


First Baptist Church of Sunrise Beach  
Constitution & Bylaws



Revised – February 2024  
Current

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# CONSTITUTION

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## *PREAMBLE*

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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 the Southern Baptist faith, and 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**

This body will be known as the First Baptist Church of Sunrise Beach, Missouri, and herein known as the same or this "church."

## **ARTICLE II: PURPOSE**

The purpose of this body will be to present the Gospel of Jesus Christ to the world through the maturing Christ-like conduct and faithful witness of its members. A program of education and worship consistent with the Holy Scriptures will be followed under the leadership of the Holy Spirit to enable the members to accomplish this purpose, in keeping with the beliefs of the Missouri Baptist Convention and the Southern Baptist Convention.

## **ARTICLE III: STATEMENT OF FAITH**

The Holy Bible is the inspired word of God and is the basis for any statement: of faith. The church subscribes to the doctrinal statement of "The Baptist Faith and Message" as adopted by the Southern Baptist Convention,-2000. We voluntarily band ourselves together as a body of baptized believers in Jesus Christ, personally committed to sharing the good news of salvation to lost mankind. The ordinances of the church are scriptural baptism by immersion and the Lord's Supper.

## **ARTICLE IV: GOVERNMENT**

This church shall be governed by and with the consent of its active members, each of whom shall have equal right as to voices and vote, without preference one over another.

## **ARTICLE V: AMENDMENTS**

Proposed amendment(s) to this constitution shall be presented to the Constitution Committee by active church member or a church committee. Following a 30-day review period, the Constitution Committee shall furnish a written copy of the proposed amendment(s) to the church at the next regular business meeting.

A six-month reflection period begins after the proposed amendment(s) are presented to the church. The purpose of the reflection period is to allow church members time to review the proposed amendments(s) and pray to help them make an appropriate decision on the proposed amendment(s).

Following the six-month reflection period, a vote on the proposed amendment(s) shall occur at a business meeting of the church provided that public notices, consisting of reading the proposed amendment(s) and the designated time of voting shall have been given on two consecutive Sundays prior to the voting date.

Proposed amendment(s) shall be approved by a two-thirds vote of the active church members present and voting. Upon approval, the proposed amendment(s) shall be effective immediately.

Disclaimer: In the event of major, critical theological changes by the Southern Baptist Convention, the review period for the amendment of the constitution may be adjusted.

# BYLAWS

## ARTICLE I: MEMBERSHIP

### SECTION 1: QUALIFICATIONS

Any person professing faith in the Lord Jesus Christ giving evidence of having been born of the Spirit and having adopted the views of faith and practices held by this church, may be received for membership following:

1. An interview with the pastor and/or deacon.
2. A majority vote of active members at any of the regular meetings for worship.
3. Specifically, members may be received as follows:
  - a. On profession of faith in Christ and acknowledgment of His Lordship by baptism in this church.
  - b. By letter of recommendation from another church of like faith and order.
  - c. By statement of having received salvation and been baptized into a church of like faith and order.
  - d. Persons coming from churches that are not in alignment with the Southern Baptist Convention, who give evidence of Christian experience and accept the Articles of Faith of this church, and having been fully immersed in baptism after their salvation may be received into membership. Those who have not been fully immersed in baptism can be received as members once fully immersed in baptism.

### SECTION 2: DEFINITION

1. Active Member: One who attends a minimum of two (2) Sundays per month for six consecutive months. Seasonal residents of the area are those that reside approximately six months or more in the lake area, and who abide by the two Sundays per month for full time resident members while residing in the lake area. A home bound member is considered an active member if they remain in contact with the Pastor and church events.
2. Membership Roll: A membership roll shall be reviewed at the church council meeting. Members not meeting the definition in Section 2(1) will be placed on an inactive roll. Inactive members have no voting privileges and cannot bring proposals/amendments to the church. Inactive members returning to the definition in Section 2(1) are returned to the active roll.

### SECTION 3: DUTIES

In accordance with Biblical commands, members of this church shall commit to a Christian lifestyle consistent with the beliefs and practices of the church. Such practices include faithfulness in all duties essential to the Christian life, regular attendance at services of the church, and support in its organized works. Each member commits to recognizing the pastor's authority in the spiritual affairs of the church, demonstrating a Christian love for all members of the church, and supporting the church in prayer, financial means and other offerings as the Lord enables.

