

MANUAL
OF THE
EDGEWATER AND WATERFORD
CIRCUIT OF BAPTIST CHURCHES

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PART 1 INTRODUCTION

This is the Manual for both the Edgewater Baptist Church and the Waterford Baptist Church, which together form the Edgewater and Waterford Circuit of Baptist Churches.

CHAPTER 1: NAME

1. The name of each Church shall be known as the Edgewater Baptist Church on one hand, and the Waterford Baptist Church on the other hand.
2. In this Manual:
 - “the Church”, or “this Church” means the Edgewater Baptist Church and/or the Waterford Baptist Church as the case may be.

- “the Circuit” or “this Circuit” means the Edgewater Baptist Church and the Waterford Baptist Church together.

The Edgewater Baptist Church and the Waterford Baptist Church shall be referred to from time to time in this manual as “the Church” or “this Church”.

PART 2 PURPOSE and DOCTRINE

CHAPTER 2: PURPOSE

The Church shall seek, by every possible scriptural means to carry out the Great Commission of our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ as set forth in *Matthew 28:19-20; and Acts 1:8*. It shall promote Public Worship, Christian Fellowship, and Evangelism:

1. By the preaching of the Word of God for the salvation of unbelievers and the edifying of believers.
2. By the administration of the ordinances of the New Testament.
3. By ministering to the spiritual and social needs of its own community.
4. By the spreading of the Gospel in all the earth through missions of like faith and practice and through Evangelism.

The purpose is further expressed in the Church Covenant

CHAPTER 3: DOCTRINE (Statement of Faith)

1 THE SCRIPTURES

We believe that the Holy Scriptures of the Old and New Testament, 66 books in all, are inspired of God and that they are the final and supreme authority for faith and life. *II Timothy 3: 16-17; II Peter 1: 19-21; Matthew 5:18.*

2 THE GODHEAD

We believe that there is only one true and living God, an infinite Spirit, the Maker and Supreme Ruler of heaven and earth; that He is inexpressibly glorious in Holiness and worthy of all possible honour, confidence and love; that in the Unity of the Godhead, there are three distinct persons, the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit; that these three distinct persons are equal in every divine attribute; that they execute distinct yet harmonious offices in the great work of redemption.

Exodus 20: 2-3; I Corinthians 8:6; Revelations 4:11; I John 5:7; I Peter 1:2;

Mark 1: 10-

11.

3 THE LORD JESUS CHRIST

1. We believe that the Lord Jesus Christ, the Eternal Son of God, became man, without ceasing to be God; that He was conceived by the Holy Spirit and born of the Virgin Mary, in order that He might reveal God, and redeem sinful man. *John 1: 1-2; Luke 1: 35*
2. We believe that the Lord Jesus Christ accomplished our redemption through His death on the Cross as a representative, vicarious, substitutionary sacrifice; that our justification is made sure by His literal physical resurrection from the dead. *Romans 3: 24-25; I Peter 2:24; Ephesians 1:7; I Peter 1:3-5*
3. We believe that the Lord Jesus Christ ascended to Heaven, and is now exalted at the right hand of God, where, as our High Priest, he fulfils the Ministry of representative Intercessor and Advocate. *Acts 1:9-10; Hebrews 9:24 and 7:25; Romans 8:34; I John 2:2-11.*

4 THE HOLY SPIRIT

We believe that the Holy Spirit is a Divine Person, equal with the Father and the Son and of the same essence and nature; that He convicts of sin, righteousness and Judgement; He bears witness to the truth and is the agent of the New Birth; that He baptizes, seals, endues, comforts, guides, teaches, witnesses to, and helps the believer; that He indwells every Child of God. *John 14: 16-17; John 16: 7-11; Acts 5: 3-4; I Corinthians 12:13; II Corinthians 13:14; Romans 8: 14-27; Ephesians 4:30.*

5 THE DEVIL OR SATAN

We believe that satan exists as a distinct personality; that he is the author of all powers of darkness; that he is destined to the judgement of eternal justice in the lake of fire. *Matthew 4: 1-11; II Corinthians 4:4; Revelation 20:10*

6 CREATION

We accept the Genesis account of creation; that God created the heavens and the earth, including all life, "each after its own kind," by direct act, and not the process of evolution. *Genesis 1:2; Colossians 1:16-17; John 1:13*

7 MANKIND

We believe that mankind was created in the image and likeness of God, but that in Adam's sin the whole human race fell, inherited a sinful nature, and became alienated from God; inclined to evil, and of himself utterly unable to remedy his lost condition. *Genesis 1:26-27; Romans 5:12; Ephesians 2: 1-3, 12.*

8 SIN

We believe that sin is an act of disobedience to God's will and purpose

Sin is missing the mark that God has set for us. It distorts our relationship with God, our fellow human beings, the rest of creation, and ourselves.

Sin lessens the freedom to choose God's will and stimulates a desire to choose evil. Its ultimate result is death, both physically and spiritually. *Isaiah 53:6; 59:2; 64:6; Romans 3: 10-18, 23;*

9 . REDEMPTION

We believe that the salvation of sinners is wholly of Grace; that it is made possible through the mediatorial offices of the Son of God, who by appointment of the Father, freely took upon Him our nature, yet without sin honoured the divine law by His personal obedience, and by His death made a full and vicarious atonement for our sins. *Hebrews 4:15, 10: 4-17; I Peter 1: 18-19.*

We believe that faith in the finished work of the Lord Jesus Christ is the only condition of salvation from sin; that no works, however good, can merit salvation or make it more secure. *Acts 16:31; Ephesians 2: 8-9; Titus 3: 5-7.*

10. THE CHURCH

We believe that the Church universal is a New Testament institution established by Jesus Christ on the Day of Pentecost; that all believers are added to this Church by baptism. *Matthew 16:18; Acts 1:8; Acts 2:1-13; I Corinthians 12:12-28; Ephesians 1:22-23; Colossians 1:18; I Thessalonians 4: 13-18.*

We believe that the Local Church is a congregation of believers, associated by a covenant of faith and fellowship in the Gospel, observing the ordinances of Christ, governed by His laws and exercising the gifts, rights, and privileges invested in them by His Word, and by the Holy Spirit. *Acts 2:41-47; Acts 15.*

We believe in the autonomy of the Local Church

11. THE RELATIONSHIP OF CHURCH AND THE STATE

The relationship between the Church and the State shall be as prescribed in *Matthew 22:21, Romans 13:1-7; and I Peter 2: 13-17*

12. THE ORDINANCES

We believe that there are only two New Testament ordinances, Baptism and the Lord's Supper.

Baptism is the immersion of the believer in water. It symbolizes, in a beautiful and solemn way, our faith in the crucified, buried, and risen Saviour; it typifies our death to the old life and our resurrection to the new life in Christ. *Acts 8:36-39; Romans 6:3-5; Colossians 3:3.*

We believe that the Lord's Supper is the commemoration of the Lord's death until He comes; that it should be preceded by solemn self examination; that no-one should partake of the Lord's Supper who has not personally received Christ as Saviour, been baptized, and has an understanding of its meanings. / *Corinthians 11:23-32.*

13. JUSTIFICATION

We believe that Justification is the act of God whereby, through Christ Jesus and in response to man's trust in God, God declares man to be just or free from guilt or blame. We believe that the act of justification includes absolution from all sin – past, present, future – restoration to favour with God, and the imputation of Christ's own righteousness. *Romans 4:1-5; 8:1; 5:1,9; Colossians 1:2-22.*

14. SANCTIFICATION / BEING MADE HOLY

We believe that there are two aspects to sanctification.

(a) That there is a positional sanctification whereby God sets us apart for Himself at the time of our personal acceptance of Christ as Saviour and Lord. *1 Corinthians 6:11; John 1:2*

(b) That there is an experiential sanctification whereby we progressively separate ourselves from the practice of sin as we grow in Grace through the studying of the Bible and the application of its truths to our lives. *John 17:17; 1 Peter 2:2*

15. SPIRITUAL GIFTS

We believe that God is Sovereign in the bestowment of all His gifts. They are given to believers for the perfecting of the saints and the edifying of the Body of Christ.

