

CONSTITUTION FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH OF FLORESVILLE

PREAMBLE

For the more certain preservation and security of the principles of our faith, and to the end that this body may be governed in an orderly manner, and for the purpose of preserving the liberties inherent in each individual member of First Baptist Church of Floresville (the “church”) and the freedom of action of this body with respect to its relation to other churches of like faith and order, we do declare and establish this Constitution. This Constitution will supersede all existing Constitutions and Bylaws currently in effect.

ARTICLE I

NAME AND PURPOSE

SECTION 1: NAME

The name of the church shall be First Baptist Church of Floresville.

SECTION 2: PURPOSE

The church is formed to support public worship and to proclaim the gospel of Jesus Christ through such ministries as may be determined by the church.

ARTICLE II

CHURCH GOVERNMENT AND MEMBERSHIP

SECTION 1: GOVERNMENT

This sovereign Baptist church under the Lordship of Jesus Christ retains unto itself the exclusive right to temporal life of this church. The membership reserves the exclusive right to determine who shall be members of this church and the condition of such membership. This church is a democracy, its authority vested in the members. Every member has the right to a voice in the church’s government, plans, and discipline. The church is subject to the control of no other ecclesiastical body, but enjoys mutual counsel and cooperation with other churches of like faith and order.

SECTION 2: CANDIDACY

Any person may become a candidate for membership in this church. All such 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 baptism according to the policies of this church;
- (2) By promise of a letter of recommendation from another Baptist church;
- (3) By restoration upon a statement of prior conversion experience and baptism in a Baptist church where no letter is obtainable;
- (4) By statement of faith and prior baptism by immersion after review by the pastor and deacons.

SECTION 3: RIGHTS OF MEMBERS

1. Every member of the church is entitled to vote at all elections and on all questions submitted to the church in conference, provided the member is present or special provision has been made by the church for absentee balloting.
2. Every member of the church is eligible for consideration by the membership as candidates for elective offices in the church.
3. Every member of the church may participate in the ordinances of the church as administered by the church.

SECTION 4: TERMINATION OF MEMBERSHIP

Membership shall be terminated in the following ways:

- (1) Death of the member;
- (2) Dismissal to another Baptist church;
- (3) Exclusion by action of this church;
- (4) Erasure upon request or proof of membership in a church of another denomination.

SECTION 5: EXCLUSION OF A MEMBER

Should a member become an offense to the church by reason of immoral or unchristian conduct or by denying acceptance of fundamental doctrines of the church, it shall be the responsibility of the Deacon body to take steps to resolve the offense in accordance with Matthew 18:15-20. If the Deacon body determines exclusion of the member becomes necessary, after due personal notice and hearing in private by the Deacon body and after faithful efforts have been made to bring such member to repentance, membership may be withdrawn upon recommendation of the Deacon body, and upon the vote of the majority of the members present at a regular business meeting, to approve the recommendation of the Deacon body. The basis for the recommendation of the Deacon body shall not be required to be made officially public, announced in public, or put forward to the general church membership or the general public.

The church may restore to membership any person previously excluded, upon request of the excluded person, and after the excluded person has met with the Deacon body and indicated such person's repentance, upon recommendation of the Deacon body and by a majority vote of the church members present at a regular business meeting, to approve said recommendation.

It shall be the practice of this church to emphasize to its members that every reasonable measure will be taken to assist any troubled member. The attitude of members toward one another shall be guided by a concern for redemption rather than punishment.

ARTICLE III

CHURCH OFFICERS, STAFF, AND COMMITTEES

All who serve as officers and ministerial staff of the church and those who serve on church committees shall be members of this church.

SECTION 1: CHURCH OFFICERS

The officers of the church shall be the pastor(s), the ministerial staff, the deacon body, a moderator, a clerk, a treasurer, and trustees.

(1) PASTOR

The pastor is responsible for leading the church to function as a New Testament church. The pastor will lead the congregation, the organization, and the church staff to perform their tasks.

The pastor is leader of pastoral ministries in the church. As such, he works with the deacons and church staff to:

- A. lead the church in the achievement of its missions;
- B. proclaim the Gospel to believers and unbelievers;
- C. care for the church's members and other persons in the community.