### SECTION 4: PRIVILEGES

Voting rights on church business are granted to active members aged 18 years and older. Should a vote by ballot be conducted, there is no proxy voting (delegating of a voting privilege from one active member to another). This includes seasonal members.

## **SECTION 5: TRANSFER/TERMINATION**

Letters of transfer may be granted to any church of like faith and order. When letters are granted, membership in this church terminates.

When a member of this church joins a church of different faith and order, membership in this church terminates.

## **ARTICLE II: OFFICERS**

### **SECTION 1: LIST OF ELECTED OFFICERS**

1. Pastor
2. Deacons
3. Trustees
4. Clerk/Assistant Clerk
5. Treasurer/Assistant Treasurer
6. Standing Committee Chairpersons
7. Others: The church may elect other officers and assistants as the need arises and shall prescribe their duties and the conditions of their tenure and specify the official board or standing committee to whom they shall be responsible.

### **SECTION 2: OFFICER DUTIES**

1. PASTOR  
It shall be the duty of the pastor to preach at the appointed hours of worship on Sundays; to administer the ordinances as taught in the scriptures, to lead in regular mid-week meetings and to have general oversight of the spiritual welfare of the membership of the church. He shall lead in a visitation program; he shall comfort the sorrowing; assist the distressed and give counsel to those who need it. He shall give the hand of fellowship to those who have been received. He shall serve as ex-officio member of all standing committees and boards of the church, but without power to vote, except to break a tie. Pastor shall act as moderator of all business sessions of the church; in the absence of Pastor or if Pastor abstains from being the moderator, the chairman of deacons shall fill this role.
2. DEACONS  
The men elected to serve as deacons shall meet the scriptural qualifications, as outlined in I Timothy 3:8-13, and have been an active member for at least one year.
  - a. Deacons shall serve a three (3) year term following their selection. Following term completion, and if the deacon desires to continue in this role, the deacon shall be presented to the church for a vote to serve another 3-year term. Deacons are encouraged to use a 3- month sabbatical during their term.
  - b. Deacons will select their own Chairman. The selected Deacon shall serve as chairman no more than two (2) consecutive terms (term defined as one 12-month fiscal year or one partial term greater than 6 months in the fiscal year).
  - c. They shall attend and actively support all phases of the church program and be cooperative in spirit.
  - d. They shall regularly attend the scheduled meetings of deacons; any deacons missing three (3) consecutive regular meetings may be placed on an inactive list at the discretion of the active deacons.
  - e. Assist the pastor in the administration of the ordinances. It is their duty to see that the Lord's Supper is observed a minimum of once per quarter or as often as necessary.

- f. The deacons are also charged with the responsibility of working with the pastor in the selection of the evangelist (both preaching and musical) for revival services.
- g. They shall counsel and cooperate with the pastor and assist him in the discharge of his duties.
- h. In cooperation with the pastor, they shall exercise general supervision over the whole membership.
- i. Visit the ministry of the church, the sick and the distressed, and generally to keep in touch with the church family and to seek to develop the spiritual life of the members.
- j. They shall deal with matters of discipline brought to their attention and admonish members who may be delinquent in the discharge of their covenant obligations.
- k. The pastor and deacons are charged with the relief work of the poor and shall disburse funds according to their best judgment without making public reports of the same. The Pastor and one deacon, or two deacons (without the pastor) may disburse funds in any given situation not to exceed the current amount allotted in the deacon budget.
- l. In the absence of the pastor, the chairman of deacons shall act in his place in the performance of his duties as may be necessary to carry on the work of the church.
- m. In the event of death, resignation, or inability of the pastor to fulfill his duties, the Body of Deacons shall report the fact to the church and a pastoral selection committee shall be elected, consisting of five (5) people. Not more than one name of a pastor is to be presented by the committee for consideration on any given occasion. Election shall be by secret ballot, an affirmative vote of no less than three-fourths of the qualified voters present required for selection.