Each believer has at least one spiritual gift, which is experienced through faith in the presence and power of Jesus Christ.

No specific gift is required for proof of salvation or any degree of spirituality or sanctification. *Romans 12:3-8; 1 Corinthians 12; Ephesians 4:7-12; 1 Peter 4: 10-11*

16. THE RESURRECTION

We believe in the resurrection of the bodies of the dead; that believers who sleep in Jesus will be raised first at the coming of Christ for his Church; that they will be caught up together with the transformed living saints to meet the Lord in the air. *Luke 23: 43*

17. THE SECOND COMING OF CHRIST

We believe in the visible and imminent return of the Lord Jesus Christ. No one, except God the Father, knows the day or the hour when Jesus Christ shall return.

His return will signal the coming together of the world (as we know it) and the full establishment of the Kingdom of God. It indicates the end of death and suffering for all believers, and the judgement of the living and the dead.

Believers in Christ will then assume their future with God and eternal condemnation will be handed to those who reject Him.

1 Thessalonians 4:13-18; and 1: 1-10; Zechariah 14:4-11; Revelation 19: 11-16; 20: 1-6; 3:10.

PART 3 AFFILIATION; CHURCH COVENANT; MEMBERSHIP

CHAPTER 4: AFFILIATION

The Circuit shall be in membership with the Jamaica Baptist Union, and the Jamaica Baptist Missionary Society and/or any other Ecclesiastical body as may be decided on by the Circuit membership.

CHAPTER 5: THE CHURCH COVENANT

Having been led, as we believe, by the Spirit of God to receive the Lord Jesus Christ as our Saviour, 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 of Angels, 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 prosperity and spirituality;

To sustain its worship, ordinances, discipline and doctrines;

To give a sacred pre-eminence over all institutions of human origin;

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 and excessive use of intoxicating drinks;

To abstain from smoking, the use and sale of illegal drugs

To abstain from all forms and appearances of evil, and

To be zealous in our efforts to advance the Kingdom of our Saviour.

We further engage to watch over one another in brotherly love

To remember one another in prayer;

To aid each other in sickness and distress

To cultivate Christian sympathy in feeling and courtesy in speech

To be slow to take offence, but always ready for reconciliation, and

Mindful of the rules of our Saviour, to secure it without delay

We moreover engage that when we move 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.

CHAPTER 6: MEMBERSHIP

1 – ELIGIBILITY

A person can only be eligible for membership in this Church if all the following are fulfilled:

1. He/she has personally believed in and received Jesus Christ as Saviour and Lord of his /her life;
2. His/her life and conduct give evidence that he has been 'born again' into the family of God;
3. He/she has been baptised by immersion as a result of his professed faith in Jesus Christ as Saviour and Lord of his life
4. He/she expresses a willingness to adhere to the Church's manual and by-laws, including the statement of doctrine and the Covenant.

Each candidate upon admission to the membership of the Church shall receive from the Secretariat:

- a) A copy of the Covenant
- b) A copy of the Church Manual
- c) A Baptismal and/or Membership Certificate
- d) Any other material decided on by the Church

2 – CATEGORIES

There shall be two categories of membership as set out hereunder:

1. Full membership
2. Associate membership

1. Full Membership into the Church shall be open to all those who conform with the Fundamental Doctrines of this Church and subject to Part 3 of this Chapter, who qualify under at least one of the following:

- a) Baptism in this Church after profession of faith
- b) Restoration to the Church fellowship
- c) Letter of transfer/commendation from another Church of like faith and practice
- d) Statement of previous baptismal experience in a Church of like faith and practice

2. Associate Membership

- a) Members of Churches of like faith and practice who are residing temporarily in the Corporate area or in the Parish of St Catherine, but who wish to retain membership in their home church may be welcomed as Associate members.
- b) Associate members of the Church may participate or be involved in all phases of the worship and work of the Church, except that such persons may not vote at Church meetings or hold office .

3 – RECEPTION

1. All candidates for membership in this Church shall:
 - a) appear before the Pastor and Council to give personal testimony of their faith in Christ
 - b) affirm their belief in the doctrinal statement of this Church and must receive the approval and recommendation of the Pastor and Council
 - c) be presented to the Church membership, and
 - d) receive a two-thirds majority vote of the Church membership present at a regular or specially called members' meeting.

2. A candidate can become a member by the following ways:
 - a) Baptism – after proclaiming faith in Christ as Saviour and Lord;
 - b) Transfer/commendation – that is by letter from another Church of like faith and practice
 - c) Experience – those who have no present Church membership or are in good standing in another Church of like faith and practice and are unable to get a letter of transfer/commendation, but who have been immersed as believers and have given testimony of such faith in Christ.
 - d) Restoration – members who have been suspended or dismissed by Church discipline and have completed the restoration process.

Provided always that the Pastor and Council may suspend the baptism or reception of a candidate under exceptional circumstances.

4 – TRANSFER

- a) A letter of transfer/commendation shall be granted to any member in good and regular standing who wishes to unite with another Church of like faith and practice.

- b) Persons under Church discipline cannot receive a letter of transfer of membership to another Church. If they desire a Certificate of Christian Character it must state that they are under Church discipline
- c) No letter of transfer or Certificate of Christian Character shall be granted to any member unless by vote of the Council at a regular or specially called business meeting.
- d) Upon the granting of any of the above, the member ceases to have any right of participation in any business of the Church, with effect from the date on which the Council voted.

5 – DUTIES OF MEMBERS

The Covenant of the Church sets forth in general terms the duties and privileges of members. Each member is expected, in obedience to the Word of God, and under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, to fill his or her place in the Church:

- a) By faithful and prayerful attendance at all services.
- b) By faithful and prayerful service in the activities of the Church.
- c) By biblically contributing to the financial support of the Church.
- d) By faithfully studying the Word of God and becoming grounded in the doctrines of the Bible.
- e) By praying fervently for the Pastor, other leaders and members of the Church.
- f) It shall be the duty of those who cannot attend the services of the Church to report to the Pastor or Secretary of the Church by letter, at least once each year concerning the place of their residence, their reasons for not attending the services, and their wish to remain a part of the fellowship

6 – PRIVILEGES OF MEMBERS

A full member of the Church shall have the freedom and privilege to:

- a. Vote at a Church meeting
- b. Speak at a Church meeting
- c. Introduce any important matter at a Church meeting subject to the provisions of the Articles and Bye-laws of this Manual
- d. Nominate candidates for election or appointment to any office of the Church as specified in the bye-laws
- e. Participate in Church activities that will facilitate the use of his/her special gifts in the interest of the Church, and

- f. Seek audience with the Pastor and/or Council on a matter that affects his/her welfare as a member of the Church, and/or the Church in general.

7 – THE ROLE OF FULL MEMBERSHIP

The final decision-making body of the Church shall be a properly constituted meeting of the membership of the Church. Decisions shall be made by voting as provided for in this Manual.

8 – INACTIVE LIST

1. Any member who is absent from the regular services of the Church or who does not carry out his/her duties (as a member) for a period of three months or more without satisfactory reason shall be placed on the Inactive List. If such person refuses to carry out his/her duties for one year or more, that person will automatically cease to be a member.
2. Persons on the Inactive List shall not be eligible to hold any office or position in the Church.
3. Persons on the Inactive List shall not vote in members' meetings.
4. Persons placed on the Inactive List will be notified, where possible, by a personal letter from the Church.
5. Persons on the Inactive List who renew their Church attendance and support of the Church and its ministries will be restored to the active list.
6. The names of persons transferred to the Inactive List shall be referred to the Class Leaders to encourage these persons so placed on the Inactive List to renew their Church attendance and support of the Church, and to report to the Diaconate from time to time.
7. Where possible, the Pastor, or the Pastor and a Deacon, or a Deacon appointed by the Pastor will personally counsel with and make every effort to encourage those members who are in danger of being placed on the Inactive List.

