

# Constitution & By-Laws

Revised: July 20, 2007



**FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH**  
504 W. MAIN STREET, MORRISTOWN

# **FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH MORRISTOWN — CONSTITUTION**

## **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 consistent with the accepted tenets of a mission minded Baptist church who is currently affiliated with the Southern Baptist Convention, and for the purpose of preserving the liberties inherent in each individual member of this church and the freedom of action of this body with respect to its relation to other churches of the same faith, we do declare and establish this constitution.

## **ARTICLE I – NAME, PURPOSE, CHARACTER**

- Section One     The name of this body shall be the First Baptist Church of Morristown, Tennessee, Inc.
- Section Two     The purpose of this church shall be to foster and maintain public worship, to carry out the Great Commission of Jesus Christ, and to promote Christian fellowship and growth among its members.
- Section Three    The Scriptures are its authority in matters of faith and practice. Doctrines of religious convictions and Christian faith for general instruction and guidance are hereby adopted by this church and attached hereto as Appendix I – The most current version of “The Baptist Faith and Message.”

## **ARTICLE II – COVENANT AND COOPERATION**

- Section One     The fellowship of the church shall be bound by the Church Covenant, attached as Appendix II.
- Section Two     This church shall voluntarily cooperate with the Nolachucky Baptist Association, the Tennessee Baptist Convention, and the Southern Baptist Convention for mutual help and benefits in the propagation of the gospel. This relationship may be altered or discontinued by the amendment procedure hereinafter provided for in Article VIII of this constitution.
- Section Three    This church shall be governed by those who compose it. All matters before the church shall be voted on by the church, and settled by a majority vote of the votes cast by members present, not counting blanks or abstentions, except as hereinafter provided.

## **ARTICLE III – MEMBERSHIP**

- Section One     The membership of this church shall be composed of persons who have given evidence of regeneration, who have been baptized by immersion, who have subscribed to the covenant and constitution of this church, and who have been received by vote of the church in regular business session.
- Section Two     Candidates for membership may be received at any worship service upon public profession of faith in the Lord Jesus Christ as Savior, by transfer of membership from another church of like faith and order, by statement satisfactory to the church to the effect that they have previously been members of a church of like faith and order, or restoration.

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Section Three Members shall be expected to be faithful in all the duties of Christian life, to be regular in attendance at the services of the church, to give regularly and systematically to its support, and to share in its organized work.

Section Four This church shall delete from its membership roll

1. Those who are removed by death.
  2. Those who unite with another church or another faith.
  3. Those who request a church of like faith and those who ask for a letter of transfer.
  4. Those who may request membership to cease.
  5. Further, members who are able to attend and choose not to attend for a period of one year shall be contacted by the church and asked to return. The member who fails to return or respond within sixty (60) days after contact shall be removed from active status on the membership database of the church and be placed in an inactive status. Those names of members who are placed in an inactive status will be brought before the deacon body after a period not to exceed three years for further review and possible removal.
  6. Those who are found guilty of unchristian conduct, and this only after dealing with such members as hereinafter provided.
- A. This church shall subject to discipline its members who persistently refuse to live up to the standards of the Holy Scriptures. The church shall at all times abide by the scriptural methods and spirit for handling such matters.

*Matthew 5:23-24 NIV "Therefore, if you are offering your gift at the altar and there remember that your brother has something against you, leave your gift there in front of the altar. First go and be reconciled to your brother; then come and offer your gift."*

*Matthew 18:15-17 NIV "If your brother sins against you, go and show him his fault, just between the two of you. If he listens to you, you have won your brother over. But if he will not listen, take one or two others along, so that 'every matter may be established by the testimony 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, treat him as you would a pagan or a tax collector."*

- B. No member shall be dealt with except after efforts of the deacons to bring about reconciliation, and except that the member has been informed of the specific charge against him and has been asked to appear before the deacons and given an opportunity to answer. Exceptions to the above rule shall be made when the member cannot be conveniently reached, in which case the request to appear before the deacon body may be made through a sealed communication by the secretary of the deacons.
- C. Should any member fail to give satisfaction to the deacon body concerning the charge, then the member shall have an opportunity to appear and give answer to the church body. After such presentation, and upon motion of the deacons, the church body may exclude the member by majority vote of the votes cast, not counting blanks or abstentions, by members present at the meeting called for such purpose.

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## ARTICLE IV – OFFICERS AND DUTIES

Section One The primary officers of this church shall be Senior Pastor, Church Administrator, Full-Time Ministerial Staff, Church Clerk, Church Treasurer, Trustees/ Board of Directors Chairman, Sunday School Director, Women’s Ministries Director, Men’s Ministries Director, Woman’s Missionary Union Director, Chairmen of Missions, Nominating, Personnel, Property, and Stewardship Committees, and Deacon Chairman and Vice-Chairman. The primary officers of this church shall make up the Church Council.

Section Two The primary legal officers of the incorporated body, First Baptist Church of Morristown, Tennessee, Incorporated, shall be as follows:

President: Chairman of Trustees  
Secretary: Church Clerk  
Board of Directors: Five Trustees

Individual duties of the officers and the collective duties of the Trustees are found in the Officer and Committee Guide.

Section Three This church shall have such other officers as wisdom and the Holy Spirit shall direct to carry out its purposes. The duties of such officers shall be those connected with the offices they fill according to the instruction of the church and as spelled out in the By-Laws and Policies and Procedures Manual.

Section Four Election of all officers shall be in accordance with the church By-Laws, Article II.

## ARTICLE V – COMMITTEES AND DUTIES

Section One This church shall have such committees as the Holy Spirit may direct as necessary for carrying on the work of the church and consistent with the Mission Statement of First Baptist Church Morristown.

Section Two These committees with their duties will be listed in the Church Policies and Procedures Guide. Election of committee members shall be in accord with the By-Laws and Policies and Procedures Manual of the church.

Section Three The Church Council shall review the duties and appropriateness of each committee periodically and make appropriate recommendations to the church. Committees may be standing (which have no automatic expiration) or temporary (which have a designated expiration date).

Section Four All committee actions, other than disciplinary actions of the Personnel Committee, may be subject to review by the deacon body or church body in a business meeting.

## ARTICLE VI – MEETINGS

Section One This church shall normally conduct regular worship services on every Lord’s Day and on Wednesday evenings unless otherwise agreed by the church. The Lord’s Supper shall be observed at least four (4) times a year. The church shall provide all necessary services for the educational, stewardship, missionary, evangelistic, and promotional functions of the church.

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Section Two This church shall conduct regular quarterly business meetings as close as possible to the months of January, April, July, and October. The pastor shall normally serve as moderator of the business sessions. In his absence, or upon his request, the chairman of deacons or their designee shall serve as moderator.

Special business meetings shall be called by the chairman of deacons, by vote of the deacon body, or pastor. Such called meetings must be announced publicly at a service of the church at least seven (7) days prior to the called meeting or by written notice sent to the resident membership of the church at least seven (7) days prior to the called meeting. No matter shall be considered at the called meeting except that for which it was called and previously announced.

## ARTICLE VII – CHURCH FINANCE

Section One The following committees and/or individuals shall be responsible for maintaining a good church accounting system with sufficient internal controls for the protection of those who administer the funds and for the protection of the funds themselves:

- A. Stewardship Committee
- B. Treasurer
- C. Church Administrator
- D. Financial Secretary

Section Two There shall be an annual review of the church finances by an outside independent auditor, with a full audit at least once every five years.

## ARTICLE VIII – ADOPTION AND AMENDMENTS

Section One This constitution shall be considered adopted and in effect when two-thirds of the votes cast by members present at the business meeting vote in favor of same, not counting blanks or abstentions, provided that the proposed constitution shall be made available to the church, and written and public notice of the vote shall be given to the church at least thirty (30) days prior to the time the vote is taken. Public notice may be by weekly announcement through media and publications of the church.

Section Two This constitution may be amended, altered, or repealed by a two-thirds vote of the votes cast by members present at any business meeting of the church, not counting blanks or abstentions, provided that such amendment, alteration, or repeal be given to the clerk in writing and that such proposed change shall be presented to the church at least thirty (30) days prior to the time the vote is taken. The presentation to the church may be by distribution at any regular church service.

Section Three All previous church actions, contrary to the provisions of this constitution, are hereby rescinded and this constitution supersedes all previous versions of the constitution.