SELECTION OF NEW DEACON: According to the example given in Acts 6:1-4

- 1) When current deacons and/or pastor deem necessary, current deacons will request nominations for new deacon from active church members; the nominations, on a prepared ballot, will be the names of men who are active members of this church and are qualified to serve as deacons. The current deacons will request these nominations at any business meeting of this church.
- 2) The nomination ballots will be presented to current deacons for discussion regarding eligibility.
- 3) Pastor and Deacon Chair will conference with each nominee to determine the nominee's interest (yes or no answer) and discuss qualifications for service.
- 4) If the nominee agrees to service, the nominee is interviewed by Deacon body at deacon meeting.
- 5) If nominee and current deacons are in Biblical alignment, a three-month trial period for prayer and reflection begins. During this period, the nominee must commit to attending regularly scheduled deacon meetings.
- 6) Following the three-month trial period, current deacons prepare a list of approved nominees; the list of approved nominees are presented, in ballot form, to church body at any church business meeting, for approval by majority vote of active members present at such meeting.
- 7) Ordination of new deacon(s) (men that have never been ordained).

### 3. TRUSTEES

- a. The trustee chairman is chosen by the nominating committee for a 3-year term. The additional minimum of 2 Trustees will be selected based on the guidelines in Article IV. The new chair must be selected from past trustees if possible.
- b. They shall have the sole right and power to create debts and obligations binding upon the church other than as approved in the budget, and then only upon proper approval of the church.
- c. The trustees shall be directly responsible to the church for emergency repairs and replacements not covered by the budget from time to time as need requires.
- d. The trustees shall provide instruction and contracts to those who use the building for non-church functions. All scheduled church events take precedence over reservations.

- e. Trustees are authorized to spend no more than the emergency fund allotted in the fiscal year budget line, without a vote from the church.
- f. They shall provide adequate equipment and supplies to care for the property of the church so that it may serve the purpose intended.
- g. In conjunction with the pastor, the board of trustees shall have authority to cancel a church service in the event of inclement weather which could affect the safety of the congregation.
- h. There shall be three trustees who shall be the legal representatives of the church in the execution of all contracts relative to business affairs, particularly in the transfer and acceptance of property, but under the direction of the church.
- i. It is the duty of the trustees to attend the regular sessions of the trustees, and any trustees missing three (3) consecutive regular meetings may be placed on an inactive list at the discretion of the trustees.
- j. The Trustees are responsible for the job description and duties of the custodial staff. Pay and wages fall under the duties of the Personnel Committee.
- k. Trustees are tasked with maintaining a building use policy which shall be approved by the church body.

#### 4. CLERK/ASSISTANT CLERK

The clerk shall keep a record of all proceedings of the church. He/she shall have general supervision of the church roll and shall keep or cause to be kept a list of names and addresses of active and inactive church members. He or she shall issue and attest all letters of dismissal or recommendation and of transfer; shall prepare the annual church letter for presentation to the deacons and to the church before transmission to the association by the September council meeting. All official church records, except financial gifts/tithes, shall be made available to any member upon request. Receipt of financial gifts will be confidential and not revealed without signed permission of the donor. All records concerning individual discipline/information are considered confidential and shall not be released to any member without written permission from the Pastor and Deacon Body. The assistant clerk shall assist the clerk in performing these duties in the event of his or her absence or incapacitation.

#### 5. TREASURER

The treasurer shall receive all monies contributed for all budget items and all other funds for which other provisions are not made by the direction of the church, after same have been counted by those designated by the church in the presence of the treasurer or assistant treasurer and a record sheet made in duplicate and shall deposit them to the proper account in the bank; all salaries, bills and other obligations relating to the local work of the church, and to missionary, educational and benevolent objectives. The treasurer shall be bonded by the church. All loose cash should be counted on the day of receipt by assigned volunteers. All donated monies should be deposited within 1-3 business days of receiving. The assistant treasurer shall perform all functions of the treasurer in his or her absence or incapacitation and shall be bonded by the church. This officer is under the supervisory control of the church and shall report to the church at regular church council meetings and church business meetings.

