

**CONSTITUTION and BYLAWS
FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH
BRANDENBURG, KY**

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CONSTITUTION

ARTICLE I. Preamble

We declare and establish this constitution to preserve and secure the principles of our faith, and to govern the body in an orderly manner.

ARTICLE II. Name

This body shall be known as the First Baptist Church, located at 149 Lawrence Street, Brandenburg, Kentucky.

ARTICLE III. Purpose

This body exists for the propagation of the gospel of Jesus Christ as the Savior of Mankind and Lord of All Creation.

This body shall endeavor to worship God Almighty in Spirit and in Truth; to carry the gospel to each generation; to baptize those individuals who come to faith in Christ and show evidence of repentance from sin toward God; to receive into its midst those who share its articles of faith; and to minister to the community at large, according to the implications of the Holy Bible.

ARTICLE IV. Statement of Faith

This body subscribes to the 1963 statement of The Baptist Faith and Message as an expression in general of the truths of the Bible, which we believe has God for its author, salvation for its end, and truth, without any mixture of error, for its matter.

ARTICLE V. Polity and Relationships

This body shall direct its affairs under the congregational form of government. We shall continue our affiliation with the Salem Association of Baptists, the Kentucky Baptist Convention, and the Southern Baptist Convention as the best means to fulfill the Great Commission and will support their efforts to reach the world for Jesus Christ through cooperative missions endeavors.

BYLAWS

ARTICLE VI. Membership

A. General

A New Testament Church of the Lord Jesus Christ is an autonomous local congregation of baptized believers, associated by covenant in the faith and fellowship of the gospel. We view Church membership as both a privilege and a responsibility. The membership of this Church shall consist of such persons who confess Jesus Christ to be their Savior and Lord and who will assume the responsibilities and endeavor to live according to the Scriptures.

Beloved, I urge you as sojourners and exiles to abstain from the passions of the flesh, which wage war against your soul. Keep your conduct among the Gentiles honorable, so that when they speak against you as evildoers, they may see your good deeds and glorify God on the day of visitation. 1 Peter 2:11-12 (English Standard Version)

Membership in this Church shall consist of all persons who have met requirements for membership as provided in ARTICLE VI.B., been approved by the congregation, and are listed on the membership roll.

B. Candidacy

All candidates shall be presented to the Church at any regular Church service for membership in any of the following ways:

- 1) By profession of faith and for New Testament baptism.
- 2) By promise of letter of recommendation from another Church where the person received New Testament baptism.
- 3) By statement of a prior conversion experience and baptism in a Church where the person received New Testament baptism and when no letter is obtainable.

C. Responsibilities of Member

Along with membership in First Baptist Church, comes the following responsibilities:

- 1) Be in basic agreement with the Church's Statement of Faith (see ARTICLE IV.).
- 2) Discover, develop, and deploy their spiritual gifts in the ministries of the Church.
- 3) Be faithful in attendance to worship services and Bible study.
- 4) Become a student of the Word of God and of prayer.
- 5) Make a commitment to personal evangelism and discipleship.
- 6) Encourage scriptural stewardship of time, talents, and tithes and offerings.
- 7) Participate in and vote on Church business.

D. Reconciliation

It shall be the basic purpose of First Baptist Church to emphasize to its members that every reasonable measure will be taken to assist any troubled member. The Pastor, other members of the church staff, and Deacons are available for counsel and guidance. Reconciliation rather than punishment should be the guideline that governs the attitude of one member toward another.

Should some serious condition exist which would cause a member to become a liability to the general welfare of the church, every reasonable measure will be taken by the Pastor and Deacons to resolve the problem in accordance with Matthew 18:15-35, I Corinthians 5:1-13, II Corinthians 2:1-11.

All such proceedings shall be pervaded by a spirit of Christian kindness and forbearance. If it is determined that the welfare of the church will best be served by the exclusion of the member, the church may take this action by a two-thirds vote of the members present at a meeting called for this purpose; and the church may proceed to declare the offender to be no longer in the membership of the church.

Any person whose membership has been terminated for any condition which has made it necessary for the church to exclude them may upon their request be restored to membership by the recommendation the Pastor and Deacons and an affirmation vote of the church upon evidence of their repentance and reformation.

