

BY-LAWS
of the
FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH
CAMDENTON MO
2022

ARTICLE I – MEMBERSHIP

SECTION 1 – QUALIFICATIONS: The membership of this church shall be limited to individuals who profess Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord and have obeyed him in scriptural baptism and whose names appear on the membership roll of this church.

SECTION 2 – RECEPTION OF MEMBERS: After having a consultation with a church pastor/elder, individuals will be presented during a worship service for church approval and may be received into membership upon:

- profession of faith in Christ and scriptural baptism
- receipt of a letter of recommendation from another church of compatible faith
- acceptance of a satisfactory statement of faith by one who had previously been a member of another church of compatible faith and has no access to a letter of transfer

SECTION 3 – RESPONSIBILITIES: Members are expected to be faithful to those responsibilities essential to a Christian life. The expected responsibilities are as follows:

- consistently attend the worship services of the church
- provide financial support for the church and its undertakings
- share in and actively support the church’s spiritual work and fellowship as detailed in the church covenant
- participate in a new member’s class if recommended by the pastor/elder(s)

SECTION 4 – PRIVILEGES: Every active member age fifteen and above is entitled to speak and to vote at all elections and on all questions submitted to the church in business meetings. An active member is defined as one who fulfills the responsibilities of membership as defined in Article I, Section 3.

SECTION 5 – TERMINATION: Membership in this church shall terminate:

- at death
- with the granting by the church, upon proper request, of a letter of transfer to another church of compatible faith
- when affiliation with a church of differing beliefs has been confirmed
- upon voluntary resignation of membership, in writing or by verbal request
- upon disciplinary vote of the church as provided by Scripture in Matthew 18:15-17 and 1 Corinthians 5.

ARTICLE II – MEETINGS

SECTION 1: This church shall hold regular meetings for worship, teaching, training, prayer, fellowship and the transaction of business.

SECTION 2: The church shall hold quarterly business meetings with dates to be announced two weeks in advance. Special business meetings may be called by the pastor/elder(s), a majority of deacons, or when requested by ten active adult members representing ten different families.

Formal notice of all meetings setting forth the time, place and agenda shall be communicated to the church membership at all Sunday worship services two weeks prior to the announced date of the meeting. Active members present shall constitute a quorum.

SECTION 3: The moderator shall conduct all regular and special business meetings. The moderator will be recommended by the Catalyst Team and be voted on by the church body to serve a term of three years. In the moderator's absence or upon his request, the Chairman of Deacons or his designee may serve as moderator at a business meeting.

SECTION 4: Robert's Rules of Order, Revised shall serve as the basis of procedure.

SECTION 5: Preprinted ballots will be available for each active member at all business meetings. Any old or new business, nominations, elections, financial expenditures or governance issues will be handled by secret vote using these preprinted ballots. Ballots will be counted by three deacons (or, if unavailable, another designated church leader) and results announced by the moderator immediately following the count. The following items will not require a secret vote: approval of minutes, granting of letters, administrative and ministry reports, committee reports, approval of messengers to the Southern Baptist and Missouri Baptist Conventions, adjournment of the meeting, or similar agenda items.

ARTICLE III – STAFF AND OFFICERS

SECTION 1 – PASTOR/ELDER(S)

The elders are the church's spiritual leaders. They consist of the pastors and other scripturally qualified men elected by the congregation.

Pastor/Elder(s) shall be:

- men of prayer (Acts 6:4, James 5:14)
- shepherds – lead, feed, nurture, comfort, correct and protect (1 Peter 5:2,3)
- overseers – graciously watch over all the members, staff, teams and ministries of the church (Acts 20:28)
- teachers – accurately handle the Word of Truth, equip saints for the work of the ministry, and rebuke those who contradict it (Titus 1:9)
- preachers – spend time ministering the word to the flock by reproof, rebuking, and encouraging with patience and teaching (2 Timothy 4:2)
- administrators – have the ability to maintain order (Titus 1:5, 1 Timothy 3:5)

Pastor/Elder(s) are also expected to perform certain administrative functions of the church. They will:

- oversee the spiritual health and well-being of the church
- ensure a balanced approach to all areas of ministry
- provide leadership that allows the church to fulfill its primary purpose while adhering to sound biblical doctrine
- oversee the ordinances of the church
- oversee church discipline and conflict resolution (Matthew 18:15-17)
- facilitate healthy communication within the body of the church
- serve as nonvoting advisory members of all ministries and teams
- ensure adherence to the constitution and bylaws
- arrange for pulpit supply when needed

Pastor/elder(s) will meet regularly to pray together, seek God's will for the church, discuss relevant issues regarding the church, and make recommendations that will benefit the body and further the kingdom of God.