#### 6. STANDING COMMITTEE CHAIRPERSONS

The chairperson shall possess a knowledge of the church membership, and the duties of their respective committee. The chairperson and the committee members are elected as defined in Article IV. Each committee chairperson will attend the next church council meeting following their election. After the election of committee members, the chairperson shall arrange a committee meeting as soon as possible, then continue to conduct committee meetings on a regular basis. It is the duty of committee chairperson to report committee activity by attending church council meetings and church business meetings; in his/her absence, chairperson selects a committee representative to attend/report at meetings.



## **ARTICLE III: STANDING COMMITTEES**

### **SECTION 1: DEFINITION**

A standing committee is defined as a permanent committee that meets on a regular basis in order to carry out the work of the church. The church membership will provide cause for the necessary standing committees and determine their respective duties. All chairpersons and committee members must be active members of the church. All church committees shall be under the supervisory control of the church and shall, through their chairpersons, report to the church at regular church council meetings and church business meetings.

### **SECTION 2: SELECTION**

1. The nominating committee shall nominate the committee chairman to a term of 1 year.
2. Each committee chairman will attend the next council meeting following their election. It is the duty of committee chairmen to attend council meetings, send a representative, or send a report to the clerk prior to the meeting.
3. The chairmen shall possess a knowledge of the church membership, and the duties of their respective committee.
4. The chairmen shall select members for their committee. These names will be submitted through the nominating committee for approval by the church.
5. Married couples are not allowed to serve simultaneously on the same committee.
6. After election, each committee shall meet as soon as possible for instructions of the duties of the respective committees.
7. All resignations from committee members shall be written and presented to the committee chairman and forwarded to the pastor. If the committee chairman resigns, the written resignation shall be given to the pastor. The pastor will present the resignations to the church for acceptance without discussion or vote.

### **SECTION 3: COMMITTEES**

1. **BUDGET COMMITTEE**  
This committee shall be composed of a minimum of four members of the church, including the treasurer and assistant treasurer, with the treasurer as chairman. The committee shall present an annual budget at the June business meeting, and a semiannual budget review at the December business meeting. The budget committee shall also make recommendations to the church of deserving students for scholarships and suggest the amount to be given. All members of the stewardship committee will be authorized check signers.
2. **AUDIT COMMITTEE**  
This committee shall be composed of a minimum of two with a maximum of four members and a chairperson. The Audit Committee shall be responsible for:
  - A. Examining and reviewing all accounts and records
  - B. Supervising and overseeing the work of an audit conducted by an outside entity.
  - C. Inspecting and examining securities and investments
  - D. Attempting to verify the truth and accuracy of the information contained in the church's financial reports.

E. Performing yearly audits on church accounts, records, and financials

3. HOSPITALITY COMMITTEE

1. This committee shall host all church fellowship dinners where meals/refreshments are served. Specifically, they shall:
  - a. Prepare the fellowship hall to accommodate the function scheduled.
  - b. Maintain the kitchen in a clean and sanitary manner, properly cleaning the facilities after the function concludes.
  - c. Ensure that adequate supplies are on hand.
  - d. In the event of special church guests, the committee is responsible for planning/preparation of meals for special guests and/or meals associated with the activities of the special guest(s).
2. This committee shall look after the decorating of the church facilities for all regular services of the church.
3. This committee shall send flowers for the local funeral of any active member or anyone living in their household. For all others (example: non-resident members, parents, or children of active members), or if the family requests no flowers, the committee should use their discretion in choosing an appropriate memorial, such as a donation to The Baptist Home, The Missouri Baptist Children's Home, Gideon Bibles, the Building Fund of the church, etc.
4. In the case of the hospitalization of members or attending friends of the church, an appropriate card will be sent by this committee.
5. It shall be incumbent on the church members to notify the committee in a timely manner so that flowers, donations, and cards may be sent.

