



# CONSTITUTION

Amended March 2, 2025

## Preamble

We, First Baptist Church, Eldon, Missouri, declare and establish this Constitution to preserve and secure the principles of our faith, to govern the church body in an orderly manner, to preserve the liberties of each individual member of this church, and to assure the freedom of action of this church body in relation to other churches.

## Article I – Name

This church body shall be known as First Baptist Church, Eldon, Missouri, the same being a corporation organized under the laws of the State of Missouri.

## Article II – Objectives

The spiritual purpose of this church is to fulfill the Great Commission as given by the Lord Jesus Christ as recorded in Mathew 28:18-20.

## Article III – Statement of Faith

We affirm the Holy Bible as the inspired, inerrant, infallible Word of God and is the basis for our statement of faith and practice. We subscribe to the statement of faith known as *The Baptist Faith and Message* adopted by the Southern Baptist Convention in 2000. The statement of faith does not exhaust the extent of our faith. The Bible itself, as the inspired and infallible Word of God, that speaks with final authority concerning truth, morality, and the proper conduct of mankind, is the sole and final source of all we believe. We believe God offers redemption and restoration to all who confess and forsake their sin, seeking His mercy and forgiveness through Jesus Christ. We believe every person must be afforded compassion, love, kindness, respect, and dignity. For purposes of church doctrine, practice, policy, and discipline, our Senior Pastor is the church's final interpretive authority on the Bible's meaning and application, subject to a church decision adopted by a two-thirds majority vote at a special-called meeting of the church.

## Article IV – Character

Recognizing Christ as Lord and Head of the church, the government of this church is vested in the membership of its believers. Only members of this church may vote on the church's business matters. Insofar as practical, this church shall cooperate with and support the Lake Ozark Baptist Association, Eldon Ministerial Alliance, Missouri Baptist Convention, and the Southern Baptist Convention.

## Article V – Organizations

The church shall determine the committees and organizations necessary to meet its objectives.

## Article VI – Amendments

This Constitution may be altered or amended by a two-thirds majority vote of members present and voting at any business meeting, provided the proposed alteration or amendment shall be made available, in writing, at least two weeks in advance.

## **Article VII – Rescission**

This Constitution supersedes all previous constitutions of First Baptist Church, Eldon, Missouri.

## **Article VIII – Ordinances**

The ordinances of the church, as set forth in the scriptures, are Baptism and the Lord's Supper.

- Section 1. (Matt. 28:19) Baptism: A person, who publicly accepts Jesus Christ as Savior at any worship service and who indicates a commitment to follow Christ as Lord, may be received for baptism.
- A. Baptism shall be by immersion in water.
  - B. Baptism shall be administered by the pastor or, upon recommendation by the pastor, whoever the church shall authorize.
  - C. Baptism shall be administered as an act of worship during any regular worship service. Special baptism services may be set at other times upon recommendation of the pastor and deacons.
- Section 2. (1 Cor. 11:23-26) Lord's Supper: The Lord's Supper may be observed on a quarterly basis or as recommended by the pastor and the deacon council. The pastor and deacons shall be responsible for administering the Lord's Supper.



# By-Laws

Amended March 2, 2025

## Article I – Membership

- Section 1. This is a sovereign and democratic Baptist church under the Lordship of Jesus Christ. The membership retains unto itself the exclusive right of self-government and the right to determine who shall be members and the conditions of membership.
- Section 2. The basic qualifications for membership in this church shall be one's personal faith in Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord which shall be symbolized by the baptism, by immersion, of the believer.
- Section 3. Any person desiring membership in this church may apply for membership at any meeting of the congregation. This church receives applicants by any of the following ways:
- A. By the applicant's profession of faith followed by baptism administered by this church (Acts 2:47);
  - B. By a letter from another Baptist church affirming the applicant was a member in good standing at the time the letter was issued;
  - C. By the applicant's statement that he or she has personally professed faith in Jesus Christ and has been baptized by immersion to signify his or her faith in Jesus Christ's redeeming work;
  - D. By restoration of an excluded member who has satisfied the church that the applicant has corrected the conditions which led to exclusion has renewed his or her commitment to the Lord Jesus Christ.
- Section 4. All applicants for membership shall agree with the Baptist Faith and Message 2000 and the Church Covenant, and shall be required to complete a "Welcome to FBC Eldon" class.
- Section 5. Upon the satisfactory completion of Sections 2 through 4, the applicant may be recommended for membership at the next general business meeting of the church. A person becomes a member upon the majority vote of those present and voting at such a meeting.
- Section 6. Membership may be terminated by:
- A. Death;
  - B. Request from another Baptist church for a letter certifying the member's status in this church;
  - C. Evidence that the member has united with another church;
  - D. A member's dated and signed written request to be removed; or