# APPENDIX I – THE BAPTIST FAITH AND MESSAGE 2000

## I. The Scriptures

The Holy Bible was written by men divinely inspired and is God's revelation of Himself to man. It is a perfect treasure of divine instruction. It has God for its author, salvation for its end, and truth, without any mixture of error, for its matter. Therefore, all Scripture is totally true and trustworthy. It reveals the principles by which God judges us, and therefore is, and will remain to the end of the world, the true center of Christian union, and the supreme standard by which all human conduct, creeds, and religious opinions should be tried. All Scripture is a testimony to Christ, who is Himself the focus of divine revelation.

*Exodus 24:4; Deuteronomy 4:1-2; 17:19; Joshua 8:34; Psalms 19:7-10; 119:11,89,105,140; Isaiah 34:16; 40:8; Jeremiah 15:16; 36:1-32; Matthew 5:17-18; 22:29; Luke 21:33; 24:44-46; John 5:39; 16:13-15; 17:17; Acts 2:16ff.; 17:11; Romans 15:4; 16:25-26; 2 Timothy 3:15-17; Hebrews 1:1-2; 4:12; 1 Peter 1:25; 2 Peter 1:19-21.*

## II. God

There is one and only one living and true God. He is an intelligent, spiritual, and personal Being, the Creator, Redeemer, Preserver, and Ruler of the universe. God is infinite in holiness and all other perfections. God is all powerful and all knowing; and His perfect knowledge extends to all things, past, present, and future, including the future decisions of His free creatures. To Him we owe the highest love, reverence, and obedience. The eternal triune God reveals Himself to us as Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, with distinct personal attributes, but without division of nature, essence, or being.

### A. God the Father

God as Father reigns with providential care over His universe, His creatures, and the flow of the stream of human history according to the purposes of His grace. He is all powerful, all knowing, all loving, and all wise. God is Father in truth to those who become children of God through faith in Jesus Christ. He is fatherly in His attitude toward all men.

*Genesis 1:1; 2:7; Exodus 3:14; 6:2-3; 15:11ff.; 20:1ff.; Leviticus 22:2; Deuteronomy 6:4; 32:6; 1 Chronicles 29:10; Psalm 19:1-3; Isaiah 43:3,15; 64:8; Jeremiah 10:10; 17:13; Matthew 6:9ff.; 7:11; 23:9; 28:19; Mark 1:9-11; John 4:24; 5:26; 14:6-13; 17:1-8; Acts 1:7; Romans 8:14-15; 1 Corinthians 8:6; Galatians 4:6; Ephesians 4:6; Colossians 1:15; 1 Timothy 1:17; Hebrews 11:6; 12:9; 1 Peter 1:17; 1 John 5:7.*

### B. God the Son

Christ is the eternal Son of God. In His incarnation as Jesus Christ He was conceived of the Holy Spirit and born of the virgin Mary. Jesus perfectly revealed and did the will of God, taking upon Himself human nature with its demands and necessities and identifying Himself completely with mankind yet without sin. He honored the divine law by His personal obedience, and in His substitutionary death on the cross He made provision for the redemption of men from sin. He was raised from the dead with a glorified body and appeared to His disciples as the person who was with them before His crucifixion. He ascended into heaven and is now exalted at the right hand of God where He is the One Mediator, fully God, fully man, in whose Person is effected the reconciliation between God and man. He will return in power and glory to judge the world and to consummate His redemptive mission. He now dwells in all believers as the living and ever present Lord.

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*Genesis 18:1ff.; Psalms 2:7ff.; 110:1ff.; Isaiah 7:14; 53; Matthew 1:18-23; 3:17; 8:29; 11:27; 14:33; 16:16,27; 17:5; 27; 28:1-6,19; Mark 1:1; 3:11; Luke 1:35; 4:41; 22:70; 24:46; John 1:1-18,29; 10:30,38; 11:25-27; 12:44-50; 14:7-11; 16:15-16,28; 17:1-5, 21-22; 20:1-20,28; Acts 1:9; 2:22-24; 7:55-56; 9:4-5,20; Romans 1:3-4; 3:23-26; 5:6-21; 8:1-3,34; 10:4; 1 Corinthians 1:30; 2:2; 8:6; 15:1-8,24-28; 2 Corinthians 5:19-21; 8:9; Galatians 4:4-5; Ephesians 1:20; 3:11; 4:7-10; Philippians 2:5-11; Colossians 1:13-22; 2:9; 1 Thessalonians 4:14-18; 1 Timothy 2:5-6; 3:16; Titus 2:13-14; Hebrews 1:1-3; 4:14-15; 7:14-28; 9:12-15,24-28; 12:2; 13:8; 1 Peter 2:21-25; 3:22; 1 John 1:7-9; 3:2; 4:14-15; 5:9; 2 John 7-9; Revelation 1:13-16; 5:9-14; 12:10-11; 13:8; 19:16.*

### C. God the Holy Spirit

The Holy Spirit is the Spirit of God, fully divine. He inspired holy men of old to write the Scriptures. Through illumination He enables men to understand truth. He exalts Christ. He convicts men of sin, of righteousness, and of judgment. He calls men to the Saviour, and effects regeneration. At the moment of regeneration He baptizes every believer into the Body of Christ. He cultivates Christian character, comforts believers, and bestows the spiritual gifts by which they serve God through His church. He seals the believer unto the day of final redemption. His presence in the Christian is the guarantee that God will bring the believer into the fullness of the stature of Christ. He enlightens and empowers the believer and the church in worship, evangelism, and service.

*Genesis 1:2; Judges 14:6; Job 26:13; Psalms 51:11; 139:7ff.; Isaiah 61:1-3; Joel 2:28-32; Matthew 1:18; 3:16; 4:1; 12:28-32; 28:19; Mark 1:10,12; Luke 1:35; 4:1,18-19; 11:13; 12:12; 24:49; John 4:24; 14:16-17,26; 15:26; 16:7-14; Acts 1:8; 2:1-4,38; 4:31; 5:3; 6:3; 7:55; 8:17,39; 10:44; 13:2; 15:28; 16:6; 19:1-6; Romans 8:9-11,14-16,26-27; 1 Corinthians 2:10-14; 3:16; 12:3-11,13; Galatians 4:6; Ephesians 1:13-14; 4:30; 5:18; 1 Thessalonians 5:19; 1 Timothy 3:16; 4:1; 2 Timothy 1:14; 3:16; Hebrews 9:8,14; 2 Peter 1:21; 1 John 4:13; 5:6-7; Revelation 1:10; 22:17.*

### III. Man

Man is the special creation of God, made in His own image. He created them male and female as the crowning work of His creation. The gift of gender is thus part of the goodness of God's creation. In the beginning man was innocent of sin and was endowed by his Creator with freedom of choice. By his free choice man sinned against God and brought sin into the human race. Through the temptation of Satan man transgressed the command of God, and fell from his original innocence whereby his posterity inherit a nature and an environment inclined toward sin. Therefore, as soon as they are capable of moral action, they become transgressors and are under condemnation. Only the grace of God can bring man into His holy fellowship and enable man to fulfill the creative purpose of God. The sacredness of human personality is evident in that God created man in His own image, and in that Christ died for man; therefore, every person of every race possesses full dignity and is worthy of respect and Christian love.

*Genesis 1:26-30; 2:5,7,18-22; 3; 9:6; Psalms 1; 8:3-6; 32:1-5; 51:5; Isaiah 6:5; Jeremiah 17:5; Matthew 16:26; Acts 17:26-31; Romans 1:19-32; 3:10-18,23; 5:6,12,19; 6:6; 7:14-25; 8:14-18,29; 1 Corinthians 1:21-31; 15:19,21-22; Ephesians 2:1-22; Colossians 1:21-22; 3:9-11.*

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## IV. Salvation

Salvation involves the redemption of the whole man, and is offered freely to all who accept Jesus Christ as Lord and Saviour, who by His own blood obtained eternal redemption for the believer. In its broadest sense salvation includes regeneration, justification, sanctification, and glorification. There is no salvation apart from personal faith in Jesus Christ as Lord.

A. Regeneration, or the new birth, is a work of God's grace whereby believers become new creatures in Christ Jesus. It is a change of heart wrought by the Holy Spirit through conviction of sin, to which the sinner responds in repentance toward God and faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. Repentance and faith are inseparable experiences of grace.

Repentance is a genuine turning from sin toward God. Faith is the acceptance of Jesus Christ and commitment of the entire personality to Him as Lord and Saviour.

