

BY-LAWS OF THE FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH

SAN MARCOS, TEXAS

MEMBERSHIP

Section 1. General

This is a sovereign and democratic Baptist Church under the Lordship of Jesus Christ. The membership retains unto itself the right of exclusive self-government in all phases of spiritual and temporal life.

The membership reserves the exclusive right to determine who shall be members of the Church and the conditions of such membership.

Section 2. Candidacy

Any person may offer himself as a candidate for membership in this church in one of the following ways:

1. By profession of faith.
2. By promise of letter from another Baptist Church.
3. By a statement of prior conversion experience.
4. Reinstatement in the event a person has been excluded from active membership for cause deemed sufficient by the Church, provided the person gives evidence to the Church of his repentance or change in conditions necessary for active membership.

Should there be any dissent as to any candidate, such dissent shall be referred to the Pastor and the Deacons for investigation and the making of a recommendation to the Church within thirty (30) days. A majority vote of those members present shall be required to elect such candidates to membership.

Section 3. Duties

Members are expected to be faithful in all duties essential to the Biblical standard of the Christian life which include: attending the services of the Church, giving regularly for its support and causes, and sharing in its organized work.

Section 4. Rights

Each resident member shall have the right to expression concerning the business of the Church and the right to vote. Only resident members present for the Church Conference shall be allowed to vote.

Section 5. Membership Status

1. Resident – living within the geographic vicinity of San Marcos, Texas
2. Non-resident – living outside the geographic vicinity of San Marcos, Texas
3. Inactive – making no known contact with this fellowship for a period of three (3) years

Section 6. Termination of Membership

Membership shall be terminated in the following ways:

1. Death
2. Transfer to another Baptist Church
3. Exclusion by action of this church*
4. Affiliation with a church of another faith or denomination
5. By request

* Should a member become an offence to the Church and its good name by reason of immoral or unchristian conduct, by persistent breach of his covenant vows, or non-support of the Church, the Church may terminate membership by majority vote, but only after due notice and hearing, and after faithful efforts have been made to bring such a member to repentance and amendment.

Section 7. Restoration

Any person whose membership has been terminated may be restored by majority vote of the Church.

CHURCH LEADERSHIP

MINISTERIAL STAFF

Section 1. Pastor

The Pastor is responsible for leading the Church in functioning as a New Testament church. The Pastor will lead the congregation, the organizations, and the church staff in performing their tasks. The Pastor is the leader of worship, proclamation, education, pastoral ministries, and staff administration. The pastor shall be the church moderator and shall be an ex-officio member of all committees of the Church.

When the Church shall be without a pastor, a Pastor Search Committee composed of nine (9) members shall be formed with no two (2) members of the committee being from the same family. Each member of the Church shall be permitted to submit in writing to the Church up to nine (9) nominees for the Pastor Search Committee. The Church will elect nine (9) Pastor Search Committee members by secret ballot from the thirty (30) nominees receiving the most votes. The Pastor Search Committee shall elect its own chairman.

Prior to an invitation in view of a call being extended to a prospective pastor, the Pastor Search Committee shall consult with the Personnel and Stewardship Committees to reach consensus on issues such as salary, vacations, sick leave, revivals, policy matters, and other pertinent matters. The Pastor Search Committee next shall present its recommendations to the Deacons for discussion and review. The Pastor Search Committee will then present its recommendations at a Church Conference for adoption.

A pastor may be called at any regular or special business meeting provided that notice has been given from the pulpit on the preceding Lord's Day. The vote to call must be 75% of those present and voting.

A recommendation to discharge a pastor shall be presented to the church by the deacon body the preceding Lord's Day prior to the action of the church. Motion to discharge a pastor shall carry by a majority vote of the members present and voting.

Section 2. Ministerial Staff

The Church shall call and employ such ministerial staff members as the Church shall need. This shall be done in accordance with the Personnel Policy adopted by the Church on May 18, 2005.

Section 3 Support Staff

The Church shall employ such support staff members as the Church shall need. This shall be done in accordance with the Personnel Policy adopted by the Church on May 18, 2005.

