend termination of membership. A majority vote of the church will terminate membership.

### **Section 4. Discipline**

By definition, church discipline is redemptive rather than punitive in nature. The intent is to restore fellowship between the disciplined member and the church as a whole. Scripture will be used as the template. Passages such as Matthew 18:15-20, 1 Corinthians 5:1-13 and 2 Corinthians 2:5-8, among others, have direct bearing on this process.

In most cases, the nature of the discipline process will be kept confidential. If the reason for the discipline is a very public matter, the congregation will be kept informed of the process as it unfolds. With the goal of restoration in mind, members agree that once the disciplinary procedure commences, they will remain members until the disciplinary procedure is completed.

Every reasonable effort will be made to restore the relationship. If resolution cannot be achieved and, in the opinion of the Pastors and Deacons, continued association with the disciplined member is harmful to the mission or welfare of the church, the disciplined person will have church membership terminated.

Discipline can be concluded at the discretion of the Pastors and Deacons.

## **Article II. Church Offices**

### **Section 1. Lead Pastor**

#### **1. Qualifications:**

The Lead Pastor's life and conduct will reflect the teachings found in 1 Timothy 3:1-7. He must also be ordained by this church or a church of like faith and order, and he must subscribe in all points to the MRBC Statement of Faith.

#### **2. Duties and Privileges:**

The Lead Pastor will lead the church in carrying out its commission as a New Testament church, consistently modeling the MRBC Statement of Faith. His primary responsibility is to preach and teach the Word of God, in season and out of season; to reprove, rebuke, and exhort, with great patience. He will also lead the pastoral ministry of the church, both to members and to the community.

The Lead Pastor will oversee the church staff and the various organizations within the church in the performance of their tasks, always with the Gospel of Jesus Christ as the ultimate motivation and object.

The Lead Pastor will be an ex officio member of all standing committees of the church. He will also preside at business meetings.

A complete job description for the Lead Pastor will be maintained by the Personnel Committee.

#### **3. Method of Calling:**

When the office of Lead Pastor becomes vacant, a Pastor Search Committee will be elected by the church to find, interview, and recommend a candidate for the position of Lead Pastor. This committee will consist of seven people plus two alternates. All committee members must be Members in Good Standing. Four of the positions on the committee will be reserved for Deacons. Two close relatives may not serve on the Pastor Search Committee.

In order to elect this committee, announcements will be made in all worship services and publications for two weeks preceding election Sunday. On election Sunday, each Member in Good Standing may submit up to five names on a secret ballot.

The Deacons will total the ballots and contact nominees in the order of number of votes they received to determine if they are willing to serve on the committee. The four positions reserved for Deacons will be filled first, with the other three positions and the two alternate positions filled by the remaining nominees. All three categories of committee member (Deacons, members at large, and alternates) will be seated in order by the number of votes each received. Deacons may also be members at large if they receive the required number of votes.



The committee will elect its own chairman from among the Deacons serving on the committee. Alternates will be present at all meetings and other activities of the search committee, so that if called upon to fill a vacancy on the committee, they will be ready to contribute. The expenses of the committee will be paid by the church.

The Pastor Search Committee will nominate an Interim Pastor who will not be considered for Lead Pastor. A seventy-five percent majority positive vote of Members in Good Standing in the services will constitute a call to the Interim Pastor. The Deacons will be responsible for filling the pulpit until an Interim Pastor is called. The Deacons may delegate additional pastoral duties to others.

When the Pastor Search Committee has selected its nominee as a prospective Lead Pastor, the church membership will be notified by announcements in all worship services and via normal methods of communication one week prior to the scheduled vote.

On the designated Sunday, at the close of each worship service, the Chairman of the Pastor Search Committee will present the recommendation before the church. A vote of the Members in Good Standing by yes/no ballot will be taken and the Deacons will count the votes. A seventy-five percent or greater yes vote will constitute a call to the new Lead Pastor.

If, for any reason, a call is not extended by the church to the man recommended by the Pastor Search Committee, or if a call is declined by the nominee, the committee will begin its work anew and come to the church in the same manner prescribed above and present a second recommendation. This process will be followed until a Lead Pastor has been called by the church.

