**Why your church probably needs to update its Constitution and Bylaws**

**Session Notes**

**Your church probably has 4 Major Documents**

1. Articles of Incorporation
2. Constitution
3. Bylaws
4. Policy Manual

**Convictions**

1. Every church is unique
2. ANY system put in place in any church is going to require a level of trust in someone to lead
3. Many churches operate outside Constitution and Bylaws (some don’t even know it)
4. Can’t tweak Bylaws corporately (too many people)

**General Issues in a Constitution**

1. Name
2. Purpose of the Church
3. Statement of Faith
4. Statement on Marriage and Building Use
5. Ordinances
6. Relationships
7. Additional Entities of the Church

**General Issues in the Bylaws**

1. Polity
2. Membership
3. Pastor
4. Staff
5. Deacons
6. Representatives
7. Committees
8. Define meetings of the organization
9. Quorum
10. Rights of Members to view Documents of the Church
11. Dissolution
12. Amendments

**Why Your Church Probably Needs to Update its Constitution and Bylaws**

1. Because of changes in structure, law, and culture
2. For clarity theology and vision
3. To clarify what it means to be a part of this congregation
4. For maintaining order in the body
5. For the effective maintenance of staff, leadership, and accountability

**Rules for Updating your Constitution and Bylaws**

1. There is no perfect document
2. God’s Word is more important than your attorney’s council
3. You don’t have to reinvent the wheel
4. Recognize the difference between a preference and an issue
5. Make them wide, but not deep
6. Think Long term
7. Avoid contradictions
8. Arrange the content logically
9. Check and recheck spelling, punctuation, and grammar
10. Make them hard to change