9 – DISCIPLINE

1. GENERAL PRINCIPLES

The purpose of discipline in the Church is to keep a pure testimony before the Lord and the world. It is a direct result of obedience to the teaching of the Word of God and it must be exercised with the deep and prayerful concern for the spiritual conviction and the repentance of the one that is disciplined. Persons

should be treated justly regardless of age, status, social position, wealth or any such consideration. The whole proceedings ought to be distinguished by faithfulness to God's Word and gentleness to the offender

(Acts 5: 1; Corinthians 5: 2; Thessalonians 3:6; Titus 3: 10 – 11; Galatians 6:1)

The objective is that disciplinary action might lead to eventual growth in Grace.

(1 Corinthians 2: 6 – 11)

2. GROUNDS FOR DISCIPLINARY ACTION

Grounds for discipline shall be:

- failure to participate in the life of the Church;
- failure to comply with the Covenant;
- serious doctrinal deviation;
- immorality or such practices which the Church, under guidance of the Holy Spirit and in keeping with the teaching of the Word of God, believes may warrant such action.

3. DISPUTES

In the event that disputes develop between members, such members are expected to refer the matter first to the Church for peaceful settlement rather than resorting to civil courts *(1 Corinthians 6: 1 – 11)*.

10 – DISCIPLINARY PROCEDURES

1. a) In the event that personal differences develop between members of the Church, it is recommended that the parties endeavour to settle their differences in the manner laid down by the Saviour (in Matthew 18: 15-16) before making it a matter for church discipline.
b) Unresolved differences should be reported to the Minister or a Deacon who may seek assistance to converse with the parties with a view to settle the matter amicably. However, if the Pastor/Deacon has failed to settle the matter amicably, the matter should then be brought to the attention of the Council.
2. In cases of differences between members of the Church which are not private in nature, initial action shall be taken on behalf of the Church by the Pastor along with the Deacons.

3. If any member wishes to bring charges against another involving violation of covenant obligations or of immoral, improper, or unchristian conduct, then that member must be willing to give testimony in the presence of the accused, or he must submit such charge or charges in writing, duly signed by the accuser.
4. Where charges are made against any member, the accused shall be notified by the Pastor, or in the absence of the Pastor, a Deacon. Notification may be given personally or by letter.
5. The accused shall be informed of the nature of the charges and shall be requested to appear before the Pastor and a Disciplinary Committee, so designated by the Council, to answer the charges.
6. If the accused does not appear in response to the summons, the Disciplinary committee shall recommend to the Church the exclusion of the said member from the membership unless a satisfactory reason is given for his/her non-appearance.
7. If the accused appears before the Pastor and Disciplinary Committee, there shall be a full and fair hearing of the case.
8. The Pastor and Disciplinary Committee have the right to dismiss the charges against the accused if they are convinced of his innocence. If, on the other hand, a majority of those present at the hearing find the accused guilty of the charges, they shall then make the appropriate recommendation to the Church for discipline, unless confession and proper restitution is made by the accused.
9. Anyone against whom charges have been made and in whose case the Disciplinary Committee has recommended exclusion may appeal to the Church. The Church shall then decide whether to hear the case, or whether to take action upon the recommendation of the Disciplinary Committee.

11 – MODES OF DISCIPLINE

The Modes of Discipline are:

1. Admonition – it consists in solemnly addressing the offender, placing the offence before the person and encouraging the person to greater righteousness (or upright living).
2. Rebuke – this is a more severe form of censure involving stern words of reproof.
3. Suspension – this is a temporary exclusion from all privileges of full communion and other rights of membership. Suspension may or may not be for a specified time, and is removed as soon as sufficient cause for its removal appears. Suspension of an office bearer is uniformly accompanied

by suspension from office. In the case of a Minister, suspension from office may include removal from his/her charge.

4. Expulsion – this, in essence is disfellowship, and is the most severe form of Church censure. It is to be resorted to only in cases of peculiar aggravation, when all other means have failed, and when the offender continues impenitent and contemptuous of the rulings of the Church.

PART 4: CHURCH ADMINISTRATION; ELECTION OF OFFICERS

CHAPTER 7. ADMINISTRATION of the CHURCH

1-----The Administration of the Church shall be:

- Pastoral
- Administrative

The administrative functions shall be performed by the Church Council (Council).

2----- CHURCH COUNCIL

1. RESPONSIBILITIES

The responsibilities of the Church Council shall include:

- a) Spiritual nurturing of the Church.
- b) Evangelism in all its phases
- c) Upholding Christian standards.
- d) Maintenance of doctrinal purity.
- e) Church finances
- f) Protection and care of Church property
- g) Coordination of Church departments, auxiliaries, and organizations.
- h) Administration of Church affairs
- i) Ratification of all committees.

2. MEMBERSHIP

a) The members of the Church Council shall be servants of God and of the Church, and be a good example to others (*1 Timothy 3: 1-3; Ephesians 4: 11-16*)

b) The Church Council shall be comprised of the following officers of the Church:

- i. Pastor
- ii. Deacons
- iii. Secretary
- iv. Assistant Secretary
- v. Treasurer
- vi. Assistant Treasurer
- vii. Family Bible Hour Superintendent
- viii. Music Director
- ix. Evangelism Co-ordinator
- x. Property Manager
- xi. Healing and Counselling Co-ordinator
- xii. Outreach Ministry Co-ordinator
- xiii. Care Ministry Co-ordinator
- xiv. Class Leaders
- xv. Ushers' Board President
- xvi. Catering/Hospitality
- xvii. Youth Fellowship President
- xviii. Boy's Brigade Director
- xix. Girl's Brigade Director
- xx. Brotherhood President
- xxi. Women's Federation President
- xxii. Communications Director

c) Additional members of the Church Council arising from the creation of an auxiliary/department may be elected by the Church at the Annual General Meeting if desired.

- d) No Council member shall serve in more than two capacities on the Council at the same time.
- e) Members of the Church Council (excluding Deacons) shall not serve for more than three consecutive terms in the same capacity. Church Secretaries and Treasurers may serve a maximum of five (5) consecutive terms in the same capacity.

3. MEETINGS

- a) The Council shall meet at least once every two months
- b) The Pastor shall preside over the meetings of the Council, and in his absence a duly designated Deacon, failing which members present shall elect, by majority vote, another member of the Council to preside over the meeting.
- c) No member of the Council shall be absent from a meeting of the Council without reasonable cause.
- d) Once per quarter, there shall be a Council meeting relating primarily to the spiritual nurture and evangelism of the Church in all its phases.

4. DUTIES OF DEPARTMENTS, ORGANIZATIONS, AUXILIARIES BOARDS

- A. All major officers of Departments, Organizations, Auxiliaries and Boards of the Church and all regular teachers of the Family Bible Hour shall be members of the Church in good standing.
- B. All Departments, Organizations, Auxiliaries and Boards of the Church, unless otherwise provided in this manual shall:-
 - a. Submit their annual statement of accounts to the Finance Committee not later than the date fixed by the Finance Committee.
 - b. Prepare a budget for the financial year, supported by proposed activities, and submit same to the Finance Committee not later than the date fixed by the Finance committee
 - c. Submit a report on membership activities to the Church Secretary not later than the date set by the Council

- d. Submit quarterly reports to the Council
- e. Submit their accounts for auditing when called upon to do so by the Church and/or Council
- f. Formulate their respective manuals to guide their operation which thereafter shall be submitted to the Church for approval.

3 -----THE PASTOR/MINISTER

QUALIFICATION

The Pastor/Minister of the Church shall be a baptised believer in membership with a Baptist Church of like faith. He shall be ordained and normally be an accredited Minister of the Jamaica Baptist Union. He shall be called by the Circuit, and shall become a member on assuming office.