#### 4. Tenure:

The Lead Pastor will serve at the pleasure of the church with the privilege of resigning at any time by written notice to the chairman of the Deacons and the chairman of the Personnel Committee.

#### 5. Removal From Office:

If a serious issue or issues arise which call into question the fitness of the Lead Pastor to continue, the Deacons will call a meeting of the Deacons and the Personnel Committee. When a quorum of the Deacons is declared, the meeting will be called to order and the issue(s) concerning the Lead Pastor's fitness to serve will be discussed.

If the Deacons and the Personnel Committee (excluding the Lead Pastor) determine by a majority vote that the Lead Pastor is unfit to continue serving as Lead Pastor, the matter will be brought before the Church in a regular or special Business Meeting of the church. A minimum of 7 days' notice will be given to the church and the Lead Pastor prior to the meeting via normal methods of communication. In the Business Meeting, after review of the situation and after the Lead Pastor has had an opportunity to address the members, a vote will be taken. A majority vote of the Members in Good Standing to remove the Lead Pastor will result in his immediate removal as Lead Pastor.

## **Section 2. Church Staff**

The church will call or employ such staff members as the church determines necessary. Their duties will be stated in job descriptions formulated by the Personnel Committee, who may use the advice and recommendations of leadership within the church to create job descriptions.

Ministerial staff will acknowledge and conduct both their private and professional lives in accordance with the MRBC Statement of Faith. The job description of non-ministry positions may require the same standard.

The Personnel Committee will be responsible for screening, selecting, and recommending to the church the employment and termination of staff members other than the Lead Pastor. Staff performance will be evaluated by the Personnel Committee.

Ministerial staff, upon recommendation of the Personnel Committee, may be terminated by a majority vote at a Business Meeting.

Non-ministerial staff members may be terminated by majority vote of the Personnel Committee. The Personnel Committee will consult with the Lead Pastor in such situations.

The Personnel Committee, in consultation with the Finance Committee, will recommend salaries and benefits to the church for all employees.

## **Section 3. Deacons**

### **1. Office:**

The office of Deacon is recognized as a higher calling, one of servant leadership rather than ruling or governing. Consistent with the New Testament (Acts 6, 1 Timothy 3), the purpose of the Deacon is to aid the Pastors, minister to the membership, and lead the congregation by example in living out all points of our Statement of Faith.

### **2. Qualifications:**

Each man serving as a Deacon will acknowledge and conduct both their private and professional lives in accordance with the MRBC Statement of Faith. Additionally, the Deacon's life and conduct will be in harmony with the special requirements described in 1 Timothy 3: 8-13 and Acts 6: 1-6.

As a practice, MRBC selects candidates from the male Members in Good Standing who are at least 21 years of age and have been members for at least six months.

A man selected to be a Deacon may not serve as a Deacon until he has been ordained in this church or in another church of like faith and order.

3.       Nomination and Selection of Deacons:

Each year the Deacons will compile a list of prospective candidates. After two weeks of announcements in church worship services and in the bulletin, nomination of Deacons will be held. Each Member in Good Standing may nominate as many men as they feel led to by the Holy Spirit. Nomination by absentee ballot is allowed for Members in Good Standing who cannot attend the voting. The active Deacons will count the ballots.

The Deacons will work with the Lead Pastor to evaluate the service needs of the church for the following year and will determine the number of men who are needed as new Deacons. After consulting with the Lead Pastor, the Deacons will contact, question, and interview qualified men with the highest vote totals.

At a Business Meeting, the Deacons will recommend the new Deacon candidates for a vote by the church.

4.       Term of Service:

A Deacon will be elected to serve a term of office of three years. Following their term of office, Deacons move to inactive status and remain so until reelected in the manner described above.

5.       Meetings, Quorum, Vote and Recommendation:

The Deacons will meet in regular session. Ad hoc meetings may be held when the Lead Pastor or chairman of the Deacons determines their necessity.