4. MISSIONS/OUTREACH COMMITTEE

For the position of Chairman, the Nominating Committee should seek an individual who is committed to missions. The Missions Committee shall be composed of other members as needed and meet regularly as follows:

1. To be encouragers of the church for mission involvement and active participants in an Acts 1:8 strategy reaching our "Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth." (Acts 1:8).
2. To report on concerning our missionaries; and to review our current monetary donation towards these missionaries.
3. Report on Disaster Relief opportunities and provide feedback on those opportunities.
4. Receive feedback on local missions, outreach/involvement (such as CFC)
5. Promote and organize local outreach events (such as Harvest Festival, Hillbilly Fair)
6. Prayerfully seek out new mission opportunities for the church.
7. Oversee the printed and digital communication of Church events (such as event publicity, signage, and social media)

5. NOMINATING COMMITTEE

The nominating committee shall consist of five persons appointed/elected as directed by Article IV, SECTION 1 of this document. This committee shall be responsible for bringing nominations consisting of active church members before the church for persons to serve in each elective office or committee position of the church (as defined in Article IV of this document).

6. PERSONNEL COMMITTEE

- A. The personnel committee shall compose/maintain a job description for each person paid a salary by this church body. The job descriptions should include a list of duties of each person, time off and vacation time. This committee is only responsible for determining pay/wages as the job description is the duty of the Trustees.

- B. Suggestions as to salary changes for paid staff must be made in conjunction with the stewardship committee and come before the church body.
- C. All employee resignations shall be written and presented to the committee chairman, who will present same to the church for acceptance without discussion or vote.
- D. No paid employee of the church shall be a member of the Body of Deacons, Board of Trustees, Nominating Committee or Budget Committee.

7. USHER COMMITTEE

The usher duty is to give a cordial Christian greeting to those attending the church services. Under the supervision of a head usher, they shall be responsible for providing, at all services of the church, a staff of ushers sufficient to seat the congregation properly and, as far as possible, make comfortable. The committee shall be responsible for ensuring ushers are prepared to receive all offerings and visitor cards. Visitor cards shall remain on church property and copies of visitor cards can be made and given to the usher desiring to contact the visitor(s).

8. WORSHIP COMMITTEE

The worship director is the chairman of the committee. This committee shall consist of the-worship director, church organist, church pianist, and others deemed necessary. In conjunction with the pastor, the committee will have charge of all matters related to the music of the church.

9. SAFETY COMMITTEE

This committee shall be composed of two or more members and a chairperson. These members shall be properly trained for the responsibilities assigned to them within the committee. The Safety Committee shall be responsible for:

- A. Taking active measures to secure the church premises against inside, outside, physical, spiritual threats.
- B. Preparing the church to respond in emergency situations such as medical crises, natural disasters, fires, or otherwise.
- C. Creating a safe church environment by developing safety procedures and arranging background checks as needed.
- D. Trained and have a good understanding of the Church Safety Handbook

10. GUIDING DOCUMENTS COMMITTEE

The purpose of this committee is to create new or review/revise existing documents which govern FBC Sunrise Beach. Guiding Documents of FBC Sunrise Beach are defined as the church Constitution and Bylaws. This committee shall be composed of at least four members, with two filling the roles of chairman and secretary. At least one member shall be a deacon, and if possible, at least one member must have previous service on this committee.

- A. The committee will convene at least once annually to ensure the active guiding documents accurately define this church (including standing committee descriptions).
- B. The committee will convene as needed to oversee the revision of the guiding documents per the amendment procedures (Constitution Article V, and By-Laws Article X).
- C. The committee will make available to church membership a copy of the current guiding documents, following any amendments.
- D. This committee ensures that the members of this church and its committees are in compliance with the guiding documents of this church.
- E. This committee will provide the newly elected chairman with the guiding documents of this church following the March quarterly business meeting.

## **ARTICLE IV: NOMINATION, ELECTION, TERMS OF OFFICE, RESIGNATION**

### **SECTION 1: NOMINATION**

At the Quarterly business meeting held in December of each year, a Nominating Committee of at least five (5) active members shall be chosen; two shall be appointed by the pastor and three elected by the active members of the church. The Nominating Committee, so appointed/elected shall select a nominee for church officers, as defined in Article II, section 1, and all standing committee chairman (this excludes pastor, deacons, and trustee chairperson, which are specifically defined in Article II, Sections 2 and 3). These nominees are to be filled at the March Quarterly meeting; other officer nominations may be made at the March Quarterly meeting by any active member. Nominees are elected at said meeting if supported by a majority of the active members present and voting.