DUTIES OF THE PASTOR

It shall be the duty of the Pastor/Minister to

- a) Preach the Gospel of Jesus Christ;
- b) Plan and lead the corporate worship of the Church;
- c) Exercise general oversight over all the activities and functions of the Church, including the Departments, Organisations, and Auxiliaries;
- d) Promote the cause of Missions and Evangelism;
- e) Ensure adequate preparation of candidates for baptism and membership;
- f) Administer the Ordinances of Baptism and Holy Communion;
- g) Perform marriage ceremonies and the blessing of children according to the tenets of the Church;
- h) Visit, counsel and pray for the sick and distressed;
- i) Officiate at the last rites of deceased members;

- j) Preside over the Council meetings, Circuit meetings, and the general business meetings of the Church; and in his absence a duly designated Deacon, failing which the members present shall elect, by majority vote, another member of the Council to preside over the meeting;
- k) Be an ex-officio member of the Deacon's Board and all other Committees of the Church, excluding the Trustee Board and the Finance Committee;
- l) Foster a program of Christian education and leadership training;
- m) Maintain working relations with community and denominational agencies whenever possible.

3. ELECTION AND CALL OF PASTOR

1. The Circuit, in seeking to call a pastor, should:
 - a. Spend time in reflection, prayer and fasting to determine the nature of the Ministry envisioned and the kinds of gifts needed in the Pastor.
 - b. Establish a Search committee of 9 members drawn from the membership of the Circuit (5 such members being from the Edgewater Baptist Church and the remaining 4 from the Waterford Baptist Church). Decisions of the Search Committee shall be by majority vote of not less than 6.
 - c. Consult with the Superintendent Minister through whom the Circuit can receive some general idea of:
 - i. any Minister who had previously indicated a willingness to leave his/her present Circuit;
 - ii. the current policies of the Jamaica Baptist Union, with regard to calling of a Pastor.
2. A short list should be developed comprising 3 or 4 potential candidates listed in order of priority based on suitability.
3. The candidate first named on the short list should be approached for an encounter with the Circuit Council.
4. The Encounter

The Search Committee sets up an encounter with the potential candidate in which the following issues should be discussed:

 - a. the purpose and Ministry of the Church
 - b. the nature of the communities in which they are set

- c. the membership and congregation
 - d. the Minister's special interests and gifts
 - e. expectations of the Minister/Congregation
 - f. the record of the Minister's present ministry.
5. The Circuit Council would then make its recommendations to the membership if the candidate is deemed suitable.
 6. The membership of both Churches shall be allowed to hear and assess the candidate recommended by the Church Council before action is taken to elect him/her to the Pastorate of the Circuit.
 7. Notice of the election of the Pastor shall be given from the pulpit for three successive Sundays preceding the election.
 8. The Pastor shall be elected at a joint Circuit Members' meeting duly called for that purpose.
 9. The Pastor shall be elected by secret ballot by a two-thirds majority of the members present and voting in favour of the motion.
 10. The Call is extended by letter approved by the Circuit Council and signed by the Circuit Secretary.
 11. If at any point in the procedure a candidate is deemed unsuitable or does not favourably respond to the call, the procedure will be repeated in respect of the remaining candidates in the order in which they were short-listed.

4. TERMINATION OF THE PASTOR'S SERVICE

- a) The services of the Pastor may be terminated by a minimum of three months' notice on either side, or payment of three months' salary to the Pastor in lieu of notice by the Circuit.
- b) Termination of the Pastor's services by the Circuit shall be by two-thirds of the members present at a Joint Circuit members' meeting called for that purpose (upon the advice of the Circuit Council) and voting by secret ballot in favour of the motion.
- c) The Circuit Council shall approve the letter of termination to be addressed to the Pastor and signed by the Circuit Secretary.
- d) The policy on a Pastor's resignation from a Church/Circuit as stated in the most current Jamaica Baptist Union Policies and Guidelines Handbook shall apply.

5. ASSOCIATE AND/OR ASSISTANT PASTOR

The Circuit may, on the recommendation of the Circuit Council decide on the need for an Associate and/or Assistant Pastor, and shall by election decide on this appointment.

4----- DEACONS

1. QUALIFICATION

Any member of the Church who satisfies the qualifications set out in Acts 6:3 and Timothy 3: 8-13, and is in good standing shall be eligible for election to the office of Deacon.

2. DUTIES

The Deacons shall:-

- a) Aid in the administration of Baptism and Communion.
- b) Assist the Pastor in the area of Church discipline
- c) Assist the Pastor in the Spiritual oversight of the Church.
- d) Take a leading and exemplary role in the Church visitation and Counselling
- e) Visit applicants for membership
- f) Officiate at the Lord's Table in the absence of the Pastor
- g) Assist in the general care of the Pastor
- h) Along with the Pastor, ensure adequate preparation of candidates for baptism and membership.

3. ELECTION

- a) Deacons shall be elected at the Annual General Meeting of the Church or a Special General Meeting called for that purpose.
- b) Where a Deacon is being elected, the Pastor and Deacons Board shall recommend the prospective candidate to the Church Council, then:
 - I. The Council may accept, reject, or add to the list of recommended candidate(s)
 - II. The Council will pass on its recommendations to the membership of the Church in a regular members meeting, especially so called or otherwise. The membership may make its own recommendations at this meeting.
 - III. The Church should spend time in reflection, prayer and fasting.

- IV. At least two months after the recommendations have been made a special meeting of the members will be held to elect the deacons.
- V. A newly elected Deacon shall not assume the office until he/she is duly ordained by the pastor and which shall be done within two months of being elected.

4. DEACON EMERITUS

Recommendation- Upon the recommendation of the Deacon's Board the Church may confer the title of *Deacon Emeritus* on a Deacon who has been physically unable to serve or has been a shut-in for at least three (3) years.

The position that was previously held by the Deacon Emeritus shall then be declared vacant.

5 ----- THE SECRETARIAT

1. COMPOSITION

The Secretariat of the Church shall be composed of the Church Secretary as Chairman, the Assistant Secretary, the Office secretary, and the Circuit Secretary (who shall be an ex-officio member)

2. FUNCTIONS

The general functions of the Secretariat shall be to:

- a) Keep an accurate record of the meetings of the Church, committees appointed by the Church and/or the Council, and any other committee as the Council may direct
- b) Keep an up-to-date record of the membership of the Church
- c) Document important events in the operations of the Church
- d) Provide secretarial support to the Pastor
- e) Perform any other related duties delegated by the Church and/or the Council

3. CHURCH SECRETARY/ASSISTANT SECRETARY

A. Qualifications

The Church secretary/Assistant Secretary shall be members of the Church, elected to such office by the Church.

B. Duties

The duties of the Church Secretary shall be:-

- a) To be responsible to the Church and the Council for the proper functioning of the secretariat;
- b) To delegate authority to the Assistant Secretary in Consultation with the Council;
- c) To be responsible for:
 - I. all church correspondence
 - II. coordinating the Church calendar of events in consultation with the Minister
 - III. presenting the annual report of the Church
 - IV. keeping an accurate record of meetings of the Council and the Trustee Board
 - V. election procedures and proceedings of the Church
 - VI. undertake any other related matter assigned by the Council
- d) To recommend to the Council for its approval any sub-committee that may be necessary for the execution of the duties of the secretariat.
- e) Assisting in the preparation of the Order of Service and the Preacher's /Leader's plan.
- f) Giving the notices, welcome and acknowledgements in the Church Services, and
- g) To ensure that the appropriate greetings/tributes be given at Church Services and functions on behalf of the Church

6 -----THE BURSARY

1. COMPOSITION

The Bursary shall be made up of:

- a) The Trustee Board (as the administrative body), and
- b) The Finance Committee

2. MEETINGS

- a) A meeting of the Bursary shall be convened at least once every six months during the financial year of the Church.
- b) The Bursary shall meet to prepare the annual budget of the Church for submission through the Treasurer to the Council, not later than the 30th September each year.

7----- THE TRUSTEE BOARD

1. COMPOSITION

- a) The Trustee Board shall consist of Trustees elected as such by the Church at the Church's Annual General Meeting.
- b) Trustees shall be members of the Church in good standing and persons of mature judgment.
- c) The Trustee Board shall consist of not less than three and no more than five Trustees
- d) The Trustee Board shall have power to co-opt not more than two church members approved by the Council, whose term of office shall be determined by the Council.
- e) The term of office of members of the Trustee Board shall be decided by the Council.
- f) The trustees shall elect from their number a chairman.
- g) No member of the Finance Committee shall be a member of the Trustee Board.