A quorum will exist when fifty percent or more of the active Deacon body is present at a regular or ad hoc meeting. A recommendation will be considered approved when a majority of the quorum votes in favor of the motion. No action of the Deacon body is binding on the church unless authority has been previously given it by a majority vote in a Business Meeting or unless assigned by this constitution.

The Deacons will keep minutes of their own meetings.

6.       Deacon Officers:

Deacons will elect their own officers from the body of active Deacons. The officer positions are:

1.   Chairman of the Deacons
2.   Vice-chairman of the Deacons
3.   Secretary

**Section 4. Church Clerk**

The Church Clerk serves at the pleasure of the church and will be a Member in Good Standing. The Nominating Committee will nominate persons to serve in this church elected position.

The Church Clerk is responsible for the keeping of accurate records of all official church business. These records will become church property and will be made available, upon request, to any member. The Clerk will

keep an accurate and up-to-date register of the church members baptisms, deaths, and admissions to or dismissals from the church. The Clerk will also issue letters of transfer for members joining other Southern Baptist churches. The church may delegate some of the clerical responsibilities to the church staff.

#### **Section 5. Minister of Business Administration**

The Minister of Business Administration will be a Member in Good Standing and will serve at the pleasure of the church. The Personnel Committee is responsible for filling this position.

The Minister of Business Administration will be responsible for keeping accurate and up-to-date records of all money received by the church. Donors will be given proper credit for their gifts. The Minister of Business Administration will be responsible for preparing and distributing annual records of contributions to all members and other identified contributors. The Minister of Business Administration will work closely with the Finance Committee to pay invoices, handle transfers of funds, and process requests for funds. The Minister of Business Administration or the Finance Committee may delegate any of these responsibilities to others.

#### **Section 6. Trustees**

The Trustees serve at the pleasure of the church and will be Members in Good Standing. The Nominating Committee will nominate persons to serve in this church elected position.

They have no authority other than that authorized by action of the church. They will have no power to buy, sell, mortgage, lease or transfer any property without a specific vote of the church authorizing such action.

The duties of the Trustees will be the execution of legal documents pertaining to real property of the church including but not limited to notes, deeds of trust, and guarantees. To be legally binding, all actions taken will require the signature of two Trustees unless additional signatures are required in the resolution authorizing the action.

The number of Trustees will be no fewer than three and no more than five. Permanent, temporary, part-time, or interim church staff will not serve as Trustees.

### **Article III. Church Business Meetings**

The church will meet regularly to conduct business. Ad hoc meetings can also be called by the Lead Pastor or, in his absence, the chairman of the Deacons.

Business Meetings, both regular and ad hoc, will be announced two weeks in advance of the scheduled date and a general agenda will be made available. All Members in Good Standing are encouraged to attend.

No business will be conducted without a quorum in attendance. A quorum is defined as five percent or more of the Members in Good Standing. Only Members in Good Standing will be issued ballots for ballot votes.

The Lead Pastor will preside at Business Meetings. In the Lead Pastor's absence, the chairman of the Deacons will preside. In his absence a designated staff member or Deacon will preside.

#### **Article IV. Standing Committees**

The church will elect all members of standing committees. A committee member must be a Member in Good Standing. Committee members may not serve on more than two standing committees at one time. To prevent even the appearance of impropriety, close relatives may not participate in matters of employment and financial dealings. Two close relatives may not serve on the same Standing Committee.

When vacancies occur on any standing committee, the Nominating Committee will nominate another Member in Good Standing to fill the position. The term of service on a standing committee is three years. At the time of a person's nomination and election, the Nominating Committee may assign that person a shorter term of service in order to synchronize the expiration of terms for members of that committee. The church may vote in any Business Meeting to establish any new temporary or standing committee.

Once formed, committees elect their own officers.

The following are the church's standing committees:

- Finance Committee
- Personnel Committee
- Nominating Committee
- Teller Committee

##### **Section 1. Finance Committee**

This committee will have an odd number of members. At least one active deacon will serve on this committee.

The Finance Committee will maintain day to day control of all church expenditures. It will prepare the church's annual budget, approve the budget for each church ministry, and report on the church's finances at each regular Business Meeting. The Finance Committee will develop and maintain policies and procedures for the handling of church finances.

