

Constitution of First Baptist Church of Blanco, Texas

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Constitution of First Baptist Church Blanco, Texas

PREAMBLE

We declare and establish this constitution to preserve and secure the principles of our faith and to govern the Church in an orderly manner. This constitution will preserve the liberties of each church member and the freedom of action of First Baptist Church (the Church) in relation to other churches.

ARTICLE I. NAME

This church will be known as First Baptist Church of Blanco, Texas with the primary location at 1200 4th Street, Blanco, Texas 78606.

ARTICLE II. INCORPORATION

- A. First Baptist Church of Blanco, Texas (a charitable non-profit organization) is organized as recognized by IRS Code 501 (c) 3 in accord with the Texas Business Organizations Code, Title 2, Chapter 22 and will have all the powers, duties, authorization, and responsibilities as provided therein.
- B. The primary location of the Church in the State of Texas will be in the City of Blanco, County of Blanco. The Church may have other offices, either within or without the State of Texas, as the Trustees may require them from time to time.
- C. The Church will have and continuously maintain in the State of Texas a registered office, as required by the Texas Business Organizations Code, Title 2, Chapter 22. The registered office may be, but need not be, identical with the primary location of the Church in the State of Texas, and the address of the registered office may be changed from time to time by the Trustees.
- D. The Articles of Incorporation and other pertinent documents will be stored in a safe deposit box away from the primary location.

ARTICLE III. GOVERNANCE

The Church is autonomous and retains unto itself the right of exclusive self-governance. Accordingly, authority for decision-making and governing church affairs is vested in church members. The Church Council, consisting of chairpersons of church committees and ministries, represents those interests. As a congregational empowered church, each member is responsible for the welfare of the Church and has a voice in matters brought before it. Persons duly received by the members shall constitute the Church membership (See Article X).

ARTICLE IV. PURPOSE

First Baptist Church is a cooperating Southern Baptist Church and is organized and will be operated for the purpose of engaging in religious worship and promoting the spiritual development and well-being of individuals and families. Specifically, this church is established to glorify God by fulfilling the Great Commandment (Matt. 22:36-40) and the Great Commission (Matt. 28:19-20).

ARTICLE V. AFFILIATION

Although this church is not subject to the control of any ecclesiastical body, it recognizes and sustains the benefits of mutual council and cooperation which are common among Southern Baptist churches. Insofar as is practical, considering this church's Mission (Article VII) and its Statement of Faith (Article VIII), this church will cooperate with and support the Bluebonnet Baptist Association, the Baptist General Convention of Texas (Texas Baptists), the Southern Baptists of Texas Convention, and the Southern Baptist Convention.

ARTICLE VI. APPLICATION OF ASSETS

On discontinuance of this church by dissolution or otherwise, its assets are to be transferred to the Bluebonnet Baptist Association of Texas as a Fiduciary. Such assets are to be used for evangelism and discipleship in a continuing effort to fulfill the Great Commission (Matt. 28:19-20).

ARTICLE VII. MISSION

EXALT GOD, ENCOURAGE THE FAITHFUL, EVANGELIZE THE NATIONS

We are a Christian Fellowship of baptized believers committed to glorify God through His Son Jesus Christ and are empowered by the Holy Spirit to follow our Savior's example by:

- A. worshipping the only true God;
- B. teaching His Holy Word;
- C. evangelizing the community and world;
- D. fostering unity among the Church fellowship;
- E. ministering to church members and the community;
- F. exhibiting Christ's love through compassion for all people;
- G. embracing biblical faithfulness and purity.

ARTICLE VIII. STATEMENT OF FAITH

We affirm the Holy Bible as the inspired Word of God and the basis of our beliefs. It is our final authority on matters pertaining to truth, morality, and the proper conduct of humankind. This church subscribes to the doctrinal statement of the "Baptist Faith and Message" as a clear and faithful representation of basic Christian beliefs and will operate by these beliefs in faith, doctrine, practice, policy, and discipline. Specific beliefs include but are not limited to the following:

- A. **Scripture:** The sole authority for this church is the Bible. Although written by the pens of men, each human author was divinely inspired by the Holy Spirit so that what was written is ultimately the Word of God. Through God's Word we know His character, His purpose, His salvation, and His Son, our Lord, Jesus Christ (Exodus 24:4; Deuteronomy 4:1-2; Psalms 19:7-10; 119:11, 89, 105, 140; Isaiah 40:8; Matthew 5:17-18; Luke 21:33; John 5:39; 17:17; Romans 16:25-26; 2 Timothy 3:15-17; Hebrews 1:1-2; 4:12; 1 Peter 1:25; and 2 Peter 1:19-21).