Section 4. Deacons

Duties of the Deacons

1. They are to be zealous to guard the unity of the Church and the spiritual fellowship within the Church.
2. They are to advise the Pastor in all matters pertaining to the welfare of the Church.
3. They are to know the physical, moral, and spiritual needs of the Church membership and to serve the whole Church in relieving, encouraging and helping all who are in need.
4. They are to serve as overseers of the Church in the absence of the Pastor.
5. They shall provide the first step in due process in discipline matters concerning church members and in the dismissal of a pastor.

The number of deacons shall be at the discretion of the Church. The Church may elect to Deacon Emeritus any deacon who by reason of age or infirmities is no longer able to render active service.

The Church elected Deacon Selection Committee will seek out and recommend to the Church for ordination those members whom they deem eligible and willing to serve. Any member of the Church shall have the right to recommend anyone to the committee for consideration. Such recommendation may be made orally or in writing.

A prospective deacon for ordination shall be a member of the Church who has attained the age of twenty-four (24) and who has been a member of this church for at least one (1) year and shall possess the qualifications as set forth in Acts 6:3 and I Timothy 3:8-12 and shall agree to support the entire program of the Church, including the principle of Christian stewardship, which is tithing of his/her income.

A new member who has been ordained by a church of like faith and order shall be invited into the full fellowship of the deacon body upon being received into the church membership. The recommendation will be brought to the Church for approval.

The active Deacons shall elect from their membership a chairman, a secretary, and other officers they deem necessary, who shall perform such duties as may be required of them.

These officers shall hold their office for no more than two (2) consecutive one year terms.

The regular meeting date shall be established at the discretion of the Deacons. A majority of the active Deacons present shall constitute a quorum to transact business. Special meetings of the Deacons may be called by the Pastor or chairman.

Section 5. Clerk

The Church Clerk will be nominated by the Committee on Committees and voted on by the Church. This person will usually be the Pastor's Secretary or another of the secretaries.

Section 6. Trustees

The Trustees must be members of the Church and in good standing. Trustees shall be knowledgeable of legal matters and have a good understanding of general business procedure.

The Trustees shall consist of six (6) members. Members shall be nominated yearly by the Committee on Committees and voted on by the Church. There shall be no term limitations.

They act as directed by the Church in legal transactions involving the disposition, acquisition, mortgage, purchase, and rental of property. At least four (4) Trustees must sign all documents of legal transaction.

CHURCH POLICY

Section 1. Relationships

The government of this church is vested in the body of believers who compose it. It is subject to the control of no other ecclesiastical body, but it recognizes and sustains the obligations of mutual counsel operation which are common among Baptist churches. The Church may vote to cooperate and associate with other Baptist organizations at the local, regional, state, national, or international level as is deemed appropriate. This will require a majority vote at Church Conference.

Section 2. Doctrine

The Church receives the Scripture as its authority in matters of faith and practices. Its understanding of Christian truth as contained therein is in essential accord with traditional Baptist beliefs.

Section 3. Property Owner

This Church may receive, or may decline to receive, by gift, purchase, or devise all kinds of real and personal property and may hold, use and convey the same for the good of the Church or to foster any enterprise the Church may direct.

Section 4. Contracts

This corporation may make contracts for the use and purpose of the Church and may sell and convey any or all of its property. It may mortgage any or all of its property, both real and personal, whenever it shall be deemed in the interest of the Church to do so, but no sale or mortgage of the property of the corporation shall be made unless authorized by the action of the Church in regular or called Church Conference. All transfers of title so authorized shall be made by the Trustees of the Corporation and attested to by the Secretary of the Corporation.

Section 5. Property Use

Use of church property shall be governed by rules and regulations as adopted and approved by the Church.

Section 6. Purpose and Assets and Dissolution

This organization is organized and shall be operated for the purpose of engaging in religious worship and promoting the spiritual development and wellbeing of individuals. Its assets are pledged for use in performing its religious functions. On discontinuation of this organization by dissolution or otherwise, its assets are to be transferred to a religious or charitable organization that is qualified as an exempt organization under Section 501(c)(3), Internal Revenue Code of 1954, as amended.

PROGRAM ORGANIZATIONS

Section 1. General

All organizations of the Church shall be under church control, all leadership being elected by the Church and reporting regularly to the Church. It is understood that the Pastor is an ex-officio officer of all the organizations named, and his leadership is to be recognized in them.