##### **Section 2. Personnel Committee**

This committee will have an odd number of members. At least one active deacon will serve on this committee.

The Personnel Committee will recruit and interview prospective church employees (except for the Lead Pastor). The committee will recommend these prospective employees to the church for employment.

When the Personnel Committee fills a ministerial position, two ad hoc members, supplied by the Nominating Committee, will be added to the committee. At least one of these ad hoc members will be a Deacon. Ad hoc members have the sole function of assisting the Committee in filling ministerial positions. Both ad hoc

members will be released from the Personnel Committee once the ministerial position is filled. No member of the Finance Committee may serve as an ad hoc member to the Personnel Committee for the addition of staff.

The Personnel Committee, in consultation with the Lead Pastor, will develop and maintain job descriptions for all church employees and review performance.

The Personnel Committee, in consultation with the Lead Pastor, will develop and maintain job descriptions for all church volunteer positions and make them available to volunteers.

The Personnel Committee, in consultation with the Lead Pastor, will develop and maintain policies and procedures regarding positions that work with youth and children. These policies and procedures will mandate due diligence for the protection of both the children and the workers.

The Personnel Committee, in consultation with the Lead Pastor, will work with the Finance Committee to draw up salary packages. The Personnel Committee will consult with the Finance Committee prior to presenting to the church any personnel changes that impact the budget.

### **Section 3. Nominating Committee**

This committee will have an odd number of members. At least one active deacon will serve on this committee.

The Nominating Committee will recruit and nominate Members in Good Standing to serve on all standing committees.

### **Section 4. Teller Committee**

This committee will have enough members to staff a rotation of four teams composed of at least two individuals per team. No one is allowed to count money alone. At least one active deacon will serve on this committee.

The Teller Committee will count weekly contributions and may count other monies collected by the church. The Chairman of Finance, the Minister of Business Administration and the Financial Secretary may help count as the need arises. The team is responsible to deposit such collections at the bank, following procedures written by the Finance Committee.

## **Article V. Campus Use**

Matthew Road Baptist Church facilities and grounds, referred to as campus, are to be used for the glory of God. All uses of our campus will be consistent with this goal and with our Statement of Faith. The campus is not available for public use.

## **Article VI. Marriage Ceremonies**

Weddings conducted under the auspices of MRBC will be consistent with the biblical definition of marriage as reflected in the MRBC Statement of Faith.

Wedding ceremonies conducted at MRBC will consist of an exchange of marriage vows and other ceremonial activities consistent with the exchange of marriage vows. All marriage ceremonies performed by ministers of MRBC will be performed on campus or at a location approved by the Lead Pastor. Only a minister of MRBC may perform a wedding on campus. All couples married at MRBC must complete pre-marital counseling with a counselor approved by the Lead Pastor. Remarriage after divorce, for biblical reasons, will be considered on a case by case basis.

No minister or paid staff member of MRBC will:

- a. Accept payment for performing a marriage ceremony,
- b. Perform a marriage ceremony unless at least one person to be married is a Member in Good Standing.

## **Article VII. Policies and Procedures**

Matthew Road Baptist Church will adopt policies and procedures that contain provisions for the regulation and management of this church. They will be consistent with the Articles of Incorporation, these bylaws, and this constitution.

Our policies and procedures will be consistent with civil law where such law does not conflict with our faith and practice.

## **Article VIII. Affiliations**

MRBC is affiliated with the Southern Baptist Convention, the Baptist General Convention of Texas, and the Dallas Baptist Association.

## **Article IX. Precedence of this Constitution**

Upon adoption of this constitution and these bylaws by Matthew Road Baptist Church of Grand Prairie, Texas, all previous actions of this church which conflict with this instrument will be null and void. In the event of conflict in meaning between this instrument and any further action of the church, the meaning herein will take precedence over any other action or meaning.

## **Article X. Amendments**

This constitution and these bylaws may be amended by a two-thirds vote at any business meeting. Notice of the date and time of a business meeting at which a proposed amendment will be considered will be publicized at least seven days prior to the business meeting and will contain the text of the proposed amendment.

## **NOTES**