Pastor/Elder Qualifications

Scripture gives qualifications of pastors/elders as seen below:

1 Timothy 3:1-7

“The saying is trustworthy: If anyone aspires to the office of overseer, he desires a noble task. Therefore an overseer must be above reproach, the husband of one wife, sober-minded, self-controlled, respectable, hospitable, able to teach, not a drunkard, not violent but gentle, not quarrelsome, not a lover of money. He must manage his own household well, with all dignity keeping his children submissive, for if someone does not know how to manage his own household, how will he care for God’s church? He must not be a recent convert, or he may become puffed up with conceit and fall into the condemnation of the devil. Moreover, he must be well thought of by outsiders, so that he may not fall into disgrace, into a snare of the devil.”

Titus 1:5-9

“This is why I left you in Crete, so that you might put what remained into order, and appoint elders in every town as I directed you - if anyone is above reproach, the husband of one wife, and his children are believers and not open to the charge of debauchery or insubordination. For an overseer, as God’s steward, must be above reproach. He must not be arrogant or quick-tempered or a drunkard or violent or greedy for gain, but hospitable, a lover of good, self-controlled, upright, holy, and disciplined. He must hold firm to the trustworthy message as taught, so that he may be able to give instruction in sound doctrine and also to rebuke those who contradict it.”

Pastoral Calling

When a pastoral vacancy occurs, a Pastoral Search Committee of five shall be elected to seek a suitable pastor. Candidates to serve on the search committee shall be nominated by ballot distributed to active members in a business meeting. These nominations will be considered by the elders/deacons and a slate of qualified nominees will be presented for election at the next business session. The five who receive the most votes will form the committee. The two receiving the next number of votes will serve as alternates. The Pastoral Search Committee will present only one candidate to the church body for consideration on any given occasion. Election shall be by secret ballot, with affirmative vote of not less than three-fourths of the active members present required for election.

Lay Elder Selection

At the third quarter business meeting (or as the need arises) with guidance from the Holy Spirit and considering scriptural qualifications, each active member of the congregation may nominate elder candidates by secret ballot. The pastor/elder(s) and the deacons will meet with the nominees. Men who are qualified and agree to serve will be presented to the church for election. A three-fourths vote will be required for approval of each nominee. Elders may be ordained after one year of faithful service.

Pastor/Elder Removal

Pastor/Elder(s) called by the church shall serve until the relationship is dissolved either by their request or by formal action of the church. Pastor/elder(s) may relinquish the office by giving at least a two week notice to the church at the time of resignation.

A pastor/elder can be removed for any of the following three reasons:

- when there is a personal sin issue involving a sin that cannot be resolved according to Matthew 18:15-17

“If your brother sins against you, go and tell him his fault, between you and him alone. If he listens to you, you have gained your brother. But if he does not listen, take one or two others along with you, that every charge may be established by the evidence of two or three witnesses. If he refuses to listen to them, tell it to the church. And if he refuses to listen even to the church, let him be to you as a Gentile and a tax collector.”

- when a pastor/elder no longer meets the qualifications defined above (Pastor/Elder Qualifications)
- when a pastor/elder is not fulfilling his biblical responsibilities as defined in Article III, Section 1

In the event of a pastor/elder not fulfilling his biblical or church administrative duties, and following unsuccessful biblical restoration attempts, the Pastor/elder(s) and/or Deacons may recommend to the church that the pastor/elder be removed from that office.

A pastor/elder should first be made aware of any oversights, intentional or unintentional. He should be approached with a view towards resolution regarding shortfalls in fulfilling his expected responsibilities. To avoid misunderstandings, any shortfalls should be listed in writing and a copy provided for the pastor/elder. If after repeated discussions for the purpose of resolving the problem, he continues to fall short of those explicit responsibilities listed, the church may be left with no other option than removal.

The request for removal of a pastor/elder for any of the reasons listed above shall take place at a special business meeting called for that purpose. After sharing the reasoning, supporting information, and any steps taken to resolve any of the three issues listed above, and after a discussion, a vote will be taken by secret ballot. An affirmative vote of three-fourths of the active members voting is required to declare the office vacant. Except in cases of gross misconduct by the pastor so excluded from office, the church will compensate the salaried pastor with not less the one-twelfth of his total annual compensation. The removal shall be immediate and the compensation shall be rendered in not more than thirty days.