B. Justification is God's gracious and full acquittal upon principles of His righteousness of all sinners who repent and believe in Christ. Justification brings the believer unto a relationship of peace and favor with God.

C. Sanctification is the experience, beginning in regeneration, by which the believer is set apart to God's purposes, and is enabled to progress toward moral and spiritual maturity through the presence and power of the Holy Spirit dwelling in him. Growth in grace should continue throughout the regenerate person's life.

D. Glorification is the culmination of salvation and is the final blessed and abiding state of the redeemed.

*Genesis 3:15; Exodus 3:14-17; 6:2-8; Matthew 1:21; 4:17; 16:21-26; 27:22-28:6; Luke 1:68-69; 2:28-32; John 1:11-14,29; 3:3-21,36; 5:24; 10:9,28-29; 15:1-16; 17:17; Acts 2:21; 4:12; 15:11; 16:30-31; 17:30-31; 20:32; Romans 1:16-18; 2:4; 3:23-25; 4:3ff.; 5:8-10; 6:1-23; 8:1-18,29-39; 10:9-10,13; 13:11-14; 1 Corinthians 1:18,30; 6:19-20; 15:10; 2 Corinthians 5:17-20; Galatians 2:20; 3:13; 5:22-25; 6:15; Ephesians 1:7; 2:8-22; 4:11-16; Philippians 2:12-13; Colossians 1:9-22; 3:1ff.; 1 Thessalonians 5:23-24; 2 Timothy 1:12; Titus 2:11-14; Hebrews 2:1-3; 5:8-9; 9:24-28; 11:1-12:8,14; James 2:14-26; 1 Peter 1:2-23; 1 John 1:6-2:11; Revelation 3:20; 21:1-22:5.*

## V. God's Purpose of Grace

Election is the gracious purpose of God, according to which He regenerates, justifies, sanctifies, and glorifies sinners. It is consistent with the free agency of man, and comprehends all the means in connection with the end. It is the glorious display of God's sovereign goodness, and is infinitely wise, holy, and unchangeable. It excludes boasting and promotes humility.

All true believers endure to the end. Those whom God has accepted in Christ, and sanctified by His Spirit, will never fall away from the state of grace, but shall persevere to the end. Believers may fall into sin through neglect and temptation, whereby they grieve the Spirit, impair their graces and comforts, and bring reproach on the cause of Christ and temporal judgments on themselves; yet they shall be kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation.

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*Genesis 12:1-3; Exodus 19:5-8; 1 Samuel 8:4-7,19-22; Isaiah 5:1-7; Jeremiah 31:31ff.; Matthew 16:18-19; 21:28-45; 24:22,31; 25:34; Luke 1:68-79; 2:29-32; 19:41-44; 24:44-48; John 1:12-14; 3:16; 5:24; 6:44-45,65; 10:27-29; 15:16; 17:6,12,17-18; Acts 20:32; Romans 5:9-10; 8:28-39; 10:12-15; 11:5-7,26-36; 1 Corinthians 1:1-2; 15:24-28; Ephesians 1:4-23; 2:1-10; 3:1-11; Colossians 1:12-14; 2 Thessalonians 2:13-14; 2 Timothy 1:12; 2:10,19; Hebrews 11:39–12:2; James 1:12; 1 Peter 1:2-5,13; 2:4-10; 1 John 1:7-9; 2:19; 3:2.*

### VI. The Church

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; observing the two ordinances of Christ, governed by His laws, exercising the gifts, rights, and privileges invested in them by His Word, and seeking to extend the gospel to the ends of the earth. Each congregation operates under the Lordship of Christ through democratic processes. In such a congregation each member is responsible and accountable to Christ as Lord. Its scriptural officers are pastors and deacons. While both men and women are gifted for service in the church, the office of pastor is limited to men as qualified by Scripture.

The New Testament speaks also of the church as the Body of Christ which includes all of the redeemed of all the ages, believers from every tribe, and tongue, and people, and nation.

*Matthew 16:15-19; 18:15-20; Acts 2:41-42,47; 5:11-14; 6:3-6; 13:1-3; 14:23,27; 15:1-30; 16:5; 20:28; Romans 1:7; 1 Corinthians 1:2; 3:16; 5:4-5; 7:17; 9:13-14; 12; Ephesians 1:22-23; 2:19-22; 3:8-11,21; 5:22-32; Philippians 1:1; Colossians 1:18; 1 Timothy 2:9-14; 3:1-15; 4:14; Hebrews 11:39-40; 1 Peter 5:1-4; Revelation 2-3; 21:2-3.*

### VII. Baptism and the Lord's Supper

Christian baptism is the immersion of a believer in water in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. It is an act of obedience symbolizing the believer's faith in a crucified, buried, and risen Saviour, the believer's death to sin, the burial of the old life, and the resurrection to walk in newness of life in Christ Jesus. It is a testimony to his faith in the final resurrection of the dead. Being a church ordinance, it is prerequisite to the privileges of church membership and to the Lord's Supper.

The Lord's Supper is a symbolic act of obedience whereby members of the church, through partaking of the bread and the fruit of the vine, memorialize the death of the Redeemer and anticipate His second coming.

*Matthew 3:13-17; 26:26-30; 28:19-20; Mark 1:9-11; 14:22-26; Luke 3:21-22; 22:19-20; John 3:23; Acts 2:41-42; 8:35-39; 16:30-33; 20:7; Romans 6:3-5; 1 Corinthians 10:16,21; 11:23-29; Colossians 2:12.*

### VIII. The Lord's Day

The first day of the week is the Lord's Day. It is a Christian institution for regular observance. It commemorates the resurrection of Christ from the dead and should include exercises of worship and spiritual devotion, both public and private. Activities on the Lord's Day should be commensurate with the Christian's conscience under the Lordship of Jesus Christ.

*Exodus 20:8-11; Matthew 12:1-12; 28:1ff.; Mark 2:27-28; 16:1-7; Luke 24:1-3,33-36; John 4:21-24; 20:1,19-28; Acts 20:7; Romans 14:5-10; 1 Corinthians 16:1-2; Colossians 2:16; 3:16; Revelation 1:10.*

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## IX. The Kingdom

The Kingdom of God includes both His general sovereignty over the universe and His particular kingship over men who willfully acknowledge Him as King. Particularly the Kingdom is the realm of salvation into which men enter by trustful, childlike commitment to Jesus Christ. Christians ought to pray and to labor that the Kingdom may come and God's will be done on earth. The full consummation of the Kingdom awaits the return of Jesus Christ and the end of this age.

*Genesis 1:1; Isaiah 9:6-7; Jeremiah 23:5-6; Matthew 3:2; 4:8-10,23; 12:25-28; 13:1-52; 25:31-46; 26:29; Mark 1:14-15; 9:1; Luke 4:43; 8:1; 9:2; 12:31-32; 17:20-21; 23:42; John 3:3; 18:36; Acts 1:6-7; 17:22-31; Romans 5:17; 8:19; 1 Corinthians 15:24-28; Colossians 1:13; Hebrews 11:10,16; 12:28; 1 Peter 2:4-10; 4:13; Revelation 1:6,9; 5:10; 11:15; 21-22.*

## X. Last Things

God, in His own time and in His own way, will bring the world to its appropriate end. According to His promise, Jesus Christ will return personally and visibly in glory to the earth; the dead will be raised; and Christ will judge all men in righteousness. The unrighteous will be consigned to Hell, the place of everlasting punishment. The righteous in their resurrected and glorified bodies will receive their reward and will dwell forever in Heaven with the Lord.

*Isaiah 2:4; 11:9; Matthew 16:27; 18:8-9; 19:28; 24:27,30,36,44; 25:31-46; 26:64; Mark 8:38; 9:43-48; Luke 12:40,48; 16:19-26; 17:22-37; 21:27-28; John 14:1-3; Acts 1:11; 17:31; Romans 14:10; 1 Corinthians 4:5; 15:24-28,35-58; 2 Corinthians 5:10; Philippians 3:20-21; Colossians 1:5; 3:4; 1 Thessalonians 4:14-18; 5:1ff.; 2 Thessalonians 1:7ff.; 2; 1 Timothy 6:14; 2 Timothy 4:1,8; Titus 2:13; Hebrews 9:27-28; James 5:8; 2 Peter 3:7ff.; 1 John 2:28; 3:2; Jude 14; Revelation 1:18; 3:11; 20:1-22:13.*

## XI. Evangelism and Missions

It is the duty and privilege of every follower of Christ and of every church of the Lord Jesus Christ to endeavor to make disciples of all nations. The new birth of man's spirit by God's Holy Spirit means the birth of love for others. Missionary effort on the part of all rests thus upon a spiritual necessity of the regenerate life, and is expressly and repeatedly commanded in the teachings of Christ. The Lord Jesus Christ has commanded the preaching of the gospel to all nations. It is the duty of every child of God to seek constantly to win the lost to Christ by verbal witness undergirded by a Christian lifestyle, and by other methods in harmony with the gospel of Christ.