A Pastor Selection Committee shall seek out a suitable pastor, and its recommendation will constitute a nomination. Any church member has the privilege of making other nominations. The committee shall bring to consideration of the church only one name at a time. Election to call a new pastor shall be by secret ballot, an affirmative vote of three-fourths of those present being necessary for approval. The pastor, thus elected, shall serve until the relationship is terminated by his request or the church's request as herein below provided.

The pastor may relinquish the office of pastor by giving at least two weeks' notice to the church at the time of resignation. The church may declare the office of pastor to be vacant. Such action shall take place at a meeting called for that purpose, which shall be called as and shall constitute a special business meeting. The meeting may be called upon the recommendation of a majority of the Personnel Committee. The moderator for the meeting shall be designated by the members present by majority vote, and that person shall be someone other than the pastor. The vote to declare the office vacant shall be by secret ballot, an affirmative vote of two-thirds of the members present being necessary to declare the office vacant. Except in instances of gross misconduct by the pastor, upon the church declaring the office to be vacant, the church will compensate the pastor with no less than one-twelfth of his total annual compensation. The termination shall be immediate and the compensation shall be rendered in not more than thirty days.

(2) MINISTERIAL STAFF

The ministerial staff shall be called and employed as the church determines the need for such offices. A job description shall be written when the need for a staff member is determined. Each employed staff member shall serve until the relationship is terminated at the staff member's request or at the church's request as herein below provided. A staff member may relinquish the position by giving at least two weeks' notice at the time of resignation. The church may declare the position to be vacant at a meeting called for that purpose. The meeting may be called upon recommendation of a majority of the Personnel Committee. The vote to declare the office of the staff member vacant shall be by secret ballot, an affirmative vote of two-thirds of the members present being necessary to declare the office vacant. Such vacancy shall be effective immediately unless otherwise so stated. Except in instances of gross misconduct by the staff member, upon the church declaring the office

to be vacant, the church will compensate the staff member with no less than one-twelfth of his total annual compensation.

(3) DEACONS

Deacons of the church shall be ordained to provide spiritual leadership for and service to the fellowship of the church. They shall guard the unity of spirit within the church, support the pastor and staff, and recommend establishment of policies concerning the material interest of the church and its ministries, subject to the will of the church.

The church shall elect qualified men as Deacons from time to time. Only those men who meet the scriptural qualifications (Acts 6:1-6 and 1 Timothy 3:8-13) and who have been members of the church for at least one year shall be eligible for consideration.

The process of electing Deacons is as follows: Potential Deacons will be nominated by the church body during a set period of time. The potential Deacon candidates will be mailed a questionnaire on the requirements of a Deacon. Those potential Deacon candidates who feel called by the Lord to serve as Deacon will send back the signed questionnaire, acknowledging they want to move forward in the confirmation process. The questionnaires will be reviewed by the Deacon body. Those who meet qualifications according to the Deacon Questionnaire will be asked to go through a Deacon training program. The candidates who still feel a calling to serve as a Deacon after the training sessions will be interviewed by the Deacon body. The Deacon body will decide then which candidates will be recommended to the church for a church vote. Elections shall be by a majority vote of the church members present at a regular business meeting. Once elected, Deacons shall serve thereafter as long as they are faithful to their duties and continue to meet scriptural qualifications set forth in Acts 6:1-6 and 1 Timothy 3:8-13. A Deacon may no longer serve if the Deacon becomes inactive as defined in the Deacon policy manual, until such time as the Deacon becomes faithful again and must receive a recommendation by the Deacon body to change that Deacon's status to active. A Deacon may be removed from the Deacon body upon a majority vote by the Deacons present at a meeting of the Deacons with advance notice to the Deacon so voted upon.

The officer positions of the Deacons will be chairman, vice chairman, and secretary. They shall be elected by the Deacon body every two (2) years. The pastor(s) shall be notified of deacon meetings and invited to attend.

In accordance with the New Testament, Deacons are to be servants of the church. The ministry of the Deacon is to assist the pastor in carrying out God's work in the church and community, and in helping the church members and others in the community in any way they can. There shall be no obligation to recognize a Deacon who comes to this church from another church of like faith; however, after six months' membership, the Deacon may be considered by the Deacon body and be recommended to the church. A majority vote of the church members present shall entitle the Deacon to serve as part of the Deacon body of this church.

(4) MODERATOR

The pastor shall serve as moderator, presiding over church business meetings, or upon the pastor's request, the church shall elect annually a moderator from the membership as its presiding officer. In

the absence of the moderator, the chairman of the deacons shall preside; in the absence of the chairman, the vice chairman shall preside; or, in the absence of all three, the clerk shall call the church to order and preside for the election of an acting moderator.