- B. **Salvation:** We believe that God offers redemption and restoration to all who confess and forsake their sin, seeking His mercy and forgiveness, through His Son, Jesus Christ, who died on the cross, atoned for sin, was raised from the dead, and offers salvation to all who believe (Luke 24; John 3:16-17, 14:6; Acts 3:19-21; Romans 10:9-10; and 2 Corinthians 5:17-19).
- C. **Marriage, and Sexuality:** We believe the Bible teaches that the ideal for sexual behavior is the marital union between one biological man, as the husband, and one biological woman, as the wife, and that all other sexual relations — whether premarital, extramarital, or homosexual—are contrary to God’s perfect design and purpose. (Exodus 20:14; Acts 15:29; Romans 1:26-32; 1 Corinthians 5:1-13; 6:12-20; Colossians 3:5-6; and 1Thessalonians 4:1-8). Furthermore, we believe that God wonderfully and immutably creates each person as male or female. The distinct male and female identities reflect the image and nature of God.
- D. **Human Life:** We believe that human life is sacred and created by God in His image (Genesis 1:26-27; 2:7-24; and Psalms 139). Human life is of inestimable worth in all its dimensions, including pre-born babies, the aged, the physically or mentally challenged, and every other stage or condition from conception through natural death. We are therefore called to defend, protect, and value human life.

ARTICLE IX. CHURCH ORDINANCES

This church observes the ordinances of baptism and the Lord’s Supper. These ordinances are viewed symbolically and therefore are not understood to have a saving efficacy or quality about them.

- A. **Baptism** will be by immersion in water. It symbolizes the washing away of sin and new life in Jesus Christ. Baptism shall be offered to any person who by faith has received Jesus Christ as Savior, who professes Him publicly at a church worship service, and who indicates a commitment to follow Christ as Lord. The Senior Pastor or whoever the Church will authorize will administer baptism. The Baptism Committee will assist in the preparations for observing baptism

- B. **The Lord's Supper** is observed each quarter or more frequently as appropriate. The Lord's Supper is practiced as a memorial to Jesus' suffering and death on the cross. The deacons are responsible for preparing the Lord's Supper elements. The Senior Pastor and/or deacons will administer the Lord's Supper.

ARTICLE X. CHURCH MEMBERSHIP

Section 1. General

Membership in this church will consist of all persons who have met the qualifications for membership and are listed on the membership rosters. The membership reserves the exclusive right to determine who shall be members of this church.

Section 2. Qualifications for Membership

- A. A personal commitment of faith in Jesus Christ for salvation;
- B. Baptism by immersion as a testimony of salvation.

Section 3. Candidacy

Any person may offer himself or herself as a candidate for membership in this church. As a general rule, qualified candidates for membership shall be approved during an Invitation in one of the following ways:

- A. By profession of faith in Jesus Christ and baptism by immersion;
- B. By promise of a letter of recommendation from another Baptist church;
- C. By statement of faith, provided the candidate presents himself or herself as having been previously converted, baptized by immersion, and affirms the views and practices held by this church.

As an exception due to one's physical or emotional well-being, persons may join the church by completing a membership card to be approved in a worship service.

In becoming a member of First Baptist Church, members acknowledge that they agree with Article VIII of this constitution and will seek to reflect these beliefs in their lives.

Section 4. New Member Orientation

A New Member Class is recommended for all persons seeking information about church membership.

Section 5. Rights of Members

The privilege of voting will be extended to all church members of legal age (18) as currently defined by state laws. Voting by proxy is prohibited.

Section 6. Responsibilities of Members

Each member is encouraged to participate in the ministry of the Church by pursuing the following goals:

- A. Demonstrate love for God and one's neighbor;
- B. Protect the unity of the Church;
- C. Be a positive and fruitful servant for Christ;
- D. Actively engage and support the Church mission and ministries;
- E. Fulfill the Great Commission.