2. DUTIES

The duties of the Trustee Board shall be:

- a) to hold in trust, as directed by the Church, the fixed, movable, and liquid assets of the Church
- b) to be responsible for all legal and financial matters of the Church relating to property general maintenance, improvements and paid personnel
- c) to negotiate on behalf of the Church any business transaction that may be necessary to meet emergency situations, and to obtain ratification of such action(s) at the earliest opportunity thereafter, from the Council and the Church
- d) to give a half-yearly report of its stewardship to the Council, and annually to the Church

- e) to study and make recommendations to the Council on reports submitted by the Finance Committee
- f) to work in close cooperation and collaboration with the Council and the Finance Committee

8 ----- THE FINANCE COMMITTEE

1. STATUS

The Finance Committee shall be a Standing Committee of the Church.

2. COMPOSITION

- a) The members of the Finance Committee shall be members of the Church in good standing and not a member of the Trustee Board
- b) The Finance Committee shall consist of nine members which should include:
 - I. The Treasurer
 - II. Assistant Treasurer
 - III. Church Secretary/Assistant Secretary
 - IV. A Deacon (as representative of Auxiliaries of the Church)
 - V. A Deacon (as representative of the Classes of the Church)
 - VI. Chairman of the Property Management Committee
 - VII. A representative of the Checking Committee [criteria to be developed for checking committee]
 - VIII. Two non-Council members of the Church co-opted by the Council.
- c) The Chairman of the Finance Committee shall be the Treasurer.
- d) Meetings of the Finance Committee shall be held at least once quarterly.
- e) All decisions taken by the Finance Committee shall be by majority vote.

3. DUTIES

The Finance Committee shall have responsibility for:

- a) Recommending to the Trustee Board “Special Projects” for the advancement of the Church;

- b) Recommending to the Council appointments from the non-Council Church membership of sub-committees, including their chairmen, to carry out the functions delegated to it, and to manage special projects of the Church;
- c) Studying the financial needs of Organizations and Auxiliaries of the Church and developing with them ways and means of meeting these needs;
- d) Receiving, studying, developing, and presenting the budget from/for each Auxiliary or Organization;
- e) Studying and reporting on any other matter referred to it by the Church and/or Council.

4. THE TREASURER/ASSISTANT TREASURER

1. QUALIFICATION

The Church Treasurer and Assistant Treasurer shall be members of the Church, and elected by the Church.

2. DUTIES

It shall be the duty of the Treasurer to:

- a) Chair the meetings of the Finance Committee;
- b) Receive and deposit the funds of the Church as directed by the Church;
- c) Disburse the said funds or portion thereof as directed by the Church;
- d) Pay by cheque, generally, all financial obligations of the Church;
- e) Keep an accurate record of all receipts, lodgements, and disbursements;
- f) Prepare and present
 - i. a quarterly financial statement to the Trustee Board, Council, and Church
 - ii. a monthly financial update to the Council
 - iii. a half-yearly financial report to the Church;
 - iv. an annual audited report to the Annual General Meeting of the Church;
 - v. and such other statements as may be deemed necessary and requested by the Church, Council, and/or the Trustee Board
 - vi. to submit the annual budget of the Church prepared by the Bursary to the Council for approval and to the Church at the Annual General Meeting for final approval;
- g) Delegate authority to the Assistant Treasurer in consultation with the Council.

9----- AUDIT COMMITTEE

1. COMPOSITION

- a) The Auditors shall be members of the Circuit in good standing, and qualified to fulfil the required duties.
- b) Not more than three auditors shall be elected annually by the Circuit from a list of candidates nominated/approved by the Joint Church Councils.
- c) One of the auditors shall be referred to as the ' Chief Auditor', who shall offer leadership in the performance of their duties

2. DUTIES

The duties of the Auditors shall be:-

- a) To audit and report on the accounts of each Church annually.
- b) To audit and report on the accounts of the Circuit annually.
- c) To audit and report on the accounts of any Department, Organization and Auxiliary of each Church when requested by that Church and/or its Council.
- d) To carry out any other assignment delegated by each Church, its respective Council, and/or the Circuit.

3. NOTICE OF AUDIT

The Chief Auditor shall give at least 2 weeks' notice to the Department/organization, and/or Auxiliary to be audited.

10----- FAMILY BIBLE HOUR

1. PURPOSE

The purpose of the Family Bible Hour, (FBH) shall be to bring into focus the functional interactivity of home and Church in the Christian development of persons.

2. FAMILY BIBLE HOUR SUPERINTENDENT AND ASSISTANT

A. QUALIFICATIONS

The Family Bible Hour Superintendent/Assistant Superintendent shall be members of the Church, elected to such office by the Church

B. DUTIES

The Family Bible Hour Superintendent shall:

- I. Be responsible for the administration, planning, operation, and promotion of the F.B.H., subject to the approval of the Council;
- II. Organize the efficient and productive running of the F.B.H. aimed at involving the total Church membership;
- III. Appoint all teachers working in the F.B.H subject to the approval of the Council;
- IV. Ensure the regular training of the F.B.H. teachers;
- V. Make all necessary arrangements for Vacation Bible School;
- VI. Prepare students for, and supervise Sunday School Exams;
- VII. Be responsible for the implementation of any other duties assigned to the F.B.H. and its officers by the Council.

11----- MUSIC MINISTRY

1. PURPOSE

- a) To promote and enhance the worship experience of the Church through the Ministry of music, and
- b) Organize the overall music ministry of the Church.

2. COMPOSITION

- a) The members of the Music Ministry shall be members of the Church in good standing.
- b) The Music Committee shall be responsible for the operations of the Music ministry.
- c) The members of the Music Committee are:
 - I. The Music Director
 - II. The Assistant Music Director
 - III. Directors of all Choirs
 - IV. Leader of Praise in Worship Team
 - V. Leader of Dance Ministry
 - VI. Organist/Musicians

d) The Music Director shall chair the Music Committee

3. MUSIC DIRECTOR AND ASSISTANT

A. Qualifications

The Music director and Assistant Music director shall be elected by the Church.

B. DUTIES

The Music Director shall:

- a) Ensure that musical selections are provided at all worship services
- b) Assist in the selection of hymns
- c) Ensure that training sessions are conducted as needed
- d) Advise the Council and the Church on all matters relating to the Music Ministry of the Church.

12 ----- EVANGELISM COMMITTEE

1. COMPOSITION

- a) Class leaders or their representatives shall be members of the Evangelism Committee. Other members of the Church who are thus inclined.
- b) The Evangelism Coordinator shall chair the Evangelism Committee.
- c) The Evangelism Committee shall meet at least once per month

2. EVANGELISM COORDINATOR AND/OR ASSISTANT

The Evangelism Coordinator and the Assistant Evangelism Coordinator shall be elected by the Church.

QUALIFICATIONS

The Evangelism committee shall comprise of members of the Church in good standing

3. DUTIES

The duties of the Evangelism Committee shall include:-

- a) Planning, developing, implementing, and promoting effective evangelistic programs which shall include outreach missionary activities such as crusades and open-air meetings.

- b) Ensuring that effective altar counselling and follow-up is given to those who make decisions during Church services, crusades, etc.
- c) Advising on matters relating to the Evangelistic thrust of the Church; and
- d) The carrying out of any other activities delegated to it by the Church and/or Council.

13 ----- PROPERTY MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE

1. COMPOSITION

- a) The Property Committee shall comprise of members of the Church in good standing
- b) The Property Committee shall be chaired by the Property Manager

PURPOSE

The Property Committee shall have responsibility for maintaining in good repair and improving, when deemed necessary and feasible, the property of the Church and manse in consultation with the Trustee Board

2. PROPERTY MANAGER AND ASSISTANT

a) QUALIFICATIONS

The Property Manager and Assistant Property Manager shall be elected by the Church

3. DUTIES

The Property Manager shall:-

- a) Ensure that the Church's properties are adequately secured, maintained, and developed
- b) Spearhead the building programmes of the Church
- c) Supervise the duties and responsibilities of the Caretaker
- d) Supervise the duties and responsibilities of the Cleaners
- e) Keep a half-yearly inventory of all Church equipment and property
- f) Be responsible for the beautification of the Church building and grounds
- g) Advise on matters relating to the Church's properties.