Section 2. Sunday School

There shall be a Sunday School conducted under the guidance of persons who are members of the Church.

The tasks of the Sunday School shall be to teach the Biblical revelation; lead in reaching all prospects for the Church; lead all church members to worship, witness, learn, and minister daily; provide and interpret information regarding the work of the Church and denomination.

Section 3. Christian Discipleship

There shall be a discipleship ministry which shall serve as the educational ministry of the church. The discipleship ministry shall be conducted under the guidance of the Pastor assisted by the ministerial staff and other volunteer teachers from the membership.

The tasks of the discipleship ministry shall be to teach systematic theology, Christian history, Christian ethics, church polity, and organization; give orientation to new church members; train all members to worship, witness, learn, and minister daily; train teachers for the Church and the denomination; discover, recruit, and train potential leaders; provide for specialized training; provide organization and leadership for special projects of the Church; provide and interpret information regarding the work of the Church and the denomination.

Section 4. Church Missions

The Church has a long history of supporting and participating in missions and we will continue to be active in missions in any way that is appropriate. The church mission organizations will be conducted under the leadership of the Missions Committee.

Section 5. Church Music Program

There shall be a church music program under the leadership of the Minister of Music. Such officers and/or organization shall be included as needed. The music tasks shall be to teach music and hymnology, provide music and musicians for congregational worship and the organizations of the Church, lead persons to participate in hymn singing, train persons to lead, sing, and play music, provide organization and leadership for special projects for the Church, and provide and interpret information regarding the work of the Church and the denomination.

CHURCH MEETINGS

Section 1. Worship Service

The Church shall meet regularly each Sunday morning for praying, preaching, instructing, evangelizing, and for the worship of Almighty God, and on other times as appropriate. These meetings will be open for the entire membership of the Church and for all people and shall be conducted under the direction of the Pastor.

Section 2. Regular Church Conference

Regular Church Conference shall be held as is appropriate and necessary to conduct the business of the Church.

Section 3. Notice of Called Church Conference

Notice of all specially-called Church Conferences shall be given by announcement one week prior to the meeting.

Section 4. Quorum

A quorum consists of those who attend the Church Conference, provided it is a stated meeting or one that has been properly called.

Section 5. Parliamentary Rules

Robert's Rules of Order, Revised is the authority for parliamentary rules of procedure for all Church Conferences of the Church.

Section 6. Fiscal Year

The fiscal year of the Church shall be January 1 through December 31.

ORDINANCES

Section 1. Baptism

Believer's baptism is encouraged for all members, but is not a prerequisite for membership. Believer's baptism is celebrated as an act of worship as is the celebration of The Lord's Supper/ Communion. Baptism and Communion are symbolic expressions of one's faith which are open to all believers and followers of Jesus Christ.

1. Baptism shall be by immersion in water at a public gathering and by the authority of the membership of The First Baptist Church of San Marcos.
2. Baptism shall be administered by the pastor or whomever the Pastor shall authorize.

Section 2. The Lord's Supper

The Lord's Supper is a symbolic act of obedience whereby Christians, through taking of the bread and fruit of the vine, commemorate the death of Jesus Christ and anticipate His second coming and in an appropriate manner as often as the Church may desire.

STANDING COMMITTEES

Each committee is to have a maximum number of members. The members are to serve a maximum of (3) consecutive years, with 1/3rd rotating off each year. The committees have the responsibilities of developing policies and programs in their specific area of church life and recommending these to the Church at Church Conference for approval. When approved, they will facilitate these and report results to the Church when appropriate.

Committee on Committees (6) Members

The Committee on Committees is responsible to the Church nominating the staff for all regular and special church committee positions that are filled by volunteers.

Standing committees shall be reviewed annually and added or deleted as needed.

Children's Committee (6) Members

The Children's Committee is responsible for acting as advisor to the Children's Minister and to assist in planning and assisting with the children's activities.

Kitchen Committee (6) Members

The Kitchen Committee is responsible to the Church for maintaining and supervising all church food services and equipment.

Insurance Committee (6) Members

The Insurance Committee is responsible to the Church for reviewing, coordinating, and evaluating all the necessary insurance coverage for the Church, and bringing to the Church for approval any recommended changes in policies or coverage.