Section 7. Termination of Membership

Membership in this church may be terminated for any of the following reasons:

- A. Death;
- B. Transfer of letter to another church;
- C. By personal request of a member;
- D. Evidence of membership in a church of another denomination;
- E. Exclusion or dismissal by action of this church when a member's life and conduct are not in accord with biblical teachings or this constitution.

Section 8. Discipline

Should a serious condition exist that would cause a member to become a liability to the general welfare of the Church, the Senior Pastor and/or deacons will take every reasonable measure to resolve the problem in accord with Matthew 18:15-17. It will be the role of the Senior Pastor and/or

deacons to ensure that this process is carried out in love for the purpose of restoration rather than punishment.

If the Senior Pastor and/or deacons determine it is necessary for the Church to take action to exclude a member, a special Members' Meeting will be scheduled. Four weeks prior to this meeting, the Church will be asked to pray for this individual and family that repentance and restoration will happen prior to the meeting. If repentance does not occur, the deacons will recommend dismissal. The Church must affirm this decision by a sixty-six percent (66%) majority vote of the members present.

Section 9. Restoration of Membership

The Church may restore to membership an excluded person when the dismissed member requests such action and when his or her lifestyle is determined to comply with the Bible and this constitution (2 Corinthians 2:7-8). The Senior Pastor and/or deacons may bring a recommendation for restoration to the Church at any Members' Meeting. The Church must affirm a decision for restoration by a sixty-six percent (66%) majority vote of the members present.

ARTICLE XI. CHURCH OFFICERS

The biblical officers of this Church will be those of the Senior Pastor and the deacons. The administrative officers of the Church will be the Chairman of Deacons, the Chairpersons of the Trustees and Church Council, as well as the Church Clerk and Church Treasurer. All officers must be church members in good standing prior to assuming their responsibilities.

Section 1. Senior Pastor

- A. **Qualifications:** The Senior Pastor will be a man recognized by the Church as having a clear testimony of saving faith in Jesus Christ. He also will be particularly gifted and called to the full-time ministry of preaching and teaching God's word. In addition, he will possess proven administrative and pastoral care capabilities. Moreover, he must satisfy the qualifications set forth in 1 Timothy 3:1-7, Titus 1:6-9, and 1 Peter 5:2-4. Furthermore, his doctrinal beliefs will be consistent with the Baptist Faith and Message. As such, he will have been ordained to the Gospel Ministry by a Southern Baptist church. Moreover, an undergraduate bachelor's degree from an accredited university and a seminary degree(s) (MDiv, DMin, or PhD) from an

accredited Southern Baptist or evangelical seminary are highly preferred.

B. **Duties:** The Senior Pastor will be responsible for cultivating the spiritual life and growth of the congregation through preaching and teaching of God's word; performing church administrative functions; ensuring church members are cared for; and thoroughly equipping members to do the work of the ministry. The duties and responsibilities of the Senior Pastor will include, but are not limited to the following:

1. Lead the Church by example to accomplish its mission: **Exalt God, Encourage the Faithful, and Evangelize the Nations** (See Article VII).
2. Lead the Church to engage in worship, discipleship, witness, education, discipleship, fellowship, and evangelism.
3. Preach biblically based sermons with practical applications that equip church members to effectively live the Christian life.
4. Provide managerial oversight of church staff to include team building, goal setting, and performance metrics in harmony with the Personnel Committee.
5. Ensure the congregation has access to pastoral care and Christian counseling as needs arise.
6. Develop and maintain relationships with other religious organizations and denominations in the local community.
7. Represent the Church among associational, state, and national southern Baptist organizations.
8. Administer the ordinances of the church: Baptism and the Lord's Supper.
9. Officiate at weddings, funerals, and special church functions.

As Church membership increases, Senior Pastor duties will be assessed by the Personnel Committee to safeguard and maximize staff performance levels.

C. **Call:** A Senior Pastor will be chosen and called by the Church whenever a vacancy occurs. He will be employed on a full-time

basis, devoting all his working time to the Church. He will seek advance approval from the deacons and Chairperson of the Personnel Committee, if he intends to seek outside, paid or unpaid employment.