E. Termination of Membership

Membership shall be terminated in the following ways:

- 1) By death
- 2) By letter to another Baptist Church
- 3) By written notification of joining a Church of another denomination
- 4) By personal request, in writing, for name to be removed from Church membership
- 5) By member exclusion (see ARTICLE VI. D.)
- 6) By prolonged inactivity*

*After a period of five years, a letter will be sent to the member requesting their written intention concerning continued membership in First Baptist Church. The member will have the option of remaining a member or removing their membership. No response from the member may result in removal from the membership roll. The goal of this procedure is accuracy of records, not removal of members.

ARTICLE VII. Church Officers

A. Pastor

1. Expectations of the Pastor

The Pastor will give himself to the ministry of the Word and the leadership of the congregation. The Pastor is responsible for all aspects of the regular worship and preaching services of the Church. He shall be the supervisor of all members of the Church staff. The educational and promotional programs of the Church shall be under his direction. He will examine all candidates for baptism as to their conversion and instruct all new members in the duties and privileges of membership. He shall exercise general supervision over all the Church and shall be an ex officio member of all organizations and committees established under the name and care of the Church. He shall preside in the observance of Baptism and the Lord's Supper unless he designates someone else to do so.

2. Selection of the Pastor

When there arises a vacancy in the office of Pastor, the Church shall nominate a Pastor Search Committee consisting of four (4) men and three (3) women. Any active member will be eligible to serve. The committee shall reflect the total membership of the Church, but no members of the committee shall be close relatives of other committee members. A positive

vote by five (5) of its members is required for the committee to recommend a candidate to the Church. The manner of presentation of the candidate is at the discretion of the Pastor Search Committee. A favorable vote by the Church membership will result in a call to the candidate to serve as Pastor. The Pastor Search Committee will recommend the percentage required for a favorable vote, to be voted on by the church.

3. Resignation/Removal of the Pastor

a. Voluntary Resignation

If the Pastor resigns voluntarily, he shall serve the Church at least two (2) weeks or two (2) Sundays but no more than four (4) weeks or four Sundays following a public announcement or the submission of his letter of resignation to the chairman of the Deacons. This period shall begin either upon public announcement from the pulpit or upon receipt of the letter of resignation, whichever occurs first. All expenses incurred by the Pastor and associated with leaving shall be his responsibility.

b. Involuntary Resignation/Removal

Any credible charge of moral impropriety, doctrinal error, or anything else that could displease the Lord or harm First Baptist Church, against the Pastor shall be investigated by the Personnel Committee. The Personnel Committee will notify the Pastor of the charges and conduct a preliminary investigation. If four (4) out of five (5) members of the Personnel Committee agree that the charge is credible, the Personnel Committee and the Deacon Body will collectively continue the investigation. If three fourths (3/4) of the joint entity agree that the evidence is credible, the Pastor shall be approached by the Personnel Committee and the Deacon Body, according to the criteria of Scripture.

Not many of you should become teachers, my brothers, for you know that we who teach will be judged with greater strictness. James 3:1

Do not admit a charge against an elder except on the evidence of two or three witnesses. As for those who persist in sin, rebuke them in the presence of all, so that the rest may stand in fear. In the presence of God and of Christ Jesus and of the elect angels I charge you to keep these rules without prejudging, doing nothing from partiality. 1 Timothy 5:19–21

During the investigation, the Pastor in question shall be placed on paid temporary leave and will remain on leave until the resolution of the accusations is reached. The evidence will be presented to the Pastor with an opportunity for rebuttal. If three fourths (3/4) of the joint entity determine that termination is warranted, the Pastor will be offered the opportunity to resign with no public disclosure of the offense(s), unless required by law. The Pastor may also choose to have the opportunity to answer the accusations in a special called business meeting of the Church Body. A three fourth (3/4) majority vote of the members present will be required to remove the Pastor.

If the pastor does not resign but is terminated by action of the Church, that individual must vacate the position immediately. The individual and family must vacate the Church-provided residential property within thirty (30) days at their own expense.

B. Church Staff

The Pastor, acting for the congregation, will supervise all staff. The Pastor, in consultation with the Personnel Committee, will have the responsibility of recommending the establishment of new staff positions to the Church and will draft a job description and make a salary recommendation for the duties, salary, and other benefits attendant to the created position. The position will be presented to the Church for final approval. If an Interim Pastor is in place, the Personnel Committee will assume the supervisory role for staff.