14 ----- HEALING AND COUNSELLING MINISTRY

1.PURPOSE

To promote optimal levels of physical, mental, and spiritual health within the Church and community at large by ministering to those who are ill and encouraging prevention of disease through effective health education and leadership

2. COMPOSITION

- a) The Healing and Counselling Committee shall comprise of members of the Church in good standing.
- b) The Healing and Counselling Coordinator shall chair this Ministry.

3. HEALING AND COUNSELLING COORDINATOR AND ASSISTANT

A. QUALIFICATIONS

- a. The Healing and Counselling Coordinator and the Assistant shall be elected by the Church
- b. The person elected should be interested in promoting healthful living among Church members and in the community.

B. DUTIES

The Healing and Counselling Coordinator shall:

- a) Organize the services related to the Healing and Counselling Ministry through a selected committee
- b) Promote and enhance the ‘holistic ministry’ of the Church into an effective spiritual-physical witness
- c) Plan activities for Healing and Counselling Sundays, and
- d) Plan activities for Family Month.

15 ----- OUTREACH MINISTRY

1. COMPOSITION

The Outreach Committee shall comprise of members of the Church in good standing

2. OUTREACH MINISTRY COORDINATOR AND ASSISTANT

QUALIFICATIONS

The Outreach Ministry Coordinator and the Assistant shall be members of the Church in good standing and elected by the Church.

3. DUTIES

- a) To organize and supervise the outreach programs of the Church.
- b) To gather and prepare clothing, food, and other supplies for the poor, needy, and unfortunate.
- c) To keep an up-to-date record of its purchases, gifts, donations, distributions, etc.

- d) To encourage adult education, visiting, home making, home nursing, and other services as part of the Church's outreach programme
- e) Any other duties as assigned to it by the Council and/or Church.

16 ----- CARE MINISTRY

1. COMPOSITION

The Care Ministry shall comprise of members of the Church in good standing

2. CARE MINISTRY COORDINATOR AND ASSISTANT QUALIFICATIONS

The Care Ministry coordinator and Assistant shall be members in good standing and elected by the Church

3. DUTIES

- a) To see to the overall well-being of the members of the Church
- b) To ensure that the appropriate gestures are made to the members of the Church, especially in their moments of crisis.
- c) To maintain a high level of confidentiality, especially in regard to sensitive information about members.
- d) To work in close co-operation with the Deacons and Class Leaders in fulfilling the other related duties outlined and assigned by the Council.
- e) Any other duties assigned to it by the Council and/or Church

17----- CLASS LEADERS

1. PURPOSE

Class leaders shall give oversight and enhance fellowship among the members

2. QUALIFICATIONS

Class Leaders shall be members of the Church in good standing, and elected by the respective class subject to the approval of the Church.

3. CHAIRMAN

The Class Leaders shall elect from among their numbers a Coordinator who shall chair the meetings of the Class Leader's Board

4. DUTIES

Class Leaders shall:

- a) Visit their class members regularly, particularly the sick and shut-in;
- b) Organize and conduct class meetings;
- c) Keep their class members informed of the activities of the Church;
- d) Remind their class members of their responsibilities to the Church, and give guidance on how to live up to these responsibilities;
- e) Assist with the distribution of the Church envelopes, and any other material connected with the Church, to their class members as soon as possible after they are available;
- f) Mobilize their class members towards full participation in the activities of the Church;
- g) Ensure his/her class is represented on the Evangelism committee.
- h) Perform such other duties as may be delegated by the Church and/or the Council
- i) Attend regular meetings of the Class Leaders' Board and special meetings as directed by circumstances.

18 ----- USHERS' BOARD

1. COMPOSITION

The members of the Ushers' Board shall be members of the Church in good standing and approved by the Council on the recommendation of the Ushers' Board.

MEETINGS: Meetings of the Ushers' Board shall be held at least once per month.

2. USHERS' BOARD PRESIDENT

QUALIFICATIONS

The Ushers' Board President shall be a member of the Church in good standing and elected as such by the members of the Ushers' Board subject to the approval of the Church at the Annual General Meeting.

3. DUTIES

The Ushers' Board shall:

- a) Be responsible for the proper maintenance of order and the smooth running of all Church services, whether regular or special.
- b) Supervise the arrangements for all occasions, including catering
- c) Welcome and accommodate worshippers
- d) Distribute books, hymnals, bulletins, etc.;
- e) Collect the offering at all services, except where other arrangements have been made;
- f) Assist in the rendering of First Aid to the faint and sick during Church services;
- g) Direct the traffic at Church services and arrange for the parking of motor vehicles;
- h) Assist at baptisms, weddings, funerals, and denominational assemblies;
- i) Fulfil any other duties assigned by the Council or church from time to time

19----- YOUTH FELLOWSHIP

1. PURPOSE

- a) To challenge the Youth of the Church to maintain an ongoing personal relationship with God;
- b) To inspire witness among Youth and engage them in the Ministry of Missions and Evangelism;
- c) To facilitate a forum for worship and fellowship among Youth of the Church
- d) To provide a training ground for future Youth leaders;
- e) To promote total development of Youth through:-
 - I. spiritual and moral strengthening
 - II. training and improvement in knowledge, skill, understanding, attitudes, and socialization, and
 - III. consultation and greater interaction with the adults of the Church.

2. YOUTH FELLOWSHIP PRESIDENT

QUALIFICATIONS

The Youth Fellowship President shall be a member of the Church in good standing, and elected as such by the members of the Youth Fellowship subject to the approval of the Church at the Annual General Meeting.

20----- THE BOYS' BRIGADE

1. PURPOSE

There shall be a Boys' Brigade governed by the principles, objectives and guidelines of the Boys' Brigade of Jamaica subject to the approval of the Church

2. BOYS' BRIGADE DIRECTOR

QUALIFICATIONS

The Boys' Brigade Director shall be a member of the Church in good standing and elected by the Church

3. DUTIES

The duties of the Boys' Brigade shall be those set out by the Boys' Brigade of Jamaica

21----- THE GIRLS' BRIGADE

1. PURPOSE

There shall be a Girls' Brigade governed by the principles, objectives and guidelines of the Girls' Brigade of Jamaica subject to the approval of the Church.

2. GIRLS' BRIGADE CAPTAIN

QUALIFICATIONS

The Girls' Brigade Captain shall be a member of the Church in good standing and elected by the Church.

3. DUTIES

The duties of the Girls' Brigade shall be those set out by The Girls' Brigade of Jamaica

22----- THE BROTHERHOOD

1. PURPOSE

There shall be a Brotherhood governed by the objectives, guidelines, and stipulations of the Jamaica Baptist Union Brotherhood.

- a) To lead men into a realization of their obligations and role in Missions/Evangelism
- b) To provide a medium through which men can serve effectively and efficiently in promoting the full programme of their Church and denomination.
- c) To co-operate with the Jamaica Baptist Union in the proper administration of the Brotherhood

2. BROTHERHOOD PRESIDENT

QUALIFICATION

The Brotherhood President shall be a member of the Church in good standing and elected as such by members of the Brotherhood subject to the approval of the Church at the Annual General Meeting

3. DUTIES

The duties of The Brotherhood shall be those as outlined by the Jamaica Baptist Union Brotherhood Council.

MEETINGS: The Brotherhood shall meet at least once per month

23----- WOMEN'S FEDERATION

1. PURPOSE

There shall be a Women's Federation governed by the objectives, guidelines, and stipulations of the Jamaica Baptist Union Women's Federation.