*Genesis 12:1-3; Exodus 19:5-6; Isaiah 6:1-8; Matthew 9:37-38; 10:5-15; 13:18-30, 37-43; 16:19; 22:9-10; 24:14; 28:18-20; Luke 10:1-18; 24:46-53; John 14:11-12; 15:7-8,16; 17:15; 20:21; Acts 1:8; 2; 8:26-40; 10:42-48; 13:2-3; Romans 10:13-15; Ephesians 3:1-11; 1 Thessalonians 1:8; 2 Timothy 4:5; Hebrews 2:1-3; 11:39-12:2; 1 Peter 2:4-10; Revelation 22:17.*

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## XII. Education

Christianity is the faith of enlightenment and intelligence. In Jesus Christ abide all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge. All sound learning is, therefore, a part of our Christian heritage. The new birth opens all human faculties and creates a thirst for knowledge. Moreover, the cause of education in the Kingdom of Christ is coordinate with the causes of missions and general benevolence, and should receive along with these the liberal support of the churches. An adequate system of Christian education is necessary to a complete spiritual program for Christ's people.

In Christian education there should be a proper balance between academic freedom and academic responsibility. Freedom in any orderly relationship of human life is always limited and never absolute. The freedom of a teacher in a Christian school, college, or seminary is limited by the pre-eminence of Jesus Christ, by the authoritative nature of the Scriptures, and by the distinct purpose for which the school exists.

*Deuteronomy 4:1,5,9,14; 6:1-10; 31:12-13; Nehemiah 8:1-8; Job 28:28; Psalms 19:7ff.; 119:11; Proverbs 3:13ff.; 4:1-10; 8:1-7,11; 15:14; Ecclesiastes 7:19; Matthew 5:2; 7:24ff.; 28:19-20; Luke 2:40; 1 Corinthians 1:18-31; Ephesians 4:11-16; Philippians 4:8; Colossians 2:3,8-9; 1 Timothy 1:3-7; 2 Timothy 2:15; 3:14-17; Hebrews 5:12-6:3; James 1:5; 3:17.*

## XIII. Stewardship

God is the source of all blessings, temporal and spiritual; all that we have and are we owe to Him. Christians have a spiritual debtorship to the whole world, a holy trusteeship in the gospel, and a binding stewardship in their possessions. They are therefore under obligation to serve Him with their time, talents, and material possessions; and should recognize all these as entrusted to them to use for the glory of God and for helping others. According to the Scriptures, Christians should contribute of their means cheerfully, regularly, systematically, proportionately, and liberally for the advancement of the Redeemer's cause on earth.

*Genesis 14:20; Leviticus 27:30-32; Deuteronomy 8:18; Malachi 3:8-12; Matthew 6:1-4,19-21; 19:21; 23:23; 25:14-29; Luke 12:16-21,42; 16:1-13; Acts 2:44-47; 5:1-11; 17:24-25; 20:35; Romans 6:6-22; 12:1-2; 1 Corinthians 4:1-2; 6:19-20; 12; 16:1-4; 2 Corinthians 8-9; 12:15; Philippians 4:10-19; 1 Peter 1:18-19.*

## XIV. Cooperation

Christ's people should, as occasion requires, organize such associations and conventions as may best secure cooperation for the great objects of the Kingdom of God. Such organizations have no authority over one another or over the churches. They are voluntary and advisory bodies designed to elicit, combine, and direct the energies of our people in the most effective manner. Members of New Testament churches should cooperate with one another in carrying forward the missionary, educational, and benevolent ministries for the extension of Christ's Kingdom. Christian unity in the New Testament sense is spiritual harmony and voluntary cooperation for common ends by various groups of Christ's people. Cooperation is desirable between the various Christian denominations, when the end to be attained is itself justified, and when such cooperation involves no violation of conscience or compromise of loyalty to Christ and His Word as revealed in the New Testament.

*Exodus 17:12; 18:17ff.; Judges 7:21; Ezra 1:3-4; 2:68-69; 5:14-15; Nehemiah 4; 8:1-5; Matthew 10:5-15; 20:1-16; 22:1-10; 28:19-20; Mark 2:3; Luke 10:1ff.; Acts 1:13-14; 2:1ff.; 4:31-37; 13:2-3; 15:1-35; 1 Corinthians 1:10-17; 3:5-15; 12; 2 Corinthians 8-9; Galatians 1:6-10; Ephesians 4:1-16; Philippians 1:15-18.*

# APPENDIX I – THE BAPTIST FAITH AND MESSAGE 2000

## **XV. The Christian and the Social Order**

All Christians are under obligation to seek to make the will of Christ supreme in our own lives and in human society. Means and methods used for the improvement of society and the establishment of righteousness among men can be truly and permanently helpful only when they are rooted in the regeneration of the individual by the saving grace of God in Jesus Christ. In the spirit of Christ, Christians should oppose racism, every form of greed, selfishness, and vice, and all forms of sexual immorality, including adultery, homosexuality, and pornography. We should work to provide for the orphaned, the needy, the abused, the aged, the helpless, and the sick. We should speak on behalf of the unborn and contend for the sanctity of all human life from conception to natural death. Every Christian should seek to bring industry, government, and society as a whole under the sway of the principles of righteousness, truth, and brotherly love. In order to promote these ends Christians should be ready to work with all men of good will in any good cause, always being careful to act in the spirit of love without compromising their loyalty to Christ and His truth.

*Exodus 20:3-17; Leviticus 6:2-5; Deuteronomy 10:12; 27:17; Psalm 101:5; Micah 6:8; Zechariah 8:16; Matthew 5:13-16,43-48; 22:36-40; 25:35; Mark 1:29-34; 2:3ff.; 10:21; Luke 4:18-21; 10:27-37; 20:25; John 15:12; 17:15; Romans 12-14; 1 Corinthians 5:9-10; 6:1-7; 7:20-24; 10:23-11:1; Galatians 3:26-28; Ephesians 6:5-9; Colossians 3:12-17; 1 Thessalonians 3:12; Philemon; James 1:27; 2:8.*

## **XVI. Peace and War**

It is the duty of Christians to seek peace with all men on principles of righteousness. In accordance with the spirit and teachings of Christ they should do all in their power to put an end to war.

The true remedy for the war spirit is the gospel of our Lord. The supreme need of the world is the acceptance of His teachings in all the affairs of men and nations, and the practical application of His law of love. Christian people throughout the world should pray for the reign of the Prince of Peace.

*Isaiah 2:4; Matthew 5:9,38-48; 6:33; 26:52; Luke 22:36,38; Romans 12:18-19; 13:1-7; 14:19; Hebrews 12:14; James 4:1-2.*

## **XVII. Religious Liberty**

God alone is Lord of the conscience, and He has left it free from the doctrines and commandments of men which are contrary to His Word or not contained in it. Church and state should be separate. The state owes to every church protection and full freedom in the pursuit of its spiritual ends. In providing for such freedom no ecclesiastical group or denomination should be favored by the state more than others. Civil government being ordained of God, it is the duty of Christians to render loyal obedience thereto in all things not contrary to the revealed will of God. The church should not resort to the civil power to carry on its work. The gospel of Christ contemplates spiritual means alone for the pursuit of its ends. The state has no right to impose penalties for religious opinions of any kind. The state has no right to impose taxes for the support of any form of religion. A free church in a free state is the Christian ideal, and this implies the right of free and unhindered access to God on the part of all men, and the right to form and propagate opinions in the sphere of religion without interference by the civil power.

*Genesis 1:27; 2:7; Matthew 6:6-7,24; 16:26; 22:21; John 8:36; Acts 4:19-20; Romans 6:1-2; 13:1-7; Galatians 5:1,13; Philippians 3:20; 1 Timothy 2:1-2; James 4:12; 1 Peter 2:12-17; 3:11-17; 4:12-19.*

# APPENDIX I – THE BAPTIST FAITH AND MESSAGE 2000

## XVIII. The Family

God has ordained the family as the foundational institution of human society. It is composed of persons related to one another by marriage, blood, or adoption.