In the absence of the pastor, the remaining pastor/elder(s) will continue to provide spiritual leadership for the church. In addition, an interim/transitional pastor may also be called. An interim/transitional search team shall follow the same process as described above in Pastoral calling, Article III, Section 1.

SECTION 2 – MINISTRY DIRECTORS

Staff in charge of church ministries (e.g., Director of Children and Family Ministries, Nursery Ministry Director) shall be called and employed as the church determines the need for such ministries. When the need for a new ministry director is determined, the Personnel Team will write a job description and submit it to the pastor/elder(s) for approval. The Administration Team will recommend a person to the pastor/elder(s) to fill a position, who may then present that person to the church for approval at a business meeting. An affirmative vote of three-fourths is required for approval.

The church may vote to eliminate such positions or to terminate the individual upon recommendation of the Administrative Team, after consulting with the pastor/elder(s). Such action shall take place at a business meeting called for that purpose, with at least two weeks' notice. The vote shall require a three-fourths majority of the active members voting. The termination and compensation conditions will be handled in the same manner as for the pastor.

SECTION 3 – NONMINISTERIAL STAFF

Non-ministerial staff members (e.g., secretaries, custodians) shall be employed as the Administrative Team, in consultation with the pastor/elder(s), determines the need. The Personnel Team shall have the authority to employ, formulate job descriptions for, and terminate services of non-ministerial staff.

SECTION 4 – DEACONS

Following the example given in Acts 6:1-4, the church shall select deacons. In accordance with the meaning of the word and practice in the New Testament, deacons are to be the lead servants of the church. Their task is to serve with the pastor/elder(s) and staff by:

- assisting the church and its leadership in the achievement of its purpose
- proclaiming the gospel to believers and unbelievers
- caring for widows, church members and other persons in the community
- working to achieve and maintain unity in the body of believers
- attending all deacons' meetings unless providentially hindered
- preparing and serving the Lord's Supper
- overseeing benevolence funds and policies

Deacon Qualifications

Deacons and their wives shall meet the qualifications stated in 1 Timothy 3:8-13

“Deacons likewise must be dignified, not double-tongued, not addicted to much wine, not greedy for dishonest gain. They must hold the mystery of faith with a clear conscience. And let them also be tested first; then let them serve as deacons if they prove themselves blameless. Their wives likewise must be dignified, not slanderers, but sober-minded, faithful in all things. Let deacons each be the husband of one wife, managing their children and their households well. For those who serve well as deacons gain a good standing for themselves and also great confidence in the faith that is in Christ Jesus.”

Deacon Selection

In the third quarter business meeting (or as the need arises) with guidance from the Holy Spirit and considering scriptural qualifications, each active member of the congregation may nominate men as deacon candidates by secret ballot. The current deacons, in consultation with pastor/elder(s) will meet with the nominees. Men who are qualified and agree to serve will be presented to the church for election. A three-fourths vote will be required for approval of each nominee. Deacons may be ordained after one year of faithful service.

Deacon Termination

Deacons ordained by the church shall serve until the relationship is dissolved either by their request or by formal action of the church. Reasons warranting termination shall be the same as those for termination of pastor/elder(s).

ARTICLE IV – TEAMS AND OFFICERS

SECTION 1 – THE CATALYST TEAM

The main purpose of the Catalyst Team will be to enhance communication and support the purpose of the ministry teams. They will:

- meet monthly to pray, share, coordinate and collaborate ideas
- assess previous ministry events and discuss upcoming/potential events
- share a calendar of upcoming events with the church secretary
- evaluate and discuss any concerns within each area of ministry
- facilitate greater communication between the church body and ministry teams
- encourage involvement of the church body within the teams
- maintain and update the church operations manual

- in the third quarter (or as the need arises) present recommendations from the active membership for church positions, which will be approved by the church body: See Section 2 – Officers and Section 3 - Teams

The Catalyst Team shall be composed of the following active members:

- chairs of each of the six ministry teams (see section 3)
- one pastor and one lay elder
- one representative from the deacons
- ministry directors
- community group coordinator

SECTION 2 – OFFICERS

Active members who are elected will serve a term of three years, beginning January first of the upcoming year.

2A - CHURCH CLERK

The Church Clerk shall:

- maintain a suitable record of all business meeting proceedings
- maintain and update the constitution record book
- greet and obtain information from individuals coming forward for membership
- arrange for a substitute if needed

The clerk will submit all necessary information to the church secretary. The church secretary may also perform the duties of the clerk in the clerk’s absence. Documents and records are church property and shall be maintained in the church office.