The Personnel Committee, in consultation with the Pastor, is responsible for conducting the search process for all vacant staff positions other than full-time ministry staff.

For full-time ministerial staff, other than the Pastor, the Church shall nominate a Search Committee consisting of five (5) members. Any active member will be eligible to serve. The committee shall reflect the total membership of the Church, but no members of the committee shall be close relatives of other committee members. A positive vote by four (4) of its five (5) members is required for the committee to recommend a candidate to the Church. The manner of presentation of the candidate is at the discretion of the Search Committee. A favorable vote by the Church membership will result in a call to the candidate to serve.

At the time of employment, the employee will be subject to the terms of the job description and the policies and procedures of the Personnel Handbook and Constitution and Bylaws of First Baptist Church.

Any credible charge of moral impropriety, doctrinal error, or anything else that could displease the Lord or harm First Baptist Church, against a Church staff member shall be investigated by the Personnel Committee. During the investigation, the staff member in question shall be placed on temporary leave and will remain on leave until the resolution of the accusations is reached. If four out of five members of the Personnel Committee agree that the evidence is credible, the staff member shall be approached by the Personnel Committee according to the criteria of Scripture. The Personnel Committee will then determine the need for correction, discipline, or termination.

C. Deacons

1. Qualifications for Deacons

Deacons, likewise, should be worthy of respect, not hypocritical, not drinking a lot of wine, not greedy for money, holding the mystery of the faith with a clear conscience. They must also be tested first; if they prove blameless, then they can serve as deacons. Wives, likewise, should be worthy of respect, not slanderers, self-controlled, faithful in everything. Deacons are to be husbands of one wife, managing their children and their own households competently. For those who have served well as deacons acquire a good standing for themselves and great boldness in the faith that is in Christ Jesus.

1 Timothy 3:8-13

In order to be considered for nomination, the prospect must be an active member of First Baptist Church for at least two (2) years.

2. Duties and Responsibilities of Deacons

Deacons are to advise and assist the pastor in the spiritual interests of the Church; seek out, visit, and minister to the physical, moral, and spiritual needs of the sick, aged, and necessities among the membership; review the Church membership at least once a year and inquire as to the regularity and faithfulness of the members in attendance and support of the Church; serve at the Lord's Supper table; and be zealous to guard and to promote the spirit of unity and peace within the Church. They will act as a sounding board from the congregation to the pastor and shall discuss matters of importance to the Church. The spirit of servanthood should mark the ministry of Deacons and all who labor for the Lord at First Baptist Church.

Once elected, a deacon will serve a three-year term after which the deacon will be ineligible for re-election for one year. A minimum of nine (9) active deacons is required. In any given year, the number of active deacons may not increase by more than four (4).

3. Deacon Nominating Procedure

- a. Suggestions for nomination for Deacon(s) will be accepted from Church members only annually during the month of June.
- b. Notice will be given to members to suggest names to be considered by the Deacons. Suggestions for nominations will be in writing, using forms provided through the Church. These forms must be received by the established deadline to be considered.
- c. There will be no limit to the number of suggested nominees a member may wish to make.
- d. Every name submitted will be considered by the Deacons and Pastor who will then create a final list of nominees.
- e. The nominees will be queried as to their fitness as Deacons. These questions will take the form of a written survey of doctrine, giftedness, and desire to serve, along with an interview conducted by representative Deacons and the Pastor.
- f. Those nominees who pass this initial review will be contacted about their names being submitted to the Church as candidates.
- g. A list of candidates will be presented to the Church in a timely manner preceding the election of Deacons at the annual business meeting.
- h. Deacon selection will require a two-thirds (2/3) majority of ballots cast by members.

D. Moderator

The Moderator and Assistant Moderator will be appointed by the Nominating Committee and approved by the Church at the annual business meeting. In the absence of the Moderator, the Assistant Moderator will preside at the business meeting. If neither of these is present, any officer named in these bylaws may call the Church to order and a Moderator Pro-tem will be elected.