D. **Accountability:** The Senior Pastor is accountable to the Lord for his ministry, conduct, and character. In addition, the Senior Pastor is accountable to the Church to provide spiritual leadership; to the deacons as his primary advisory board; to the Church Council for guidance and church polity; to the Finance Committee for monetary expenditures and compliance; to the Trustees for church legal considerations; and to the Personnel Committee to meet job description and performance expectations. The Senior Pastor's central point of contact for accountability is the Chairman of Deacons.

E. **Pastor Search Committee:**

1. A Pastor Search Committee (PSC), consisting of seven (7) members and two (2) alternates will be formed by the Church. Church employees will not serve on the PSC. In addition, married couples will not serve together on the PSC.
2. The Church Moderator will ask church members to submit names of persons willing and qualified to serve on the PSC. Candidate qualifications will include, but are not limited to spiritual maturity, integrity, leadership, church membership, and service to the FBC family. Committee members must be at least 21 years old. The Church Moderator and Clerk will present the names of candidates to the Church Council.
3. The best qualified candidates will be selected by the Church Council from the names submitted, who represent as closely as possible the demographics of the Church. The Chairperson of the Church Council will present a list of seven (7) primary candidates and two (2) alternates to the Church Moderator, who will schedule a special called meeting for church members to vote for the PSC candidates.

F. **Pastor Search Committee Guidelines:**

1. Seek God's choice for the church's new Senior Pastor.
2. Maintain confidentiality throughout the search process.
3. Identify congregational expectations of a Senior Pastor.

4. Provide periodic progress updates to the Church Moderator, Church Council, and church congregation.
5. Conduct the search for the next Senior Pastor in a progressive, orderly, and timely manner.
6. Evaluate Senior Pastor candidates and recommend one to serve as pastor of FBC.
7. Upon calling a Senior Pastor, encourage the congregation to follow his leadership.

The PSC Chairperson will be responsible for informing the Senior Pastor of his salary and benefits, his duties and responsibilities, and the Church expectations. Detailed guidelines, procedures, and forms for PSC use may be found in the "Pastor Search Committee Workbook," located on the Bluebonnet Baptist Association website.

G. Senior Pastor Selection:

1. Pastor and church profiles will be prepared to help select a candidate. The PSC also will solicit and review resumes, complete background checks, and conduct interviews. In select cases, visits to candidates' churches will be made. Notably, only one (1) candidate at a time will be recommended for consideration as Senior Pastor of the Church. Once the PSC selects a candidate to present to the Church, such action will constitute a nomination. The PSC Chairperson will brief the congregation regarding its selection in a Question and Answer (Q&A) session three (3) weeks before the candidate is presented to the Church.
2. At least two (2) weeks' notice will be given prior to the formal presentation of a candidate to the congregation. Approved travel expenses for the candidate and his spouse to Blanco will be paid at the government per diem rate, including mileage or cost of airplane tickets, lodging, meals, and an honorarium for preaching. If the candidate has minor children, their approved travel expenses will be paid. A reception for the candidate and his spouse will be scheduled prior to their being presented to the Church in a Sunday worship service.
3. On a designated Sunday, the candidate and his family will be introduced to the congregation by the Church Moderator, after which the candidate will preach a sermon. Following the sermon, the candidate and his family will be escorted out of the sanctuary to the Pastor's Study by the PSC Chairperson. The Church Moderator then will convene a special called meeting to

vote on the candidate. The election will be by secret ballot. Approval will require a majority vote of eighty percent (80%) of the church members present. The Chairperson of the PSC will notify the candidate of his selection and escort him and his family back to the sanctuary. The Church Moderator will present the candidate to the congregation.

4. Upon the call of a new Senior Pastor, the Church will pay for approved moving expenses. The deacons will assist the Senior Pastor in assuming his responsibilities and fulfilling his call as pastor of the Church.
5. In the event that the candidate is not called to serve as the Senior Pastor, the PSC Chairperson will inform the candidate of the vote and take appropriate measures to encourage him and his family. The PSC then will consider other candidates to recommend as Senior Pastor of the Church.