2B - TREASURER

The Treasurer shall:

- supervise the collection of church funds
- disburse such funds as authorized by the church budget or the administration team
- maintain a current itemized account of all church monies, receipts and disbursements
- at each business meeting, submit for approval a report of all receipts and disbursements for the preceding month
- prepare an annual report at the end of the fiscal year and, after acceptance and approval, convey the report to the church clerk to be included in the permanent records of the church

All documents, reports and materials pertaining to this office are church property and shall be maintained in the church office or other secure location. The chairperson of the Finance Team may perform the duties of the treasurer in the absence of the treasurer or at the request of the treasurer.

2C – TRUSTEES

The church shall elect three or more trustees to serve as legal officers for the church. They shall:

- hold in trust the church property
- upon specific vote of the church authorizing each action, have the power to buy, sell, mortgage, lease, or transfer any church property
- when the signatures of trustees are required, sign legal documents involving the sale, mortgage, purchase, or rental of property, or other legal documents related to church-approved matters
- be responsible for recommending to the church a comprehensive and adequate insurance program, which shall be reviewed annually
- be responsible for an annual audit of all financial records and church property

2D – CORPORATE OFFICERS

The trustees and the church treasurer shall be the officers of the corporation as listed below:

- the chairman of the trustees shall be the chairman of the corporation
- the vice chairman of the trustees shall be the vice chairman of the corporation
- the secretary of the trustees shall be the secretary of the corporation
- the church treasurer shall be the treasurer of the corporation

2E – ADDITIONAL POSITIONS

The Catalyst Team will nominate additional positions as needed, including the following:

- Community Group Coordinator
- Women On Mission Coordinator
- Men's Ministry Coordinator
- Moderator of business meetings
- Librarian
- L.A.M.B. House Representative
- Historian
- Women's Ministry Coordinator

SECTION 3 – TEAMS

The ministry teams reflect the FBC mission statement in four aspects: loving God, loving each other, loving our community and loving our world. The ministry teams in the church are based on those four areas plus two additional teams: one which is responsible for the WEE Care ministry and one which coordinates the administrative responsibilities of the church and supports the mission of the aforementioned teams. Team leaders will reference the church operations manual to determine specific responsibilities, which include submitting budget requests for each area of ministry for approval.

Active members who are elected will serve a term of three years, beginning January first of the upcoming year.

SECTION 3A – The “**Loving God Team**” will lead the church in activities that will implement, enhance and promote spiritual growth in an individual’s relationship with God. With this purpose in mind, this team is encouraged to begin new ministries and will oversee church activities such as:

- media
- greeters
- baptism
- decoration
- music
- fine arts

SECTION 3B – The “**Loving Each Other Team**” will lead the church in activities that will deepen relationships, promote unity, and look for ways we can serve one another. With this purpose in mind, this team is encouraged to begin new ministries and will oversee church activities such as:

- historian
- library
- scholarships
- hospitality
- Wednesday supper (kitchen)
- bereavement
- children’s ministry
- health and wellness
- community groups
- women’s ministry
- men’s ministry
- JOY group
- youth ministry
- Kidz Quest

SECTION 3C – The “**Loving Our Community Team**” will lead the church in activities which will encourage members to find opportunities to represent Christ and our church in the community. With this purpose in mind, this team is encouraged to begin new ministries and will oversee church activities such as:

- LAMB House
- Community festivals/holiday events
- sports
- family outreach programs
- VBS

SECTION 3D – The “**Loving Our World Team**” Will lead the church in activities that will enlighten the members to the needs in other communities and countries, as well as ways they can be involved in spreading the Word of God around the world. With this purpose in mind, this team is encouraged to begin new ministries and will oversee church activities such as:

- Women on Mission
- Southern Baptist mission offerings
- mission trips
- missions education
- allocation of local mission funds

SECTION 3E - The "**WEE Care Team**" will be composed of five church members and the WEE Care director, who will serve as a nonvoting advisory member. All church members and WEE Care staff members are welcome to attend the monthly meetings. The WEE Care Team will provide oversight, fiscal accountability and assistance with WEE Care activities. They will facilitate a positive relationship with the pastor/elder(s), church staff and the children's parents as well as encourage mutual participation between the children and the church as a whole. The team will be responsible for financial and personnel policies in accordance with the WEE Care Employee Handbook.