E. Church Clerk

The Clerk and Assistant Clerk will be appointed by the Nominating Committee and approved by the Church at the annual business meeting. The Clerk shall keep the Church Book and enter therein all business transacted by the Church, necessary to be recorded, keep and file all records and papers in his/her possession, when required by the Church, and sign all such records and papers in the Church's behalf. The Clerk will maintain a copy of this constitution and these bylaws as finally approved, together with any and all amendments thereof. All of the records of the Clerk will be considered the property of the Church. The Clerk will keep a suitably bound register of the names of members, with dates of admission, or death, together with a record of baptisms. These records may be duplicated in other forms as deemed necessary. The Clerk will make every effort to keep the Church records in good order, being prompt in making the necessary record notations, requesting and forwarding letters of dismissal from and to other Churches.

F. Church Treasurer

The Treasurer and Assistant Treasurer must be active members of the Church for at least two (2) years. These positions will be appointed by the Nominating Committee and approved by the Church at the annual business meeting. The Treasurer shall be the custodian of all funds of the Church. These funds shall be placed to the credit of the Church in the bank designated by the Church at the recommendation of the Finance Committee. Said funds shall be paid out by the Treasurer as authorized by the Church. The Treasurer shall make a monthly report to the Church of the receipts and expenditures of the current month, and at the monthly/annual business meeting, he/she shall make a full and complete report of all his/her official acts and file the vouchers and books with the Finance Committee, who may have the records audited by a Certified Public Accountant. The results of any such audit shall be presented to the Finance Committee at their next regular meeting. The Finance Committee shall determine whether the audit requires further action by the Church. The audit results shall be made available to any Church member upon request.

G. Trustees

The Trustees shall be legal custodians of all Church property and as such, must be active members of the Church for at least two (2) years. In the event of the sale or purchase of any real estate for the Church, or in making any loans on behalf of the Church, the Trustees shall be authorized to sign all deeds, notes, and legal papers for the Church when so instructed by the Church in a regular or duly called special business meeting of the Church. The Trustees shall be held responsible for the physical condition of all Church property and see that it is kept in proper order. The Board of Trustees shall consist of three (3) members. They shall be elected for a term of three (3) years. Trustees shall be elected by secret ballot at the annual business meeting, replacing those whose terms have expired or who have resigned, moved away, or deceased. Nominations for Trustees should be turned into to the Church office prior to the election. The current Trustees will review the list of nominees to determine their eligibility. The Trustees will prepare the ballot for the election at the annual meeting. The candidate(s) receiving the most votes will fill the vacant position(s). If there is only one nominee for each vacancy, the Church may vote by acclamation and cast a single vote for the nominee on the ballot.

H. Church Committees

Each committee will be made up of five members of First Baptist Church, including at least one deacon. Committee members should not be relatives (husband/wife, parent/child, siblings). The members shall serve a three-year rotating term with no more than two members rotating off in any given year. At the conclusion of their term of service, committee members are ineligible to be nominated to serve on the same committee for one year. The Deacon body will select the Deacon representative for each committee. The Nominating Committee shall nominate the members-at-large. Each committee will elect a chairperson annually. The current Deacon Chairman and Assistant Chairman are not eligible to serve as Committee Chairs.

The Church may appoint an ad-hoc committee as a need arises. These committees will continue until their task is complete but are not considered standing committees.

1. Finance

The Finance Committee shall be a standing committee of the Church and shall have the responsibility of preparing the annual budget for the Church, presenting it to the Church for a vote at the annual business meeting, and establishing/maintaining financial policies and procedures. The Finance Committee shall monitor the budget line items quarterly to assure that spending complies. Any purchase that will exceed the budget line item must be approved by the Finance Committee and reported to the Church.

The Finance Committee shall consist of one active Deacon, one Trustee, and three (3) Members-at-large. The Church Treasurer and Assistant Treasurer are ex officio members of the committee and do not rotate off. The Trustees shall select their representative.

2. Personnel

The Personnel Committee shall assist the Pastor, other standing committees, and Church in matters relating to personnel administration and management, including the personal and professional needs of the Church staff. The Committee shall meet monthly and report any non-confidential actions at the following Church business meeting. Duties may include, but are not limited to, establishing personnel policies/procedures, maintaining job descriptions, providing two performance evaluations annually per staff, filling staff vacancies, surveying the need for additional staff positions, compensation (including collection data for compensation and approved time-off for payroll), providing and reviewing background checks, and reviewing disciplinary and conduct matters, proposing appropriate action to Church leadership and/or the Church body as needed. The Personnel Committee is also charged with the responsibilities outlined in ARTICLE VII. A. 3. b.