- E. Disciplinary action from evidence that the member's faith, practice or personal conduct is deemed prejudicial to the church's ministry. The Senior Pastor and deacons shall be responsible for the discipline of any church member according to the teaching in Matthew 18:15-17 and 1 Corinthians 5:1-12.
- Section 7. Every member of the church, 14 years of age and older, is entitled to vote, in person, at all business meetings of the church.
- Section 8. Members shall be responsible to give due honor and support to their church by being faithful to worship with the church body, to represent the Lord and this congregation well in their daily living, to support the ministries of this church through their tithes and offerings, and to seek ways to extend the Kingdom of God through their service and witness.

## **Article II - Statement on Marriage and Sexuality**

- Section 1. 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.
- Section 2. Marriage ceremonies using church facilities or grounds shall be in compliance with the Wedding Policy. The church shall 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 Deacons subject to the direction of the church.
- Section 3. We believe God intends sexual intimacy to only occur between a man and a woman who are married to each other. We believe God has commanded that no intimate sexual activity be engaged in outside of a marriage between a man and a woman.
- Section 4. We believe any form of sexual immorality, such as child molestation, adultery, fornication, homosexual conduct, lesbian conduct, bisexual conduct, bestiality, incest, pedophilia, pornography, any attempt to alter one's gender by surgery or appearance, or disagreement with one's biological sex, is sinful and offensive to God.
- Section 5. We believe children are a heritage from the Lord, human life begins at conception, and the unborn child is a living human being. Abortion constitutes the unjustified, unexcused taking of unborn human life.
- Section 6. We believe God offers redemption and restoration to all who confess and forsake their sin, seeking His mercy and forgiveness through Jesus Christ.
- Section 7. We believe every person must be afforded compassion, love, kindness, respect, and dignity.

## **Article III - Officers**

### **Section 1. Senior Pastor**

- A. The Senior Pastor shall be expected to live in accordance with the Biblical requirements of 1 Timothy 3 and Titus 1. He shall be committed to the Lord Jesus Christ, shall believe in the inerrancy of the Scriptures as contained in the Bible, shall boldly proclaim and lift up Christ, and shall love the church and community. He shall be a servant of the church, tither, student of the Word, teacher, preacher and a Christian example both in and out of church.
- B. When the office of Senior Pastor becomes vacant, a search committee of five, nominated by the Nominating Committee and elected by the church, shall seek a candidate. The committee shall bring to the church only one candidate at a time. Voting shall take place at a business meeting called for that purpose with at least one week's notice being given. Voting shall be by secret ballot with 80% of the voting members casting affirmative votes for a call. If less than 80% of the affirmative, shall adjourn the meeting without debate and the committee shall seek another candidate.
- C. The Senior Pastor's call shall be indefinite. He shall serve until the relationship is dissolved by resignation or termination with a notice of thirty days, unless otherwise mutually agreed. The Deacons (not including the Senior Pastor) and the Personnel Committee may present to the church a motion for termination of service based upon a substantiated accusation against the Senior Pastor for approval at a special members' meeting. A two-thirds majority vote of the church members present is required to pass the motion for termination.
- D. The Senior Pastor shall be responsible for leading the church to function as a New Testament church. He shall work with the Deacons and church staff to guide the church in performing its tasks. He shall have the pulpit ministry as his special responsibility. He shall have supervision of the church staff, but may delegate such responsibilities as he deems expedient.

### **Section 2. Staff**

- A. Staff positions may be added for the work and ministry of the church.
- B. The Personnel Committee, in consultation with the Senior Pastor, shall be responsible for employment of staff as provided in the Employee Handbook.
- C. Any staff member may be terminated by the Personnel Committee upon the recommendation of the Senior Pastor.

### **Section 3. Deacons**

- A. The church shall have deacons in any number, as deemed appropriate. These men shall live in accordance with the biblical requirements in Acts 6 and 1 Timothy 3. Deacons shall be servants of the church, tithers, regular attenders, and Christian examples both in and out of church.