SECTION 3F – The “**Administration Team**” will be composed of active church members and one active deacon (appointed by the deacon body). The entire team will meet together as needed. Within this team there will be three sub-teams of 3-5 members each. The three sub-teams are the properties team, the personnel team and the financial team, and will function as follows:

- The properties team will be responsible for the maintenance, safety and security of all church property, and will oversee the security team. They will also annually update the Building Policies and Use Manual in collaboration with the pastor/elder(s).
- The personnel team will be responsible for determining non-ministerial staff needs, employments, salaries, benefits, other compensation, policies, job descriptions, evaluation procedures, and other personnel services.
- The financial team will work with the treasurer in the preparation and presentation to the church of required reports regarding the financial affairs of the church. This team will plan, prepare, and present to the church an annual detailed and itemized budget proposal, and see to its implementation upon adoption. Copies of the proposed budget will be available to the church body two weeks prior to a fourth quarter business meeting. Such budget shall be submitted for discussion and adoption at a regular fourth quarter business meeting. The financial team is to be responsible for the supervision of the budget program of the church.

APPENDIX 1

FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH POLICY ON GENDER

First Baptist Church affirms God's original design to create two distinct and complementary sexes, male and female, to glorify Him. (Genesis 1:27) The assignment of biological sex at conception is a gift of God and part of God's glory in creation. The fall of man into sin has introduced brokenness and futility into God's good creation. (Genesis 3:1-24) We affirm God's good design that gender identity is determined by biological sex and not by one's self-perception – a perception which is often influenced by fallen human nature in ways contrary to God's design. (Ephesians 4:17-18) We affirm distinctions in masculine and feminine roles as ordained by God as part of the created order. (Ephesians 5:22-23) We believe that efforts to live contrary to natal sex, whether by behavior, attire, cosmetics, or medical/surgical therapy, are sinful rebellion. We commit ourselves to make decisions about membership, personnel and other church matters based on this biblical perspective of human sexuality.

APPENDIX 2

FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH POLICY ON MARRIAGE AND CIVIL UNIONS

First Baptist Church affirms the biblical truth that marriage is a divine institution, essentially rooted in the created order, uniting one man and one woman in an exclusive covenant commitment for their joint lifetime, for their good and for the good of any children who may be born or adopted into this union. (Genesis 2:24, Matthew 5:31-32) Marriage is based on the truth that men and women are complementary, including the biological fact that reproduction depends on a man and a woman. Redefining marriage in any other manner rejects these truths. By encouraging the tenets of biblical marriage (man-woman monogamy, sexual exclusivity, and permanence), society is strengthened, and the couple and their children prosper according to God's design.

Christian marriage is God's unique gift to reveal the union between Christ and His Church, as illustrated by the wedding of a Christian man and woman in this exclusive and permanent covenant relationship. As such, First Baptist Church believes that Christian wedding ceremonies on church property are spiritual observances, worshiping God who created this institution. As worship services, wedding on church property shall be officiated by one or more ordained ministers of the gospel approved by the pastor/elder(s).

The church may decline to make its facilities or ministers available for any wedding if it is determined that one or both of the parties are not biblically qualified to marry. Such determinations may be made by the pastor/elder(s). No minister, employee or member of the church shall officiate at any marriage or similar ceremony unless such event or ceremony is consistent with this policy.

These policies are consistent with the Nashville Statement of 2017. (Nashville Statement - CBMW.org/Nashville-Statement)

APPENDIX 3

FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH CODE OF CONDUCT FOR MEMBERS AND VISITORS

Purpose

This code of conduct is designed to promote the purpose of First Baptist Church, Camdenton, MO and to protect members and visitors from any individual bad judgments that would compromise the atmosphere of comfort, worship and refuge for which we strive.

Biblical Foundation

The First Baptist Church code of conduct is based on our beliefs regarding biblical doctrine, and it reflects our biblically inspired belief that every person should treat his fellow man with love and respect just as he wants to be treated.

CODE OF CONDUCT

- (1) Conduct, which includes both behavior and speech, should be in accordance with biblical standards.
- (2) Behavior and/or speech should be conducted in such a way as to help fulfill the purpose of the church, by maintaining an atmosphere of comfort, worship, refuge and learning for all members and visitors of First Baptist Church.
- (3) Respecting the worth and dignity of each individual includes compassionately holding individuals responsible and accountable for their behavior.
- (4) Behavior or speech that is dangerous or disruptive will not be tolerated and will be dealt with immediately. If disruptive behavior or speech is not stopped immediately, or if it is threatening or dangerous, the offender(s) will be asked to leave the event and/or property. Failure to comply may result in intervention by law enforcement.