Marriage is the uniting of one man and one woman in covenant commitment for a lifetime. It is God's unique gift to reveal the union between Christ and His church and to provide for the man and the woman in marriage the framework for intimate companionship, the channel of sexual expression according to biblical standards, and the means for procreation of the human race.

The husband and wife are of equal worth before God, since both are created in God's image. The marriage relationship models the way God relates to His people. A husband is to love his wife as Christ loved the church. He has the God-given responsibility to provide for, to protect, and to lead his family. A wife is to submit herself graciously to the servant leadership of her husband even as the church willingly submits to the headship of Christ. She, being in the image of God as is her husband and thus equal to him, has the God-given responsibility to respect her husband and to serve as his helper in managing the household and nurturing the next generation.

Children, from the moment of conception, are a blessing and heritage from the Lord. Parents are to demonstrate to their children God's pattern for marriage. Parents are to teach their children spiritual and moral values and to lead them, through consistent lifestyle example and loving discipline, to make choices based on biblical truth. Children are to honor and obey their parents.

Genesis 1:26-28; 2:15-25; 3:1-20; Exodus 20:12; Deuteronomy 6:4-9; Joshua 24:15; 1 Samuel 1:26-28; Psalms 51:5; 78:1-8; 127; 128; 139:13-16; Proverbs 1:8; 5:15-20; 6:20-22; 12:4; 13:24; 14:1; 17:6; 18:22; 22:6,15; 23:13-14; 24:3; 29:15,17; 31:10-31; Ecclesiastes 4:9-12; 9:9; Malachi 2:14-16; Matthew 5:31-32; 18:2-5; 19:3-9; Mark 10:6-12; Romans 1:18-32; 1 Corinthians 7:1-16; Ephesians 5:21-33; 6:1-4; Colossians 3:18-21; 1 Timothy 5:8,14; 2 Timothy 1:3-5; Titus 2:3-5; Hebrews 13:4; 1 Peter 3:1-7.

## APPENDIX II – CHURCH COVENANT

Having been led, as we believe, by the Spirit of God to receive the Lord Jesus Christ as our Saviour;

And on the profession of our faith, having been baptized in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit,

We do now, in the presence of God, angels and this assembly, most solemnly and joyfully enter into covenant with one another, as one body in Christ.

We engage, therefore, by the aid of the Holy Spirit, to walk together in Christian love; to strive for the advancement of this church in knowledge, holiness, and comfort;

To promote its prosperity and spirituality; to sustain its worship, ordinances, discipline and doctrines;

To contribute cheerfully and regularly to the support of the ministry, the expenses of the church, the relief of the poor and the spread of the Gospel through all nations.

We also engage to maintain family and secret devotions; to religiously educate our children; to seek the salvation of our kindred and acquaintances;

To walk circumspectly in the world; to be just in our dealings, faithful in our engagements and exemplary in our deportment;

To avoid all tattling, backbiting, and excessive anger;

To abstain from the sale of, and use of destructive drugs or intoxicating drinks as a beverage; to shun pornography; to be zealous in our efforts to advance the kingdom of our Saviour.

We further engage to watch over one another in brotherly love;

To remember each other in prayer; to aid each other in sickness and distress; to cultivate Christian sympathy in feeling and Christian courtesy in speech;

To be slow to give or take offense, but always ready for reconciliation, and mindful of the rules of our Saviour to secure it without delay.

We moreover engage that when we remove from this place we will, as soon as possible, unite with some other church, where we can carry out the spirit of this covenant and the principles of God's Word.

# By-Laws

Revised: July 15, 2015



**FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH**  
504 W. MAIN STREET, MORRISTOWN

# **FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH MORRISTOWN — BY-LAWS**

## **ARTICLE I - GOVERNANCE OF THE CHURCH**

### **Section One**

The church year shall begin September 1 and end August 31. The financial year shall be the calendar year. (Note: the Stewardship Committee shall serve January through December along with the financial year).

### **Section Two**

Church Business Meetings shall observe the following order of business:

1. Reading of minutes
2. Report of Officers
3. Report of Committees
4. Unfinished Business
5. New Business
6. Adjournment

### **Section Three**

The church Business Conference shall be guided by the latest edition of Robert's Rules of Order, except in cases especially provided for in this Constitution and By-Laws.

## **ARTICLE II – ELECTIONS AND PROCEDURES**

### **Section One**

All church officers except members of committees, trustees, deacons, and salaried employees, shall be elected for a one-year term. All persons elected for a one year term of office may occupy that position for no more than four succeeding terms before he must take leave of at least one year's term.

### **Section Two**

The Nominating Committee consisting of six (6) members, will be elected to a rotating three (3) year term with two (2) new members being elected at the winter business meeting each year. This committee, including the chairperson, shall be recommended by the Church Council and elected by the church. This committee shall serve until a new committee is elected.

### **Section Three**

The Nominating Committee shall nominate all general church officers and vacancies and chairpersons for all church committees, except the Nominating Committee.

When brought to the church, the floor shall be open for nominations for all officers and committee members.

All nominations should be presented to the church on or before the summer business meeting.

# FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH MORRISTOWN — BY-LAWS

## Section Four

A pastor will be chosen and called by the church whenever a vacancy occurs.

To begin the process, a team consisting of the deacon officers and the Nominating Committee, with the deacon chairman presiding, shall enlist recommendations for a Pastor Search Team from the church body. After earnest prayer and consideration, this team shall then nominate a Pastor Search Team, consisting of not less than seven (7) members, which shall be brought to the church for election by secret written ballot. The Pastor Search Team shall bring only one man at a time to the church for consideration. His election shall take place at a meeting called for that purpose of which one week's public notice shall be given. Public notice shall be given by announcing the meeting at a Sunday morning worship service of the church.

Election of the pastor shall be by secret ballot, and an affirmative vote of eighty-five percent (85%) of those members present and casting ballots, not counting blanks or abstentions, are necessary to call a pastor.

The pastor shall have charge of the spiritual welfare and oversight of the church. He shall preside at all meetings of the church, except as hereinafter provided, and shall be an ex-officio member of all committees, teams and groups of the church.

## Section Five

In case of vacancies of other ministerial and professional staff such as Minister of Music, Minister of Education, etc, the Personnel Committee, giving the Pastor the opportunity to provide as much input as he chooses, would have the options of:

1. the Personnel Committee performing the search process themselves,
2. the Personnel Committee and other qualified and ministry specific individuals, of their choosing, perform the search process, or
3. the Personnel Committee forming an ad-hoc ministerial search team which may include some members of the Personnel Committee to do the search.

This committee or team, seeking input as led of God, giving the pastor the right to recommend potential staff members, would seek out God's person for such vacancy and would bring their recommendation to the church for election by secret written ballot.

Only one person at a time shall be brought to the church for consideration. His (her) election shall take place at a meeting called for that purpose of which at least one week's public notice shall be given. Public notice shall mean announcement to the church at a Sunday morning worship service of the church.

Election shall be by secret written ballot. An affirmative vote of eighty-five percent (85%) of those members present and casting ballots, not counting blanks or abstentions, are necessary to call a staff member.

The Personnel Committee shall be responsible for employing other employees such as secretaries, janitors, kitchen workers, daycare and nursery workers, etc. as specified by their duties and responsibilities in the Personnel Policies. The advice of other committees or persons supervising these employees may be sought by the Personnel Committee.

# FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH MORRISTOWN — BY-LAWS

## Section Six

The term of office of deacons shall be three (3) years on a rotating basis. A deacon who rotates off is ineligible for re-nomination until a year has expired.

There shall be thirty-six (36) deacons.

Election of deacons is to be handled as follows:

1. A nominating ballot is to be presented to the church on or about the second and third Sundays in July. On the nominating ballot, church members may nominate qualified men of the church to be deacons. Each member present may nominate up to as many names as there are deacons to be chosen.
2. Prior to being nominated, men will be given an opportunity to indicate if they do not want to be considered as a deacon.
3. A team appointed by the deacons will visit with qualified nominees and discuss the qualifications of a deacon and their willingness to serve.
4. A list of qualified, willing nominees, up to twice as many names as there are deacons to be chosen, will be made and submitted to the church.
5. The church will vote to elect deacons during the morning worship services on or about the second Sunday in September. Each member present may vote for their choices for the number of deacons to be chosen.
6. As soon as those selected with the highest number of votes have agreed to serve, the elected list of deacons will be presented to the church.
7. New deacons will assume the duties of a deacon in October.
8. On or about the first Sunday in October, the church will ordain as deacons any men elected to serve who have not been previously ordained.
9. In case of death, or removal, or incapacity to serve, the church may elect to fulfill the unexpired term in the manner prescribed.
10. It shall be pertinent for the deacons to recommend to the church active life-time membership for any deacon who by reason of age or infirmities shall, after honorable service, be no longer able to render active service.