Members of the Personnel Committee shall not serve on any other Church committee or be related to a staff member.

3. Nominating

The Nominating Committee shall recommend to the Church a list of volunteers who, in their judgment, are the best qualified to serve the Church as officers, teachers, at-large committee members and team members. Anyone nominated for service as an officer or

a teacher must be a member of First Baptist Church. The Nominating Committee shall present their recommendations in the form of a report at the annual business meeting, which must then be approved by a vote of the Church. Any vacancies which occur during the Church year will be filled by recommendation of the Nominating Committee and approval by a vote of the Church.

I. Church Teams

Church Teams are groups of volunteers serving in a specific ministry area of the Church, selected by the Nominating Committee. Church Teams will operate under the supervision of the Pastor and the Church Staff. Teams are responsible for electing their officers and establishing operating guidelines. Officers must be active members of the Church. The term of service for team members is left to the discretion of the Nominating Committee and the team member. [Examples of teams would include, but not be limited to, Kitchen Team, Flower Team, Technology Team, etc.]

ARTICLE VIII. Church Ordinances

A. Baptism

The Church shall observe baptism of new members within four (4) weeks of an individual's presenting himself/herself on profession of faith in Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior unless the individual requests otherwise. In such cases, the Pastor shall arrange the most expedient date for immersion.

B. Lord's Supper

The Church shall observe the Lord's Supper on the first Sunday in each quarter or as otherwise specified by the Deacons.

ARTICLE IX. Church Meetings

A. Worship Services

The regular worship services of the Church shall be held on Sunday at times so designated by the Church fellowship. The worship schedule and any temporary changes or special services are at the discretion of the Pastor and Church Staff.

In case of inclement weather or acts of God, the Pastor, Deacon Chairman, and Trustee Chairman may cancel regular worship services. If the Deacon Chairman and/or Trustee Chairman is not available, the Pastor and any one deacon and one trustee may cancel regular worship services.

B. Business Meetings

The regular monthly business meeting of the Church shall be held on the Wednesday following the first Sunday at which time the Deacon-approved agenda will be distributed to attendees. Any member who wants to add an item for the business meeting agenda must submit the item to the Church office, to be forwarded to the Deacons, by noon on Wednesday the week prior to the scheduled business meeting. Any motion not on the agenda brought forward during a business meeting will not be voted upon until the next regularly scheduled business meeting.

Any new business items will be included in the bulletin on the Sunday prior to the Business Meeting.

C. Special Called and Emergency Business Meetings

Special meetings for the transaction of business shall be held only upon the request of a majority of the active deacons. Any such called meeting shall be announced from the pulpit at a regular Sunday or Wednesday service preceding the special meeting. Special meetings may deal only with matters for which they are specifically called, and such special meetings shall not occur on the same day as the service in which they are first announced.

An emergency session of business may be called by joint decision of the Pastor, the Deacon Chairman, and the Trustee Chairman. Notification of the meeting along with the specific business item to be discussed will be distributed electronically through our Emergency/Connection lists. No other items of business may be considered at the meeting.

D. Quorum

A quorum shall consist of the Church members present.

E. Parliamentary Rules

All business meetings of First Baptist Church will be conducted according to Robert's Rules of Order.

ARTICLE X. Church Finances

A. Fiscal Year

The fiscal year of the Church shall begin on September 1 and end August 31 of the following calendar year.

B. Designated Funds and Love Offerings

All donations accepted by the Church will be allocated to the general fund unless it is designated to an established designated fund. Procedures for establishing designated funds will be published by the Finance Committee.

Love offerings must be approved in a church business meeting prior to being announced and received.

ARTICLE XI. Amendments

These Constitution and/or Bylaws (rules) may be altered or amended by a two-thirds (2/3) vote of the Church present, but a motion to alter or amend must be made and continued at least one (1) month before the vote is taken.

These rules shall be provided to any new member and available to any member by request.

Any and all rules of the Church which have been previously enacted and are in conflict with these rules and/or amendments shall be null and void and of no effect from the date of the adoption of these rules by the Church.