### **SECTION 2: ELECTION**

The Nominating Committee shall cooperate with the elected officers/chairpersons, defined in Section 1 above. As soon as possible, and before the June Quarterly meeting, the elected officers will submit the names of nominees for committee members, for their confirmation and recommendation to the church for election at the June Quarterly meeting.

### **SECTION 3: TERMS OF OFFICE**

Unless otherwise defined in Article II, the term of office for officers and committee members commences on the first day of the fiscal year of the church and concludes the final day of the same fiscal year. In the event of an election of a successor, said person(s) shall serve until the final day of the fiscal year elected.

### **SECTION 4: RESIGNATION**

All resignations from committee members shall be written and presented to the committee chairperson, then forwarded to the pastor. If the committee chairperson resigns, the written resignation shall be given to the pastor. The pastor will present the resignations to the church for acceptance without discussion or vote.

## **ARTICLE V: DISCIPLESHIP TEAM**

SECTION 1: Consists of Sunday School Director and Discipleship Director

The officers of the Discipleship Team shall consist of a Director, and Sunday School Director, working in conjunction with the pastor. The officers shall set a positive example for others by living as an authentic witness of Christ and through full involvement in the life and ministry of the church.

(a) DISCIPLESHIP DIRECTOR:

The Discipleship Director serves as the general leader of the Discipleship ministry of the church. Coordinating the work of non-Sunday School related ministries, including but not limited to Youth Ministry, Children's/Nursery Ministry, and Adult Small Groups. He or she leads the Discipleship Ministries in planning, organizing, enlisting, and equipping leaders to achieve goals toward their stated objectives. The major responsibilities of the Director will include:

1. Finding/ordering curriculum.
2. Record keeping, including attendance leading in the development of an effective organization that facilitates spiritual transformation while recommending needs to the church regarding Discipleship;

3. Meeting regularly with ministry leader and communicating goals and actions to its leaders and participants.
4. Leading in efforts to call participants into service and enlisting and developing new leaders.
5. Leading in evaluating needs related to space, budget, Bible study curriculum, supplies, and other resources.

(b) SUNDAY SCHOOL DIRECTOR

The Sunday School Director serves as the general leader of the Sunday School ministry of the church. Coordinating the work of Sunday School related ministries for all ages. The responsibilities for the director shall include:

1. Finding/ordering curriculum
2. Record keeping, including attendance of members and guests
3. Assist Sunday School teachers in reaching out to absent members and guests
4. Meeting a minimum of once yearly with Sunday School Teachers and communicating goals and actions.
5. Leading in efforts to call participants into service and enlisting and developing new teachers
6. Leading in evaluating needs related to space, budget, Bible study curriculum, supplies, and other resources.

## ARTICLE VI: MEETINGS

### SECTION 1: REGULAR SERVICES

The church shall hold services for public worship on each Lord's Day and such other meetings as may be deemed necessary. No regularly scheduled service may be cancelled without the vote of the church with the exception of the terms set forth in ARTICLE II, SECTION 2c. A vote may be taken at any scheduled church meeting without prior notification to the church membership.

Section 2: Quarterly Regular Business Meeting; the second Sunday of every third month following regular Sunday Service

Section 3: Monthly Church Council Meetings the first Wednesday of every month following Wednesday evening Bible Study. Each committee chair and officers shall attend (or send an alternate) and report.

### SECTION 4: ANNUAL MEETING

The annual meeting coincides with the June quarterly meeting. A special agenda (separate from the June quarterly meeting) will be presented, and only include, Elect/approve officers at June meeting; approve budget for next fiscal year. Choose messengers to send to the Missouri Baptist Convention. September quarterly meeting: the annual report submitted to MBC will be presented.

### SECTION 5: SPECIAL MEETINGS

Special meetings may be called by the pastor or in his absence or refusal to act, or resignation, the Chairman of the Body of Deacons. **Special meetings may also be called by a committee Chair or Church officer, or upon a signed, written request of five (5) church members, stating the reason for the special meeting.** Notice of special business shall be first publicly given out in the church during three meetings prior to the meeting. Any stated assembly of this church shall constitute a meeting capable of dealing with current items of business.