## Section Seven

There shall be five (5) trustees to hold title of all property of the church and subject to the will of the church, represent the church in all legal matters where any process of law is required. The trustees shall be elected to a rotating five (5) year term with a trustee being elected every year. A trustee who rotates off is ineligible for re-nomination until a year has expired. The trustees are to act only as directed by a majority, or other percentage as required, of the church in a business meeting.

## Section Eight

Teams and team captains may be selected by the ministerial staff and function on an interim basis between Quarterly Business meetings, but the team captain and the team duties must be approved by the church at the next Quarterly Business Meeting.

Current teams and duties of teams are located in the Policies and Procedures Manual.

# FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH MORRISTOWN — BY-LAWS

Membership of some teams will fluctuate, but the current membership will be reported to the church at least annually. Types of teams include:

1. **Service Teams** which serve an active and ongoing ministry need in the church and will continue indefinitely as long as the ministry need is being accomplished,
2. **Special Project Teams** which meet to handle a specific objective and will disband after the objective is accomplished,
3. **Special Event Teams** which serve to accomplish a specific and short-term ministry need in the church and will disband after the ministry need is completed.

## ARTICLE III – QUALIFICATIONS AND DUTIES OF SPIRITUAL LEADERS

### Section One

Pastor and Ministerial Staff

#### Qualifications

1. 1 Timothy 3:1-7 NIV *“Here is a trustworthy saying: If anyone sets his heart on being an overseer, he desires a noble task. Now the overseer must be above reproach, the husband of but one wife, temperate, self-controlled, respectable, hospitable, able to teach, not given to drunkenness, not violent but gentle, not quarrelsome, not a lover of money. He must manage his own family well and see that his children obey him with proper respect. (If anyone does not know how to manage his own family, how can he take care of God's church?) He must not be a recent convert, or he may become conceited and fall under the same judgment as the devil. He must also have a good reputation with outsiders, so that he will not fall into disgrace and into the devil's trap.”*
2. Baptist Faith and Message as found in Appendix I of the Constitution.
3. Church Covenant as found in Appendix II of the Constitution.

### Section Two

Deacons

#### A. General Duties

In accordance with the meaning of the word and the practice of the New Testament that deacons are to be the servants of the church.

1. First, they are to be zealous to guard the unity of the Spirit within the church in the bonds of peace.
2. They shall serve as a council of advice and conference with the Pastor in all matters pertaining to the welfare and work of the church. With the Pastor they are to consider and formulate plans for the constant effort and progress of the church in all things pertaining to the saving of souls, the development of Christians, and the extension and growth of the kingdom of God.
3. By proper organization and method among themselves, they are to establish and maintain personal fraternal relations with, and inspiring oversight of, all the membership of the church. Especially are they to seek to know the physical needs and the moral and spiritual struggles of the brethren and sisters; and to serve the whole church in relieving, encouraging, and developing all who are in any such need.
4. In counsel with the Pastor and by such methods as the Holy Spirit may direct in accordance

# FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH MORRISTOWN — BY-LAWS

with the New Testament teachings, they are to have oversight of the discipline of the church in administering which they are to be guided always by the principles set forth in Matthew 18:15-17; I Corinthians 5: 9-13; I Thessalonians 5:12-14. The deacons shall be free to call upon any member of the church to aid in the discipline.

5. In case of absence or unavailability of the Pastor, subject to advice from and conference with him, they will provide pulpit supplies. In any period when the church is without a Pastor, unless the Church shall otherwise provide, the deacons will arrange for temporary ministry continuity and secure an Interim Pastor or pulpit supply.
6. In counsel with the Pastor, they shall administer the Lord's Supper in such a manner as is Biblical, fitting, practical, and in accordance with the wishes of the Pastor.
7. The deacon body may review and make recommendations to the church body regarding such matters as they deem advisable.

## B. Qualifications of Deacons

1. 1 Timothy 3:8-13 NIV *“Deacons , likewise, are to be men worthy of respect, sincere, not indulging in much wine, and not pursuing dishonest gain. They must keep hold of the deep truths of the faith with a clear conscience. They must first be tested; and then if there is nothing against them, let them serve as deacons. In the same way, their wives are to be women worthy of respect, not malicious talkers but temperate and trustworthy in everything. A deacon must be the husband of but one wife and must manage his children and his household well. Those who have served well gain an excellent standing and great assurance in their faith in Christ Jesus.*
2. Baptist Faith and Message as found in Appendix I of the Constitution.
3. Church Covenant as found in Appendix II of the Constitution.
4. Member of First Baptist for more than one year.
5. At least 18 years of age.

## C. Methods of Procedure

1. The deacons shall elect annually one of their members as chairman, one as vice chairman, and one as secretary. This election shall be held at the October meeting of the deacons each year.
2. The whole body of deacons shall be organized as a unit for the consideration of all larger problems and general policies and shall regularly meet each month. They may organize themselves into such groups as their wisdom may direct for efficiency in service.
3. They shall apportion the membership of the church among themselves or make plans whereby the entire membership may have the benefit of the oversight in Christ of their brethren.
4. Each deacon shall freely confer with the Pastor about all matters and cases of discipline which in his judgment would be more wisely and spiritually handled in private.

## D. Mission Statement

1. We, as a body of deacons, are resolved that the cause of Christ must predominate our ministry as deacons, to the church and the community. In other words, the Staff and the deacons are committed to reviving Christ's commission to us, to serve the Church and our community through Pastoral Ministry. Future deacons meetings will be a time of sharing the results of our Pastoral ministries with each other and celebrating the results of Christ's work through our lives.
2. We will train for our ministry focus as needed. We will fully support our staff and be obedient to the vision for our church that God has placed on their hearts. To God be the Glory.

# FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH MORRISTOWN — BY-LAWS

## E. Call To Action

We resolve that:

Whereas, we the deacons of the First Baptist Church realize that the Scriptures do not call us to be a board of directors of the Church, and

Whereas, we the deacons of the First Baptist Church realize that the Scriptures do not call us to be business managers of the Church.

Now, therefore, we resolve to serve the Church as Pastoral ministers, by:

1. Proclaiming the Gospel to the lost.
2. Reaching persons for Christ and church membership.
3. Teaching the Bible.
4. Training church members to perform the functions of the Church.
5. Ministering to the widows, widowers, and orphans.
6. Assuming the role of encouragers to care for a certain number of members.
7. Aiding, encouraging and protecting the pastor and staff.

## ARTICLE IV - STATEMENT ON MARRIAGE AND SEXUALITY

We believe that every person must be afforded compassion, love, kindness, respect and dignity. Hateful and harassing behavior or attitudes directed toward any individual are to be repudiated and are not in accord with Scripture or the doctrines of this church.

We believe that the term "marriage" has only one meaning and that is marriage sanctioned by God which joins one man and one woman in a single, exclusive union, as delineated in Scripture. We believe that God intends sexual intimacy to only occur between a man and a woman who are married to each other. We believe that God has commanded that no intimate sexual activity be engaged in outside of a marriage between a man and a woman.

We believe that any form of sexual immorality, such as adultery, fornication, homosexuality, bisexual conduct, bestiality, incest, pornography or any attempt to change one's sex, or disagreement with one's biological sex, is sinful and offensive to God.

We believe that in order to preserve the function and integrity of this church as the local Body of Christ, and to provide a biblical role model to the church members and the community, it is imperative that all members and prospective members, persons employed by the church in any capacity and non-members who serve as volunteers, must abide by and agree to this Statement on Marriage and Sexuality and conduct themselves accordingly; and that any wedding, funeral or any other event being held on any church property NOT include, display or in any other way openly or implicitly endorse or support any form of sexual immorality.

We believe that God offers redemption and restoration to all who confess and forsake their sin, seeking His mercy and forgiveness through Jesus Christ.

## ARTICLE IV – ADOPTION AND AMENDMENTS

### Section One

# **FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH MORRISTOWN — BY-LAWS**

These by-laws shall be considered adopted and in effect when two-thirds of the votes cast by members present at any business meeting of the church, not counting blanks or abstentions, shall vote in favor of the same, provided that the proposed by-laws shall be made available to the church and public notice of the vote shall be given to the church at least thirty (30) days prior to the time the vote is taken.

