

GCBC Bylaws / Constitution – Overview of Changes

**Please let the Elders know of any questions before congregational meeting on Sunday September 7th after the PM service to ratify Bylaws presented to congregation on 7/27/08, copies given in AM service and Q&A in PM service*

Note: Copies of new bylaws are available on back counter in lobby or online at our church home page – www.goldcountrybaptist.org (click on links underneath picture on home page which include the audio of Elders overview and Q&A, and link to old bylaws as well).

The new or rewritten sections have already been given to the congregation as bulletin inserts in 2008 (ex: Purpose Statement, Guiding Principles, Elders, Deacons, Church Discipline, etc.)

Below are the most notable changes:

GOVERNMENT (Article VI in revision, old Article VIII)

Formerly: “authority vested in voting members”

Revision: “The governing authority and head of this church is Jesus Christ alone ... As head of the church, Jesus Christ in His Word has given Elders to be the spiritual leaders of the local church ... All the activities and affairs of the Corporation shall be exercised by or under the direction of the Board of Elders, who are responsible for shepherding and having oversight of the flock.”

Formerly: “The administrative government of this church shall be vested in the executive board, consisting of the pastor(s), the elders, deacons, clerk, treasurer, and other officers as approved by the church ... executive board shall be responsible for establishing and maintaining the basic policies, practices and operation of this church.”

Bylaws Revision gives shepherding, leadership, and governing responsibilities to the Board of Elders based on the Scriptures

Note: Congregation will still continue to “vote” (affirm) officers to affirm major decisions. Please see website sermons on Eldership dated 5/11 and 5/18/08 for more biblical background on Eldership

DEACONS (Article X in revision, old Article IX, Section 2)

New Bylaws clarifies role in Scripture as recognized servants rather than executives, and thus are a separate body to meet needs of the church. *See website sermon on 6/22/08 for more biblical background*

NOMINATION AND SELECTION (Article VI and X in revision)

Rewritten to follow more the pattern of Scriptures such as Acts 6 and to require examination by Elders rather than a committee.

Officers no longer serve 3 year terms, but are re-affirmed each year by the congregation and can continue to serve the church as long as they are qualified by Scripture. Pastors continue to serve an unspecified term as long as qualified.

Since the Elders of this church only see clear Scriptural evidence for two Officers in Scripture (Deacons and Elders), we have not treated “deaconesses” in a section parallel to these Officers. Instead, these ladies who are recognized servants of the church (like Romans 16:1-2, Greek word *diakonos*, and debatably 1 Timothy 3:11) will continue their same role of meeting practical needs of the church body as servants, working under the Elders and Deacons. Although terms like “deaconess” and “ushers” do not appear in the NT and thus are not in this document with the biblical Offices, they are still important *roles* that will be used in serving the Lord.

MEMBERSHIP (Article VII in revision, old Article VI)

Re-written to clarify that Membership is defined as members of the church fellowship, but is not Corporation membership, to be consistent with Elder leadership model.

Expanded CHURCH DISCIPLINE section Scripture (Article VII, Section 7 in revision). *See website sermons on 8/19/07 and 6/29/08*

STATEMENT OF FAITH – Included in document along with new paragraph on “MARRIAGE” based on recommendation of Pacific Justice Legal (Christian legal defense group) for CA churches