In guarding and maintaining the fellowship of the church, the aim of the moderator must be to bring about unity with people of different views, ideas, and convictions. The objectives of the moderator should be as follows: to maintain the spirit of Christian love while presiding; to be fair and courteous with all members; to help members understand parliamentary procedures without embarrassment to them; to insist that motions be stated and seconded before discussed; to suggest that a member make a motion by stating, "A motion is in order to ..."; to call on the person who makes a motion to discuss it first; to encourage full and free debate by leading members to talk through their disagreements and trying to avoid trivial matters; to alternate discussions so as to bring out both sides of a question by giving a member who has not spoken preference over the one who has; to respect the minority who has a right to be heard even though the majority must prevail; and to always take the affirmative vote first and then the negative vote second.

The moderator must maintain a neutral position while presiding. If he wishes to debate a question under consideration, he should ask an assistant to preside.

(5) CHURCH CLERK

The Nominating Committee shall recommend for election annually a clerk as its clerical officer, who shall serve until a successor has been elected. The clerk shall be responsible for keeping a suitable record of all official actions of the church and recording minutes of the church business meetings except as otherwise herein provided. The clerk or assistant must be present in all regular and special church business meetings to record the results of all matters voted upon. In business meetings, the clerk shall record information on applicants for church membership and other decisions. The clerk shall also record all actions voted on by the church and follow through on all necessary correspondence related to the actions. The clerk shall sign letters of transfer voted on by the church, and submit for record-keeping all communications and written official reports.

All church records are church property and shall be kept in the church office when an office is maintained.

(6) CHURCH TREASURER

The Nominating Committee shall recommend for election annually a church treasurer as its financial officer who shall serve until a successor has been elected. It shall be the duty of the treasurer to render to the church at each regular business meeting an itemized report of the receipts and disbursements of the preceding month. The assistant treasurer shall assume the responsibility of the treasurer in his/her absence.

It shall be the duty of the treasurer and/or assistant treasurer to approve and sign all checks prepared in the course of business.

The treasurer shall serve on the Budget/Finance Committee. The treasurer and the Budget/Finance Committee will jointly develop and recommend to the church adequate policies and procedures related to receiving, accounting, disbursing, and reporting church monies, and to provide regular

reports of same. The treasurer will assist the Budget/Finance Committee in developing the operating budget of the church.

Upon rendering the annual account at the end of each fiscal year and its acceptance and approval by the church, the records shall be delivered by the treasurer to the church office, which shall keep and preserve the account as a part of the financial records of the church for seven years.

(7) TRUSTEES

The Nominating Committee shall recommend for election annually seven trustees to act for the church in legal matters on a 3-year rotation who shall serve until successors are elected. The Trustee members shall be staggered in term. They shall hold the church property in the corporate name of the church. Upon specific vote of the church authorizing each action, they shall have the power to buy, sell, mortgage, lease, or transfer any church property, but not otherwise. When the signatures of trustees are required, four or more shall sign legal documents involving the sale, mortgage, purchase, or rental of property, or other legal documents related to church-approved matters.

SECTION 2: NONMINISTERIAL STAFF

The nonministerial staff members shall be employed as the church determines the need for their services. Contingent upon church-approved position(s), the Personnel Committee shall have the authority to employ nonministerial staff members and to terminate services of any and all nonministerial staff members without church approval, as defined in the Personnel Policy Manual.

SECTION 3: CHURCH COMMITTEES

The committees listed below, with the exception of the Budget/Finance and Church Council Committees, shall serve at the discretion of the church as needed in its ministry. The Budget/Finance, Article VIII, and Church Council Committees, Article V, function under the authority of the Constitution and do not serve at the discretion of the church.