## **Section Two**

Any of these by-laws may be amended, altered or repealed by a two-thirds vote of the votes cast by members present at any business meeting of the church, not counting blanks or abstentions, provided that such amendment, alteration or repeal be given to the clerk in writing, that such proposed change shall be presented to the church at least thirty (30) days prior to the time the vote is taken, and that such change does not conflict with the church constitution. The presentation to the church may be by distribution at any regular church service.

## **Section Three**

All previous church actions, contrary to the provisions of these by-laws, are hereby rescinded and these by-laws supersede all previous versions of the by-laws.

# Officer & Committee Guide

Revised: July 20, 2007



**FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH**  
504 W. MAIN STREET, MORRISTOWN

# FBC MORRISTOWN — OFFICER AND COMMITTEE GUIDE

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### GENERAL INFORMATION

The membership, term of office, qualifications for committee members, organization and procedure, and duties of the chairperson of a committee are outlined and presented in this manual.

The duties, responsibilities and term of office for the Church Clerk, Church Council, and Treasurer are also presented.

Any church officer who fails to fulfill the same qualifications listed for committee members under section III below, may be asked to resign or be removed by the church.

The qualifications for committee members, the organization and procedure instructions, duties of the chairperson for general committees will usually apply to these individuals or committees.

#### I. MEMBERSHIP

- A. Committees shall be composed of multiples of three members including the chairperson.
- B. The enlargement or reduction of any committee shall be done in multiples of three as the church desires.

#### II. TERM OF OFFICE

- A. Committee members will serve three year terms, being elected on a rotating plan with one-third of the membership of each committee rotating off each year.
- B. No person may serve more than three years on any one committee until a period of a year has elapsed, except under special circumstances as approved by the church.
- C. Vacancies occurring during the year will be filled by the church upon recommendation from the Nominating Committee.

#### III. QUALIFICATIONS FOR COMMITTEE MEMBERS

- A. Each committee member shall be a sincere church member, willing to assume responsibilities of committee membership.
- B. Each committee member shall understand the responsibilities of the committee, the time involved, and the type of work to be done.
- C. Each committee member shall have a willingness to do creative, constructive, practical thinking; always keeping in mind the best decision for the whole church. Each member should participate in making the decisions.

# FBC MORRISTOWN — OFFICER AND COMMITTEE GUIDE

- D. Each committee member shall practice good communication, profit from the ideas of others, consider seriously all suggestions made by other members.
- E. Each committee member shall approach each meeting and task with an open mind.
- F. Each committee member shall stick to the major issues under discussion at the moment.
- G. Each committee member shall avoid personal barriers between himself or herself and other committee members.
- H. Each committee member shall have a desire to see the business and work carried on smoothly and harmoniously to the best advantage for the church and for all concerned.
- I. Each committee member shall have a willingness to devote the necessary time to the work of the committee.
- J. No person should serve on more than one committee at one time.
- K. Any committee member who flagrantly ignores these qualifications may be asked to resign or be removed by the church.

## IV. ORGANIZATION AND PROCEDURE

### A. Committee chairperson:

- 1. The chairperson will prepare an agenda for each meeting in coordination with the ministerial staff liaison and shall make the necessary plans for the meeting being careful to see that the agenda is followed.
- 2. The chairperson will see that the secretary gives proper notification of meetings.
- 3. The chairperson will gather together the necessary resource materials.
- 4. The chairperson will begin the meeting promptly on time, organize the committee for action, and avoid extended meetings.
- 5. The chairperson will clarify any points of misunderstanding as to the duties, procedure and desired results of the committee.
- 6. The chairperson will keep discussions to the point.
- 7. The chairperson will see that the secretary maintains full notes of discussions and prepares report for the church.
- 8. The chairperson will keep discussion democratic.
- 9. The chairperson will see that recommendations are clear and concise, yet with enough information to be understandable.

### B. Other committee officers:

- 1. Each committee shall elect a vice chairperson to preside in the absence of the chairperson.
- 2. Each committee shall elect a secretary whose responsibility it will be to notify all committee members of the meetings, and to record and retain for the church files proceedings of each meeting.

### C. Committee procedures:

- 1. Each committee will follow the latest edition of Robert's Rules of Order to conduct business. A quorum of over fifty percent (50%) of members will be required to conduct business. The chairperson shall not vote, except in case of a tie.
- 2. Each committee will meet on a regular plan in coordination with the chairperson, the staff liaison, and the schedules of the members.
- 3. Each committee shall be responsible for the planning and overseeing of the work assigned to it through this manual, or requested by the Church, Pastor, Deacons or Ministerial Staff.
- 4. Each committee shall clear in advance through the Stewardship Committee:
  - a. The expenditure of money over and above the amount budgeted,
  - b. The expenditure of money for major projects other than those budgeted,
  - c. All expenditures in times of church financial crisis or shortfall.
- 5. Each committee will report to the church at the Quarterly Business Meeting as necessary.

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## **CHURCH CLERK**

The Church Clerk shall be elected annually at or before the summer business meeting upon nomination by the Nominating Committee. The Church Clerk is charged with maintaining accurate records of the Church.

The specific duties and responsibilities of the Church Clerk shall consist of the following:

1. Attend church business meetings regularly.
2. Keep a copy of the minutes and actions of the church during the regular and special church business meetings.
3. Give organized minutes to church office, promptly after each business meeting. Organized minutes will be kept safeguarded at all times.
4. Check with the church office to see that church letters on new members are secured from previous church affiliation.
5. Check with the church office to see that upon church approval, church letters are sent to other Baptist churches as requested.
6. Check with the church office to see that an up-to-date church roll is kept with dates of admission or baptism and dismissal or death.
7. Serve as the Secretary of the incorporated body, First Baptist Church of Morristown, Tennessee, Incorporated.
8. Serve as the Secretary of the Trustees, in their capacity as the Board of Directors for Jarnagin Cemetery, to sign checks as necessary.

## **CHURCH COUNCIL**

The Church Council shall be composed of the officers as listed in Article IV, Section One of the church Constitution.

The Church Council shall meet as often as needed and as desired and directed by the Pastor. The committee shall act in an advisory capacity only, making any pertinent recommendations to the Church.

The specific duties and responsibilities of the Church Council shall consist of the following:

1. Enlist and nominate to the church at a church business meeting, persons to fill all vacancies that occur in the Nominating Committee.
2. Nominate to the church at the winter business meeting a qualified and dedicated Chairperson for the Nominating Committee, who they believe will fulfill the necessary responsibilities of Chairperson for the coming year.
3. Be available to meet, as directed and for such purposes as directed by the Pastor.
4. Shall periodically review the governing documents of the church and shall make such recommendations to the church that are prudent and expedient in accomplishing the mission of the church.

## **MISSIONS COMMITTEE**

The purpose of the Missions Committee shall be to seek and instill a missionary spirit within the church membership, and to lead in carrying out the mission projects.

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In addition to the six (6) regular committee members, the W.M.U. Director and any Men's Ministry or Women's Ministry Mission Directors may serve as ex-officio members.

Specific duties and responsibilities are as follows:

1. Coordinate the ongoing missions action of the church along the lines of Acts 1:8, *"you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth."*
2. Plan and/or approve one-time trips and short-term and long-term partnerships with various mission opportunities for service, both local, statewide, national, and international, as the need arises and volunteers are available.
3. Determine awards of available mission scholarship funds.
4. Keep the church fully informed about all planned and completed mission projects.
5. Recommend to the Stewardship Committee each year the amount of money needed for any of these projects.

## **NOMINATING COMMITTEE**

The purpose of the Nominating Committee is to discover, interview, enlist and nominate to the Church for election such persons who are suitable to fill and accept responsible positions as general church officers (except salaried employees), committee vacancies and committee chairpersons.

Specific duties and responsibilities of this Committee are as follows:

1. Enlist general church officers in accordance with church guidelines.
2. Enlist appropriately qualified committee members to fill all vacancies that occur.
3. Select a qualified and dedicated Chairperson for each committee, who they believe will fulfill the necessary responsibilities of Chairperson for the coming year.
4. Provide the ministerial staff any help requested in enlisting workers for their individual ministry area.
5. Submit nominations to the church, no later than the summer business meeting, for officers and committees for the new church year and at any business meeting throughout the year for any vacancies.
6. Carry out the stated duties regarding officers or committee members who fail to fulfill their duties or qualifications under "General Information" Paragraph three and Section III, Letter K in this document.