2. WOMEN'S FEDERATION PRESIDENT

QUALIFICATION

The Women's Federation President shall be a member of the Church in good standing and elected as such by members of the Women's Federation subject to the approval of the Church at the Annual General Meeting

3. DUTIES

The duties of the Women's Federation shall be those as outlined by the Jamaica Baptist Union Women's Federation

MEETINGS: The Women's Federation shall meet at least once per month

24----- COMMUNICATIONS DEPARTMENT

1. PURPOSE

The Communications Department shall promote the use of a sound program of Public Relations and all contemporary communications techniques, sustainable technologies and media in the promulgation of the Gospel.

2. COMPOSITION

- a) The Communications Department shall comprise of members of the Church or Circuit in good standing.
- b) Where there is a public relations officer in any department or auxiliary of the Church, such officer is deemed to be a member of the Communications Department.
- c) The Communications Director shall chair the Communications Department.

3. COMMUNICATIONS DIRECTOR AND ASSISTANT

QUALIFICATIONS

The Communications director and Assistant Communications director shall be elected by the Church

4. DUTIES

The Communications Department shall:

- a) Provide the medium through which communication takes place in support of the Church's mission
- b) Promote the enhancement of the communications capabilities of the Church;
- c) Provide all technical services in relation to audio and visual aids for church services, functions, presentations and activities;
- d) Organize and promote public relations activities of the Church;
- e) Ensure that training is conducted in pursuance of the purpose of the Communications Department;
- f) Perform such other duties assigned to it by the Council and/or Church

Chapter 8: ELECTION OF OFFICERS

1. ELECTIONS

- a) All officers and members of the board for the administration of the Church shall be elected by the Church at the Annual General Meeting (AGM) unless otherwise provided herein.
- b) **Assumption of Duties:** The elected officers and members of Auxiliaries, Boards, Committees shall assume their duties of office the day immediately following the date of election.
- c) **Notice:** Notice of an election to, or removal from any office shall be given during the public worship of at least four Sundays preceding the Church meeting at which the voting is to be done.
- d) **Voting Format:** Election of officers of the Church, and members of Boards shall be by ballot or by show of hands as decided by the Council.
- e) **The Vote:** Unless otherwise specified, election to any office of the administration of the Church shall be by majority of the members present and voting in favour at a properly constituted meeting of the Church. The nomination and voting age of the church shall be twelve (12) years of age and over.

2. NOMINATIONS

- a) Nominations for any office shall be made from the floor before the Church votes.
- b) The Council may recommend to the Church persons whom in its judgement can meet the requirements and are generally suitable for the position prior to the commencement of the nomination exercise
- c) All nominees must be present at the meeting, except that an individual who is absent may be nominated provided that,
 - i. The prospective nominee shall have indicated in writing to the Church secretary his/her consent to being nominated to such post, and
 - ii. The prospective nominee's absence is due to circumstances beyond his/her control.

3. QUALIFICATIONS FOR ELECTION

Those filling elected positions of the Church shall, in addition to any other requirements of the specific position shall:

- a. Be servants of God.
- b. Have been members of the Church in good standing for at least one year.
- c. Be good examples to others.

5. REMOVAL OF OFFICERS

A Deacon or any other officer of the Church may be removed from office by the vote of two-thirds of the members present at a special Church meeting called for that purpose.

Such removal may be effected on the following grounds:

- a) For conduct tending to bring his/her office into disrepute
- b) The person has been excluded from the membership of the Church
- c) For any other good cause shown; and
- d) In the case of a Deacon only, absence of for a period of twelve months or more from regular meetings of the Council.

6. FILLING VACANCIES

- a) If, by death, resignation, or removal from office, a vacancy should occur, such a vacancy shall be filled within two months thereafter, unless otherwise agreed by the Church.
- b) When such a vacancy is filled, the appointee or elected person shall complete the term of office of the predecessor and shall be eligible for re-appointment or re-election.

PART 5 CHURCH FINANCES

Chapter 9: FINANCES of the CHURCH

1. THE FINANCIAL YEAR

The financial year of the Church shall be from 1st October to 30th September

2. BUDGET FOR FINANCIAL YEAR

- A. The Budget for the financial year shall be prepared by the Bursary, and submitted through the Treasurer to the Council for its approval. The budget shall then be submitted by the Treasurer to the Annual General Meeting of the Church for its final approval.

- B. All Departments, Organizations, Auxiliaries and Boards of the Church shall submit their annual statement of Accounts and budget for the financial year to the Finance Committee not later than the date fixed by the Finance Committee.**

3. MANAGEMENT OF FUNDS

A. DELEGATION OF AUTHORITY

The Council shall delegate to the Trustee Board authority for the management of the finances of the Church

B. EXPENDITURE OF FUNDS NOT BUDGETED

The Council shall submit to the Church for its approval any expenditure exceeding ten thousand dollars (\$10, 000.00) which was not included in the approved budget for the financial year.

C. FUNDS OF AUXILIARIES

- I. All money received by and for all Departments, Organizations, and Auxiliaries of the Church shall be turned over promptly to the Church Treasurer by the respective Treasurer of those Departments, Organizations, and Auxiliaries.
- II. Funds in excess of budgeted amounts shall be made available to the Department, Organization, or Auxiliary turning over same to the Church Treasurer.
- III. These excess funds may only be disbursed by order of the Department, Organization, or Auxiliary to which they are available.

D. QUARTERLY STATEMENTS

The Treasurer shall present a quarterly statement of the Accounts to the Church.

E. ANNUAL STATEMENT

The Treasurer shall present an audited Annual Statement of Accounts to the Annual General Meeting of the Church.

4. BEQUESTS AND GIFTS

The Trustee Board shall accept bequest(s) and gifts on behalf of the Church from Church members, et al, approved by the Council, and in case of doubt and/or misunderstanding regarding the intention of the donor of a bequest or gift, the Trustee Board shall interpret or take any step deemed necessary to interpret the wishes of the Donor.

5 - THE BENEVOLENT FUND

The church may establish a Benevolent Fund, through which members may have specific areas of need addressed.

The Church Council will ensure that a Benevolent Fund Committee is in place so that the funds may be managed with the highest standards of integrity.

The Benevolent Fund Committee shall develop written procedures and formats to:

- a) Appropriately document the needs of applicants
- b) Investigate and verify the need

1. COMPOSITION

The Benevolent fund Chairman and Committee shall be comprised of members of the Church in good standing.

2. FUNDING

The Benevolent Fund will be built through

- a) contributions from members, whether at an agreed rate or otherwise
- b) contributions from donors, including bequests
- c) The church will provide appropriate receipts for gifts or contributions to the Benevolent Fund.
- d) The church reserves the right to return any gifts that may be given if the source or intent of the gift is inappropriate to the standard and mission of the Church.
- e) Donors may make suggestions but not designate or restrict their donations concerning the identity of the needy individuals.

3. DISBURSEMENT:

The Benevolent Fund Committee shall ensure:

- a) Proper records are kept,
- b) Reports of receipts and expenditure are made at monthly meetings of the Benevolent Fund membership
- c) Quarterly reports and financial statements made to the Church Council.
- d) Funds will be released to the members who apply for, or need assistance, by Benevolent Fund Committee only after the required documentation is appropriately completed and authorized by the Benevolent Fund Committee.
- e) In order to prevent any prolonged suffering on the part of the member who applies for assistance, efforts are to be made to ensure response and disbursements are completed in as short a time as is possible.

Part 6 CHURCH SERVICES AND MEETINGS

CHAPTER 10: WORSHIP SERVICES AND MEETINGS

1. WORSHIP SERVICES

- a) Worship Services shall be observed each Lord's Day;
- b) A mid-week service of Prayer and Bible Study shall be held in the Church or at any other place decided by the Church and/or the Council.
- c) Evangelism Services shall be held at least once a year for periods to be approved by the Council.
- d) The Lord's Supper shall be observed at least once every month and at such other time as may be determined by the Church and/or Council.
- e) Baptismal Service shall be observed regularly.

2. MEETINGS

A. Business/Regular Meetings

Business/regular meetings of the Church shall be held at least once every three months unless prevented by unforeseen circumstances. It will then be held on the earliest convenient date. At such meetings full information should be given to the membership regarding the work of the Church.