- (1) AUDIO/VISUAL COMMITTEE**
- (2) BAPTISMAL COMMITTEE**
- (3) BENEVOLENCE COMMITTEE**
- (4) BUDGET/FINANCE COMMITTEE**
- (5) BUILDING & GROUNDS COMMITTEE**
- (6) CHURCH COUNCIL**
- (7) COMMITTEE ON COMMITTEES**
- (8) FELLOWSHIP/HOSPITALITY COMMITTEE**
- (9) FUNERAL MEAL COMMITTEE**

- (10) LORD'S SUPPER COMMITTEE
- (11) MASTER PLAN COMMITTEE
- (12) MISSIONS COMMITTEE
- (13) MUSIC COMMITTEE
- (14) NEW MEMBERS COMMITTEE
- (15) NOMINATING COMMITTEE
- (16) NURSERY COMMITTEE
- (17) PERSONNEL COMMITTEE
- (18) PREKINDERGARTEN COMMITTEE
- (19) TELLERS
- (20) TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE
- (21) WEDDING COMMITTEE
- (22) YOUTH COMMITTEE

Members of these committees are nominated by the Committee on Committees and elected by a majority of church members at the September business meeting.

SECTION 4: COMMITTEE ORGANIZATION AND GOVERNANCE

Each committee shall organize to accomplish its individual purpose. See the appropriate committee manual.

ARTICLE IV

CHURCH PROGRAMS

The church shall maintain programs of Bible teaching. All organizations related to the church program shall be under church authority, all officers being elected by the church and reporting regularly to the church, and all program activities subject to church coordination and approval. The church shall provide the human resources, the physical resources, and the financial resources for the appropriate advancement of these programs.

SECTION 1: SUNDAY SCHOOL

The basic responsibility of the Sunday School program is Bible teaching and biblical revelation in a way that would reach people for Christ and church membership, and to aid in the interpretation of information pertaining to the church and denomination.

Any and all Sunday School teachers must be a member of First Baptist Church. Each teacher is also encouraged to read the 2000 Baptist Faith and Message (BFM), along with the section on our web site entitled "What we Believe."

The Sunday School program shall be divided into departments and/or classes to meet the needs of all ages, and shall be under the direction of a Sunday School director nominated by the Nominating Committee and elected annually by the church.

SECTION 2: MUSIC PROGRAM

The church music program, under the direction of the minister of music, shall include the music education, training, and special performances in support of the church. Its tasks shall be to teach music; train persons to lead, sing, and play music; provide music in the church and community; and provide and interpret information regarding the work of the church; and may provide and interpret information regarding the work of the denomination. The church music program may have such officers and organization as the program requires.

SECTION 3: OTHER TEACHING AND TRAINING PROGRAMS

Other programs can include, but are not limited to, small group studies, Deacon Training, Vacation Bible School, Missions training, Youth programs under the direction of the Youth Minister, and evangelism training.

It is preferred, but not required, that teachers for any and all other groups excluding Sunday School be a church member. If one is not a member, one is required to read the 2000 BFM and sign a Letter of Agreement stating one's affirmation. The Letter of Agreement will provide opportunity for the candidate to state any variant with the 2000 Baptist Faith and Message, along with the section on our web site entitled "What we Believe." Should there be any variant, the Pastor and/or staff will have final approval of candidate.

ARTICLE V

CHURCH COUNCIL

The Church Council shall serve the church by leading in planning, coordinating, conducting, and evaluating the ministries and programs of the church. The primary functions of the Church Council shall be to assist the church in coordinating activities into one harmonious program of work. The Church Council at large member(s) is/are nominated and elected according to Article III, Section 3, of this Constitution. Operating procedures for the Church Council and its members are as per the Church Council Committee Manual. The standing positions of the Church Council are defined in the Committee Manual.

ARTICLE VI

CHURCH ORDINANCES

SECTION 1: BAPTISM

This church may receive for baptism all persons who have received Jesus Christ as their Savior by personal faith, who profess Him publicly at any worship service, and who indicate a commitment to follow Christ as Lord. Baptism shall be by immersion in water. The pastor, or whomever the church shall authorize, shall administer baptism. Baptism shall be administered as an act of worship during any worship service of the church. A person who professes Christ and is not baptized after a reasonable length of time shall be counseled by the pastor and/or staff or deacons.

SECTION 2: LORD'S SUPPER

This church shall observe the Lord's Supper on a recurring basis as scheduled by the church. The pastor and deacons shall administer the Lord's Supper. To observe the Lord's Supper, one must be a believer in Christ, having undergone believer's baptism or with the intent to do so.

ARTICLE VII

CHURCH MEETINGS

SECTION 1: WORSHIP SERVICES

The church shall meet regularly each Sunday morning, Sunday evening, and Wednesday evening for the worship of Almighty God. Prayer, praise, preaching, instruction, and evangelism shall be the primary purposes of these services. The pastor shall direct the services for all church members and for all others who may choose to attend. In the absence of the pastor, an ordained minister, a ministerial staff member, or a church deacon may direct the services.