- B. Deacons shall select deacon prospects and from these make recommendations to the church. The church shall have the final vote on the deacon recommendations. An ordination service shall be held for new deacons. Deacons shall serve a term of three church calendar-years.
- C. A deacon may serve consecutive terms if recommended by the deacons upon the suggestion of a three-member committee consisting of the Deacon Chairman, Deacon Vice-Chairman, and Senior Pastor.
- D. The terms and duties of the Deacons are outlined in the Deacon By-Laws.

#### Section 4. Trustees

- A. The Nominating Committee shall recommend and the church shall elect six Trustees who shall serve three church calendar-year terms with two members being elected each year. The Trustees shall elect their own chairperson.
- B. The Trustees shall manage for the church all real property; represent the church in all legal responsibilities; buy, sell, mortgage, create debt and binding obligations, lease, rent or transfer property with church authorization for such action; and affix their signatures to legal papers as directed by the church.
- C. The Trustees shall serve as the corporation's directors, but shall take no action unless explicitly instructed to act by the church or these bylaws.

#### Section 5. Clerk

- A. The Nominating Committee shall recommend and the church shall elect a Clerk to serve during the church calendar-year.
- B. The Clerk shall keep minutes of all business meetings.

#### Section 6. Church Treasurer

- A. The Nominating Committee shall recommend and the church shall elect a Treasurer to serve during the church calendar-year.
- B. The Treasurer shall be an ex-officio member of the stewardship committee.
- C. The Treasurer is authorized to administer the disbursement of church funds in accordance with the budget or upon action by the church.
- D. The Treasurer assures all monthly financial statements since the last regular business meeting, are distributed to the church at the next regular business meeting.

#### Section 7. Other Officers

The church shall elect other officers as needed.

### **Article IV - Committees**

The duties and responsibilities of all committees shall be outlined in the Church Operations Manual developed by the appropriate committees. Such duties and responsibilities shall be communicated to members upon their election. Committee members must be a member of First Baptist Church of Eldon, Missouri.

## Section 1. Church Council

- A. The Church Council will recommend to the church suggested objectives and goals. They will review leadership, calendar time and resources, and evaluate program achievements.
- B. The members of the council include the pastor and ministry staff, chairman of deacons, and the coordinators and chairpersons of all committees as follows: Sunday School Director, Youth Minister, Church Hospitality/Kitchen Coordinator, Chairman of Stewardship, Missions/Evangelism, Family Life, Women's Ministry Coordinator, Senior Adult Coordinator, and Good Neighbors Coordinator.
- C. The Church Council shall serve as the Committee on Committees. They will develop the necessary service committees along with the committee policies and procedures to be approved by the church. The Church Council will recommend to the church, at the May Business Meeting, two names for prospective members of the Nominating Committee for the coming ministry year.
- D. The church secretary shall take minutes of all church council meetings.
- E. All matters agreed upon by the council, calling for action not already authorized, shall be referred to the church for approval or disapproval.

## Section 2. Nominating Committee

This committee is elected to fill temporary committee chairpersons and committee members. The committee will also fill other leadership positions to include vacancies, organizational leaders, and general church officers unless otherwise state in the By-Laws. A Nominating Committee vacancy would be selected by remaining Nominating Committee members and then presented to church council for approval. This is then voted on by the church at the next business meeting.

## Section 3. Stewardship Committee

The purpose of this committee is to prepare an annual budget, and ensure safe and accurate procedures for receiving, counting, and disbursing funds.

## Section 4. Personnel Committee

This committee is elected to recruit, interview, and recommend new personnel to the church; to develop and recommend salary schedules and job descriptions; and to annually review and update the Employee Handbook.

## Section 5. Properties Committee

This committee is elected to assist the church in the care of all properties and buildings; study the needs and recommend management of existing space; the need to acquire additional property and equipment; to inventory all items over \$100.00; and to develop and recommend policies, for the maintenance and use of buildings and properties.

## Section 6. Missions/Evangelism Committee

This committee will study community needs and recommend plans for mission work of the church. They will work with local, national, and world-wide groups outside the church in accordance with Matthew 28:19-20.

**Section 7. Constitution Committee**

This committee will update Church Constitution as needed with the approval of church members at a business meeting.

**Section 8. Baptism Committee**

This committee will repair and label robes, assign rooms, and place robes in rooms for candidates before service and will be available for baptisms on Sunday mornings to host candidates.