## **PERSONNEL COMMITTEE**

The Personnel Committee administrates the policies of the church in matters relating to personnel administration and management.

The Personnel Committee initiates and gets church approval of policies and procedures in such areas as staff organization, employment practices and personnel services.

It may assist, when called upon, in relieving the Pastor of administrative duties and details. The members of the Personnel Committee do not usurp the supervisory and administrative responsibilities of the Pastor or any staff person.

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Specific duties and responsibilities shall be as follows:

A. Fill open positions:

1. Seek out God's person to fill vacancies of ministerial and professional staff such as Minister of Music, Minister of Education, etc.,. The Personnel Committee, giving the Pastor the opportunity to provide as much input as he chooses, would have the options of:
  - a. Performing the search process themselves,
  - b. Performing the search process with other qualified and ministry specific individuals of their choosing, or
  - c. Forming an ad-hoc ministerial search team which may include some members of the Personnel Committee to do the search.

This Committee or team, seeking input as led of God, giving the pastor the right to recommend potential staff members, would seek out God's person for such vacancy and would bring their recommendation to the church for election by secret written ballot.

2. Assisting the Pastor and Church Administrator, as needed, in recruiting, interviewing and placement for openings in support staff positions.

B. Work with the Pastor and Church Administrator to deal with problems within the staff, with which they request assistance.

1. Assist with policies and implementation of discipline of paid church staff.
2. Serve as a final arbiter, if necessary, in matters of discipline of paid church staff.
3. Available to hear perceived unresolved grievances or accusations between staff members.
4. Available to hear and deal appropriately with any problems or grievances concerning the Pastor (always giving extreme latitude for the Biblical mandate of the Pastor as the undershepherd of the church) or Church Administrator.
5. Work with the Pastor and/or Church Administrator (seeking legal counsel if advisable) in the dismissal of any staff member, who without legitimate reason for their action(s), has either
  - a. Exhausted a plan of discipline with no change in action, or
  - b. Committed an action, which it is determined, is grounds for immediate dismissal.
6. Design and implement an appropriate severance plan or package.

C. Act as an encouragement to the staff.

1. Stand up for and protect the staff from unwarranted attacks.
2. Work with staff members to make appropriate amends when mistakes are made which cause disunity in the church body.
3. Provide and make sure that staff members take appropriate advantage of paid time off work (vacations, sick time, conferences, etc.)
4. Recognize paid staff members for significant anniversaries and accomplishments, as determined by the committee.

D. Review staff organization with the Church Administrator.

1. Identify staff duties of the Ministerial, Support, Kitchen, Preschool, and Custodial staff.
2. See that the total work load of each function is divided into manageable and logical parts (does not include tasks that church members can and should perform).
3. Keep the organizational functions flexible and as simple as possible.
4. Prepare an organizational chart.

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- E. Review Employment Practices with the Church Administrator.
  - 1. Prepare written job descriptions.
  - 2. Set up daily and weekly work hour schedules.
  - 3. Set up salary program.
  - 4. Determine employee services.
  - 5. Provide for future personnel expansion.
  - 6. Establish termination policy.
  
- F. Set salary policy:
  - 1. Survey the salaries presently provided for staff workers and compare to staff members of other churches.
  - 2. Rate the jobs based on the written job descriptions.
  - 3. Determine starting and maximum salary, step increases, and salary review dates.
  - 4. Determine factors for employee raises including
    - a. Results from a regular performance evaluation for all paid church staff
    - b. Seniority
    - c. Cost of Living
  
- G. Set employee benefits and services:
  - 1. Survey the benefits presently provided for staff workers and compare to staff members of other churches.
  - 2. Determine benefits for staff workers, which may include the following:
    - a. Vacations
    - b. Holidays
    - c. Hospitalization
    - d. Life Insurance
    - e. Retirement Pension
    - f. Sick Leave
    - g. Paid Moving Expenses
    - h. Housing Allowance
    - i. Car Expense
    - j. Time allotments for revivals, conventions, conferences, etc.
    - k. Help in locating housing for new employee
    - l. Help in arranging credit at a local source
    - m. Help in arranging medical service
    - n. Etc.
  - 3. Prepare an analysis of the cost of each benefit.
  - 4. Prepare a clear and complete statement of each item to be included in overall benefit plan.
  
- H. Suggest to the Stewardship Committee each year the amount of money necessary to accomplish the foregoing functions.

## **PROPERTIES COMMITTEE**

The purpose of the Properties Committee shall be to supervise maintenance, repairing, purchasing, etc. (as approved by the church in the annual church budget) of all church properties with the input and advice of the Church Administrator and Director of Properties.

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Due to the high maintenance cost of our facility, there should be close communication and cooperation with the Stewardship Committee before any major expenditures are approved, even if budgeted, to facilitate cash flow.

Specific duties and responsibilities shall be as follows:

1. Plan, order and supervise the maintenance and decoration of all church properties, buildings, grounds, furniture and equipment, including the Mission Home, Prophet's Chamber and Harrell Park.
2. Make purchases with the budgetary limitations in accordance with the established policies of the church.
3. Make purchases and award contracts on competitive bids as often as seems feasible.
4. Each member of the committee shall be given an area of the church properties to inspect regularly and make recommendations as to their care, cleaning, maintenance or repair.
5. Establish and administer policies concerning the use of church buildings, equipment, and furniture.
6. Study fire hazards on the church properties and provide, inspect and maintain fire prevention equipment and measures.
7. Be responsible for determining and maintaining an adequate property insurance program.
8. Inform the church as to any major repairs that will be forthcoming and to the progress it is making from time to time.
9. Suggest to the Stewardship Committee each year the amount of money necessary to accomplish the foregoing functions.

## **STEWARDSHIP COMMITTEE**

The purpose of the Stewardship Committee is three-fold:

1. Provide that the proper emphasis on stewardship promotion is carried out in the church,
2. Be responsible for effective budget planning,
3. Be responsible for the church's budget administration.

Specific duties and responsibilities shall be as follows:

1. Provide that proper emphasis on stewardship promotion is carried out in the church throughout the year.
  - a. Develop and recommend to the Church Council an overall plan for sharing stewardship information.
  - b. Provide information on budget and giving to appropriate church leaders.
  - c. Provide information on the Cooperative Program to appropriate church leaders.
  - d. Provide information on Christian wills and trusts to appropriate church leaders.
2. Be responsible for effective budget planning.
  - a. Study history of giving and potential giving of the church.
  - b. Analyze current budget strengths and weaknesses.
  - c. Evaluate budget requests.
  - d. Direct annual budget preparation.
  - e. Present budget to church for adoption.

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3. Be responsible for the church's budget administration.
  - a. Develop and administer proper plan for purchasing church materials and equipment.
  - b. Review expenditures periodically in terms of budget allocations.
  - c. Review requests for special offerings.
4. Be responsible for administration of monies outside the budget.
5. Establish and periodically review a set of Financial Procedures to include internal controls, and policies for designated giving and designated funds. These Financial Procedures are part of the Policies and Procedures Manual.

## **TREASURER**

The Treasurer will be elected annually. The Treasurer will be responsible to:

1. Examine supporting data for checks.
2. Sign checks as required.
3. Review the bank statement reconciliations at the end of each month with the Financial Secretary.
4. Review all financial reports.
5. Make inquiries of any items which could be in error.
6. Report any discrepancy, variation, irregularity or concern to both the Stewardship Committee Chairperson and the Church Administrator for review and necessary action.
7. Keep all financial information and other matters that the person may become privy to, strictly confidential.

## **TRUSTEES**

There shall be five (5) trustees. The duties of the trustees shall be as follows:

1. Serve as the Board of Directors for the legal corporation, First Baptist Church of Morristown, Tennessee, Incorporated and in such capacity:
  - a. Hold title of all property of the church.
  - b. Represent the church in all legal matters where any process of law is required.
  - c. Be a signatory and provide safekeeping for the church lockbox at the bank, doing a periodic inventory of its contents.
  - d. Sign any legal documents required.
  - e. Be available, even after rotating off as a trustee, to update matters which were part of their duties as a serving trustee.
  - f. Act only as directed by a majority, or other required percentage, of the church in a business meeting.
2. Serve as the Board of Directors for Jarnagin Cemetery and in such capacity act as dictated under the By-Laws of Jarnagin Cemetery.