SECTION 2: SPECIAL SERVICES

Revival services and any other special services for the advancement of the church's objectives shall be held as recommended by the pastor and approved by the church. In the absence of the pastor, an ordained minister, a ministerial staff member, or a church deacon may direct the services.

The marriage service is a Biblical institution established by God as clearly described in the Scriptures. This Church recognizes that marriage is the uniting of one man and one woman in covenant commitment. Accordingly, this Church, its pastors, staff and members will not participate in same sex unions or same sex marriages, nor shall its property or resources be used for such purposes. (Genesis 2:24; Matthew 19:4-9)

SECTION 3: REGULAR BUSINESS MEETINGS

The church shall hold regular business meetings quarterly, as well as an additional regular business meeting in August. Each meeting will be held on the Wednesday after the third Sunday of the month. The church fiscal year coincides with the calendar year. The first regular business meeting of the year is in March and the last is in December. Any new business for a regular business meeting

must be submitted to the church secretary and publicly posted for two Sundays prior to the meeting. Regular business meetings will be conducted according to Robert's Rules of Order.

SECTION 4: SPECIAL BUSINESS MEETINGS

The church may conduct special business meetings to consider matters of a particular nature and significance. The notice of a special business meeting shall include the subject, the date, the time, and the place of the meeting; and it must be given by announcement in the Sunday worship services in the two weeks immediately prior to the meeting. No business except that for which the meeting was called may be transacted.

A special business meeting may be called by the Church Council or by a written petition signed by not less than one-eighth of the church members on the membership roll. All special business meetings will be conducted according to Robert's Rules of Order.

SECTION 5: EMERGENCY BUSINESS MEETINGS

An emergency business meeting is called when an urgent matter that is time-sensitive must be addressed. It is to be held as soon as is reasonably possible. An emergency business meeting must be approved by majority consent of the pastor, worship leader, trustee chair, deacon chair, and deacon vice chair. All emergency business meetings will be conducted according to Robert's Rules of Order.

SECTION 6: QUORUM

A quorum is necessary to adopt new business in any and all business meetings and will consist of 30 members.

ARTICLE VIII

CHURCH FINANCES

SECTION 1: BUDGET

The Budget/Finance Committee shall prepare and submit to the church for approval an inclusive budget, indicating by line items, all assets and liabilities of the church, and all line items for operating expenses.

This church and its causes are supported with tithes and offerings.

SECTION 2: ACCOUNTING PROCEDURES

All funds received for any and all purposes are collected, secured, recorded and deposited under the direction of the Church Treasurer.

The church shall use a system of accounting that will conform to Generally Accepted Accounting Principles (GAAP) for the handling of all funds. This system shall be selected and purchased by the Church Treasurer, and it shall be the responsibility of the office secretary to implement it under the direction of the Church Treasurer.

The Church Treasurer or an Assistant Church Treasurer shall be authorized to select and designate such depository or depositories for the funds and securities of the church as they shall deem proper, upon recommendation of the Budget/Finance Committee. All checks, notes, and contracts of the church, and all orders for deposit or withdrawal of securities from the designated depository or depositories shall be signed by the Church Treasurer or an Assistant Church Treasurer.

SECTION 3: FISCAL YEAR

The church fiscal year coincides with the calendar year.

ARTICLE IX

AMENDMENTS

Changes in the Constitution may be made at any business meeting of the church provided each amendment shall have been presented in writing one month in advance and copies of the proposed amendment shall have been furnished to each member present at the earlier meeting or upon request. Amendments to the bylaws shall be adopted by a two-thirds vote of church members present. A quorum is defined as 30 members.

ARTICLE X

OPERATION AND DISSOLUTION

This church is organized and operated primarily for the purpose of engaging in worship of the Triune God, discipleship, and evangelism, all as defined in the Holy Scriptures. It is to be operated in a way that does not result in accrual of distributable profits, realization of private gain resulting from payment of compensation in excess of a reasonable allowance for salary or other compensation for services rendered, or realization of any other form of private gain.

The church pledges its assets for use in performing the organization's religious functions. It directs that on discontinuance of the church by dissolution or otherwise, the assets are to be transferred to another Southern Baptist church of like order and faith.

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Modified 12/18/19