**Section 9. Family Life Committee**

This committee plans special family activities and events (i.e. new member reception, winter warm-ups, church picnic, & ladies' tea) and coordinates holiday emphasis for worship services (i.e. Mother's Day, Father's Day, baby dedications & Memorial Day).

**Section 10. Hospitality Committee**

This committee plans Wednesday Night Meals, funeral meals, Church Picnic, Easter brunch, Thanksgiving dinner, 5th Sunday, and other events that come up (working with Family Life Committee).

**Section 11. Nursery Committee**

This committee reviews Nursery Policies, and facility needs, and enlists workers as needed for scheduled activities (i.e. morning and evening worships, Wednesday evenings, revival etc.).

**Section 12. Transportation Committee**

This committee sees to van needs. Sunday morning pickup of those needing transportation.

**Section 13. Worship Center Committee**

This committee helps develop the worship experience through decoration and works with the Family Life Committee for special services.

## **Article V - Ministry Coordinators**

**Section 1. Church Hospitality/Kitchen Coordinator**

- A. This position is to be elected annually and has overall responsibility for oversight and use of the church's kitchen.
- B. Will represent the church in the planning of church events requiring food preparation and use of the church's facilities.
- C. Assures the church kitchen is supplied with the needed condiments, paper products and cleaning supplies.
- D. Assures the kitchen is clean and sanitary and the equipment is kept in good repair, replaced when worn and is in accordance with state health laws.
- E. A policies and procedures manual is to be developed and approved by the church.

**Section 2. Women's Ministry Coordinator**

This position is a coordinator of women's ministry events, prepares, and executes their budget, and represents them on the Church Council. This coordinator is elected annually.



Section 3. Senior Adult Ministry Coordinator

This position is a coordinator of Senior Adult ministry events, prepares and executes their budget, and represents them on the church council. This coordinator is elected annually.

Section 4. Good Neighbors Coordinator

This position is a coordinator of Good Neighbors program, prepares and executes their budget and represents them on the church council. This coordinator is elected annually.

## **Article VI - Meetings and Administration**

Section 1. The church shall meet regularly for preaching, instruction, evangelism and worship. Meetings shall be conducted under the direction of the Senior Pastor.

Section 2. General business meetings shall be called as the church council deems appropriate. A special business meeting may be called by the Senior Pastor, chairman of deacons, or a majority of elected deacons provided that notice of time, place and purpose of the meeting shall be given at least one week in advance by an announcement in Sunday morning worship services, unless extreme urgency renders such notice impractical.

Section 3. The Senior Pastor shall serve as moderator of business meetings. In the Senior Pastor's absence or upon his request, the Chairman of Deacons shall serve as moderator. In the absence of both, the Vice-Chairman of Deacons shall call the church to order and serve as moderator.

Section 4. A quorum of at least 40 members is necessary for transacting church business and only those members present are entitled to vote. A majority vote of members present, and voting shall determine all matters of the church except as otherwise specified. The most recent edition of Robert's Rules of Order shall be the authority for parliamentary rules of procedure for all business meetings of the church.

Section 5. Any member may introduce an item of new business at a business meeting. If the motion receives a second, the motion may be discussed and the motion may be amended at that time. The moderator shall assign the matter to the appropriate committee or organization for consideration and report at the next business meeting.

Section 6. A Church Policy Manual shall be maintained in the church office which shall contain all of the various policies, guidelines, and procedures for implementing the various ministries of the church. It shall be accessible for viewing to all members upon request but shall be kept in the office.

## **Article VII - Finances**

The church will not invest in any companies that work against Christian values according to scripture.

## **Article VIII - Ministries**

All ministry organizations shall be established by the church and shall function in compliance with the Ministries Handbook section of the Church Policy Manual. All members shall be encouraged and expected to find their place of serving within the ministries of the church. A listing of those ministries shall be available so that members may know where their service may be utilized.

## **Article IX - Church Year**

The reporting year for the Annual Church Profile shall be July 1 through June 30. The organizational year shall be September 1 through August 31. The fiscal year shall be January 1 through December 31.

## **Article X - Amendments**

These by-laws may be altered or amended by a two-thirds majority vote of members present and voting, provided the proposed alteration or amendment shall be made available, in writing, to the church at least two weeks in advance. Any proposed amendments to the By-Laws or Constitution may be made at any Business Meeting and will be referred to the Church Constitution Committee for consideration.

## **Article XI - Recission**

These By-Laws supersede all previous By-Laws of First Baptist Church, Eldon, Missouri.