## SECTION 6: QUORUM

A quorum consists of those **active** members who attend the business meeting, provided it is a stated meeting or one that has been properly called.

## SECTION 7: VOTING

Voting on items of business brought before the church will be by raised hands unless otherwise requested. Request for secret ballot will be taken without contest. Voting privileges are defined in ARTICLE I, SECTION 4.

## SECTION 8: PARLIAMENTARY AUTHORITY

The rules contained in the current edition of Abbreviated Roberts Rules of Order shall govern the church in all cases to which they are applicable and in which they are not inconsistent with these bylaws and any special rules of order the church may adopt.

# ARTICLE VII: DISCIPLINE

## SECTION 1:

The pastor and deacons shall constitute a committee on discipline. They shall seek an interview with all members violating their covenant obligations or conducting themselves in any way and in such manner as to bring reproach upon the church for discipline.

## SECTION 2:

In all cases of grievances between members, the offenders shall be dealt with in accordance with the rules laid down in the eighteenth chapter of Matthew, and no complaint shall be preferred before the church until this course has been pursued.

Charges, when made, must be made in writing, and shall be submitted to the committee on discipline, for such action as is deemed necessary and proper. In all cases, if practicable, persons accused shall be given an opportunity to be heard in defense, and no member, if absent shall be censured or excluded at the same meeting, at which such charge is preferred against him or her.

## SECTION 3:

Any person whose membership has been terminated pursuant to the provisions of Article VIII, upon request, after demonstrating evidence of repentance and reformation to the leadership team during a review period not to exceed 6 months and having received a majority vote from the church following the review period, shall be restored to full membership.

# ARTICLE VIII: FAITH AND CULTURE PARAMETERS

## SECTION 1: Marriage Policy

Our statement of faith, [the Baptist Faith and Message \(2000\)](#), expresses our fundamental biblical conviction that Christian marriage is, by definition, the spiritual and physical uniting of one man and one woman in an exclusive covenant commitment for their joint lifetime. Christian marriage is God's unique gift to reveal the union between Christ and His Church. As such, this local church believes that wedding ceremonies on church property are spiritual observances of worship of God who created this divine institution. As worship services, weddings on church

property shall be officiated by one or more ordained ministers of the gospel. The church may decline to make its facilities or ministers available for any wedding if it is determined that one or both of the parties are not biblically and/or legally qualified to marry. Such determinations may be made by the pastor and deacons, subject to the direction of the church. No minister or employee of the church shall officiate at any marriage ceremony unless such a marriage is consistent with this policy.

## SECTION 2: Gender Identity

Our statement of faith, the Baptist Faith and Message (2000), expresses our fundamental biblical conviction that at the beginning of creation in Genesis 1, God created Male and Female. In Jeremiah 1:5, God states that he knows all beings before they were born, leaving no room for mistakes. Based upon this statement of faith, this church will not support or accommodate any request for gender neutral facilities (i.e., restroom or other). Any person on premises of the church building must use facilities based upon their sex/gender at birth. Failure to comply will result in immediate removal from the premises.

## **ARTICLE IX: AMENDMENTS**

The church bylaws may be amended by a two-thirds majority vote of the members present at a regular business meeting if at least thirty days written notice is given of the intention to amend.

Proposed amendment(s) to these by-laws shall be presented to the Guiding Documents Committee by active church members or a church committee.

Following a 30-day review period, the Guiding Documents Committee shall furnish a written copy of the proposed amendment(s) to the church at the next regular business meeting.

A 30-day reflection period begins after the proposed amendment(s) are presented to the church. The purpose of the reflection period is to allow church members time to review the proposed amendments(s) and pray to help them make an appropriate decision on the proposed amendment(s).

Following the 30-day reflection period, a vote on the proposed amendment(s) shall occur at a business meeting of the church provided that public notices, consisting of reading the proposed amendment(s) and the designated time of voting shall have been given on two consecutive Sundays prior to the voting date.

Proposed amendment(s) shall be approved by a two-thirds vote of the active church members present and voting. Upon approval, the proposed amendment(s) shall be effective immediately.