B. Special Meeting

A Special Meeting of the Church may be called in any of the following ways:

- a. At the request of the Pastor, or
- b. At the request of 2/3 majority of the Deacons
- c. At the request of the majority of the Council, or
- d. At the written request of at least fifteen active Church members (E.B.C.) and ten active members (W.B.C.), provided that the specific purpose of this meeting is given and the meeting announced at least one Lord's Day prior to the meeting.

C. Annual General Meeting

The Annual General Business Meeting (AGM) of the Church shall normally be held on a day after the last Sunday in September, but not later than the 2nd Sunday in November of the Church year.

D. Notice of Meetings

Notice of Business or Regular meetings shall be given at least three consecutive Sundays preceding the date of such Meeting.

E. Quorum

At all meetings where business is conducted a quorum shall be not less than 30% of the members of the Church.

F. Confidentiality of Meetings

Members shall regard all business discussed at Church Meetings as of a strictly private and confidential nature.

G. Meetings of Auxiliaries, etc.

Regular/Special Meetings of Boards, Councils, Departments, Organizations, Auxiliaries and Committees shall be held as and when approved by the Church.

PART 7 THE CIRCUIT

CHAPTER 11: THE CIRCUIT

1. CIRCUIT PURPOSE

The purpose of the Circuit is for two or more Baptist Churches in geographical proximity to each other to be committed to working together in partnership in enhancing the fellowship and ministry of member Churches under the guidance of a single shared Pastorate.

2. COMPOSITION

The Circuit shall be comprised of the Edgewater Baptist Church, the Waterford Baptist Church, and any other Church so designated that

- a) is a member of the Jamaica Baptist Union; and
- b) subscribes to the *Chapters and By-laws* of this manual.

3. CIRCUIT ADMINISTRATION

- a. The Circuit shall be administered by the Circuit Council
- b. The Circuit Council shall be comprised of the Councils of the Churches of the Circuit sitting jointly, and the elected Circuit Officers.
- c. The Circuit Council shall meet at least once in the Church year.

- d. The elected circuit officers shall be the Circuit Secretary, Assistant circuit Secretary, Circuit Treasurer, and the Circuit Youth Coordinator, who shall be elected at the Circuit Annual General Meeting for a tenure of one year, but no more than three consecutive years of service.

4. CIRCUIT SECRETARY

A. QUALIFICATIONS

The Circuit secretary shall be a member a Church in the Circuit in good standing, and elected at the Annual General Meeting of the Circuit.

B. DUTIES

The duties of the Circuit Secretary shall be to:

- i. Keep an accurate record of meetings of the Circuit Council.
- ii. Keep an accurate record of the Annual general Meeting, joint meeting of the Churches and Circuit Committees.
- iii. Compile and co-ordinate the joint calendar of the churches in consultation with the secretaries of the Churches, and the Pastor.
- iv. Liaise with, and perform duties as required by the Jamaica Baptist Union.
- v. Perform any other duties assigned by the Circuit Council or Circuit.

5. CIRCUIT TREASURER

A. QUALIFICATIONS

The Circuit Treasurer shall be a member of a Church in the Circuit in good standing and elected at the Annual General Meeting of the Circuit.

B. DUTIES

The duties of the Circuit treasurer shall be to:

- i. Develop and monitor a Circuit budget based on the joint needs of the Churches in conjunction with the joint bursaries of the Churches
- ii. Inform each Church of its required contribution to the Circuit Fund.
- iii. Maintain an accurate record of Circuit funds.
- iv. Be responsible for keeping and disbursing Circuit Funds as required for Circuit activities and as directed by the Circuit Council.

- v. Prepare and present financial statements to the Circuit Council and the Annual General Meeting of the Circuit.

6. CIRCUIT YOUTH COORDINATOR

A. QUALIFICATIONS

The Circuit Youth Coordinator shall be:

- i. A faithful member of a Church in the Circuit.
- ii. In good standing within the Circuit
- iii. Not a member of any of the Youth Fellowship executives within the Circuit and
- iv. Elected as such at the annual Circuit Youth Day.

B. DUTIES

The duties of the Circuit Youth Coordinator shall be to:

- i. Serve as a role model (spiritual and otherwise) to the Youth of the Circuit.
- ii. Co-ordinate all the joint activities relating to youth in the Circuit and ensure that plans are in keeping with the stated programme(s) of the Circuit.
- iii. Identify specific needs of the Youth and formulate effective measures in addressing these needs.
- iv. Represent the youth of the Circuit at meetings requiring such representation.
- v. Convene quarterly meetings of the Circuit Youth Committee which shall be comprised of the leaders of the youth groups and co-opted members from within the Circuit as deemed necessary.
- vi. Present a quarterly report to the respective Church Councils within the Circuit and an Annual Report to the A.G.M of the Circuit.

7. CIRCUIT MEETINGS

A. ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

There shall be an Annual General Meeting of the Circuit.

B. SPECIAL MEETING

A Special Meeting of the Circuit shall be called as circumstances demand in any of the following ways:

- i. At the request of the Pastor, or
- ii. At the request of a two-thirds majority of the Circuit council.

iii. At the request of a two-thirds majority of the membership of a Church in the Circuit.

C. NOTICE OF MEETINGS

Notice of meetings shall be given in each Church at least four consecutive Sundays preceding the date of such meeting.

D. QUORUM

At all meetings where business is conducted a quorum shall be not less than thirty percent (30%) of the members of each Church present.

E. DECISIONS

- i. Decisions of the Circuit shall be made by the combined majority votes of the Churches voting in favour at a properly constituted meeting of the Circuit.
- ii. In exceptional circumstances and where it is more convenient, the Circuit may allow a vote to be taken at each Church and the combined majority votes which are in favour shall be deemed to be the decision of the Circuit.

F. SOCIAL ACTIVITY

There may be a joint social activity of the Churches of the Circuit at least once per year.

APPENDICES

Appendix 1: Amendment of the Manual

- A. The Manual (*Chapters and/or By-laws*) of the Circuit may be amended by two-thirds of the members present and voting in favour at a general meeting of members of the Church called for the purpose.
- B. A proposed change or amendment of any *Chapter and/or By-laws* shall take the form of a Notice of Motion given in writing by a member of the Church in good standing for at least one year. This member must be seconded by another member in similar standing.
- C. A copy of the Notice of Motion shall be given to the members of the Church at least three months before any vote on the proposed amendment/change.

- D. At least three months, and not more than six months, shall elapse between the dates of the Notice of Motion and its presentation to the Church for debate and decision at the meeting called for the purpose of the aforementioned amendment/change.
- E. The Notice of Motion shall be accepted for presentation at the Church meeting called for the purpose of the amendment/change.
- F. The date of the implementation of any amendment/change to these *chapters* and/or *By-laws* shall be determined by the Church at the time when the amendment is passed.
- G. Where the proposed amendment/change relates to the Circuit, the above provisions shall similarly apply at the Circuit level.

APPENDIX 2: BY-LAWS

1. COMMITTEES

- a) Unless otherwise provided for, or specified by the Council/Circuit Council, the members of sub-committees and/or ad hoc committees shall elect from their number a Chairman and a Secretary.
- b) Sub-Committees and ad hoc committees of the Circuit shall have no less than five (5), and no more than eleven members.
- c) Unless otherwise provided:
 - i. The composition of a committee of the Circuit shall have regard to the total active membership of each Church to be represented on the Committee.

- ii. Each Church shall be represented on the committee in proportion to its active membership.
- iii. Provided, however that the representation of a Church shall not be less than or equal to the minimum votes required by the Committee to make decisions.

2. CIRCUIT COMMITTEE DECISIONS

Decisions of a Circuit Committee shall be made by majority vote as follows:

- a) Where the committee comprises five members, a majority of four members voting in favour, or
- b) Where the committee comprises seven members, a majority of five members voting in favour, or
- c) Where the committee comprises nine members, a majority of seven members voting in favour, or
- d) Where the committee comprises eleven members, a majority of nine members voting in favour.