Missions Committee (9) Members

The Missions Committee is responsible to the Church for seeking to discover possibilities for missions projects, sharing findings with church program organizations, and serving the Church in establishing and conducting such mission projects as may be assigned to it. The Missions Committee shall also have general oversight of the Knispel Fund for international missions.

Personnel Committee
(6) Members

The Personnel Committee is responsible to the Church for providing assistance in matters related to employed personnel administration. Its work includes such areas as staff needs, employment, salaries, benefits, and personnel services. Though the work of the committee concerns practical administrative details, the committee should operate in the framework of Christian understanding and devotion.

Properties/Building Committee
(6) Members

The Properties/Building Committee is responsible to the Church for providing assistance in matters related to buildings administration. Its work includes such areas as maintaining all church buildings for ready use; recommending policies regarding use of buildings; maintaining personnel and the assignment of responsibility to appropriate personnel.

Properties/Grounds Committee
(6) Members

The Properties/Grounds Committee is responsible to the Church for providing assistance in matters related to grounds administration. Its work includes such areas as maintaining all church grounds for ready use; recommending policies regarding use of grounds; maintaining personnel and the assignment of responsibility to appropriate personnel.

Safety Committee
(6) Members

The Safety Committee will have the responsibility to work with the church staff to create policies, recruit and train volunteers, and recommend procedures and personnel to the church that will promote safety in our facility and among our congregation.

Stewardship Committee
(6) Members

The Stewardship Committee is responsible to the Church for developing, recommending, and promoting an overall stewardship information plan and administering the gifts of church members using sound principles of financial management.

Transportation Committee
(3) Members

The Transportation Committee is responsible to the Church for making policies regarding the safe operation of all church owned or rented transportation vehicles and for making recommendations to the Church as to the transportation needs.

Youth Committee
(6) Members

The Youth Committee is responsible for acting as an advisor to the Youth Minister and to assist in planning and implementing youth activities.

SERVICE GROUPS

Service Groups contain members who perform duties in a specific area. They are not limited in number. They may be either temporary or long term. They do not make policies or make recommendations to the Church.

Baptism Service Group

The Baptism Service Group is responsible to the Church for assisting the Pastor in preparing for baptism. The service group is responsible for preparing the candidates and the baptistry for the ordinance.

Technology (Audio/Video) Service Group

The purpose of the Technology Service Group is to support the use of audio and video in the services, programs, and ministries of the Church. This will include, but not be limited to, regular worship services and special seasonal programs. The service group is also responsible for operating and overseeing the use of church technology equipment.

Condolence Service Group

The Condolence Service Group is responsible to the Church for coordinating the serving of a meal during time of bereavement within the church family.

Lord's Supper Service Group

The Lord's Supper Service Group is responsible to the Church for preparing the elements and the equipment for the observance of The Lord's Supper. The committee helps to make the memorial service an expression of true worship. It does the preparatory and maintenance work needed to observe this memorial to the Savior, and it prepares the elements for worship on a schedule approved by the Church.

OTHER GROUPS

The Church may, as needed, constitute other groups for specific tasks. These shall be temporary in nature and may be called committees, task forces, search committees, or other descriptive names. These shall be elected at a church conference.

POLICIES

Written policies shall be developed and kept in the church office. Policies for: Personnel, Children's Ministry, Mothers Day Out, weddings, lending of church equipment, and use of church facilities are established and regularly updated.

Written policies establishing standing church committees and program councils shall be developed and reviewed annually.

DISTRIBUTION

One copy of this Constitution, By-Laws, and Policies shall be kept in the Church Clerk's current record book, one copy shall be preserved in the Church's safe deposit box, and additional copies shall be made available to the church membership.

AMENDMENT

These By-Laws may be amended in whole or in part by a majority of the members present and voting at any regular Church Conference, provided notice and explanation of the proposed change shall be given at the previous regular Church Conference. This will be limited to (1) time each calendar year.

These By-Laws make void any previous action of the Church if such action is not in agreement with them.

ADOPTED BY ACTION OF THE FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH OF SAN MARCOS, TEXAS ON THIS

15th DAY OF JANUARY, 2012

Moderator

Clerk