H. Associate Pastor Selection:

The process for calling a Senior Pastor will be used to call Associate Pastors. The Church Council, Personnel Committee, Finance Committee, and a Search Committee will coordinate with the Senior Pastor when considering Associate Pastors for employment. The Senior Pastor's perspective will be an essential component of the decision-making process.

I. Continuity of Ministry:

To ensure that the Church's mission continues uninterrupted when the office of the Senior Pastor is vacant, the Church Council Chairman will oversee church ministries and administrative functions. This provision includes the right to delegate responsibilities and solicit assistance as needed.

J. Termination of Pastoral Employment:

1. A Senior Pastor or Associate Pastor may relinquish the position for which they were employed by submitting in writing a letter of resignation. Resignation letters will be submitted and read in a Sunday morning worship service, giving at least two (2) weeks' notice prior to leaving the Church. Upon leaving, the Senior Pastor or Associate Pastor will be paid any vacation pay due them, up to thirty (30) days.

2. At least two (2) weeks prior to public notification of resignation by the Senior Pastor or an Associate Pastor, the Chairman of Deacons and Chairperson of the Personnel Committee must be informed. In addition, the resigning pastor will provide a resignation letter to the Chairman of Deacons and the Chairperson of the Personnel Committee. Once a resignation letter has been signed and accepted, it may not be rescinded.
3. At the recommendation of the deacons and Personnel Committee to the Church Council, the Church may declare the Senior Pastor's or Associate Pastor's position vacant. To be approved by the Church, such action shall require a majority vote of sixty-six percent (66%) of the members present at a Members' Meeting or a special called meeting. Notice of a meeting will be given in accordance with Article XIII, Section 4 of this constitution. The recommendation to declare the Senior Pastor's or Associate Pastor's position vacant and justification for such action will come from the Church Council.
4. As a matter of protocol and to reach consensus among vested parties, the Church Council Chairman will coordinate with the Church Administrative Officers (See Article XI) at least two (2) weeks prior to presenting the Church Council's recommendation to church members. As the Church Moderator, the Church Council Chairman will present the recommendation to terminate the Pastor's or Associate Pastor's employment to the Church.
5. If a Senior Pastor's or Associate Pastor's employment is terminated by a vote of church members, the departing pastor shall be entitled to any vacation pay due him up to thirty (30) days. In addition, a severance package will be paid up to a total of three (3) months' salary, including benefits except when termination is based on a moral or criminal offense or the terminated pastor slanders church leaders or in any way adversely affects the overall well-being of the Church. In such a case, the Finance Committee will recommend a modified severance package to the Church to begin immediately.

Section 2. Deacons

A. **Qualifications:**

The qualifications for the Office of Deacons are described in Acts 6:17 and 1 Timothy 3:8-13. These biblical references state that deacons are to be men worthy of respect, sincere, not indulging in much wine, and not pursuing dishonest gain. In addition, they must keep hold of the deep truths of the faith with a clear conscience. Moreover, they must be tested and then if there is nothing against them, they may serve as deacons. Furthermore, deacons must be the husband of but one wife and must manage their children and household well. The wives of deacons are to be women worthy of respect, not malicious talkers but temperate and trustworthy in everything. Finally, deacons are to be active church members, contributing faithfully by their support of the Church. Qualified men meeting the preceding qualifications may be eligible for ordination to serve as deacons.

B. **Duties:**

The word “deacon” is defined as “servant” or “helper.” The primary duty of a deacon is to be a servant leader, “full of the Spirit and wisdom” (Acts 6:3). To be a servant-leader means to be a shepherd to church members, providing pastoral care and spiritual support. Deacons support the Senior Pastor through prayer, counsel, and encouragement. They also represent congregational interests to him and serve as an advisory board to include leadership accountability. Moreover, deacons promote harmony and unity within the Church. They also assist with administrative and worship activities, including the Lord’s Supper. Deacons are not empowered to establish rules or policies governing the Church, although the deacons may formulate recommendations for consideration by the Church Council and the Church.

C. **Chairman’s Responsibilities:**

The Chairman of Deacons will convene and preside at deacon’s meetings. He also will represent the Deacons on the Church Council (See Article XIV, Section 5).

D. Election:

Deacons will be elected and ordained by the Church as needed. When the deacons determine that more deacons are required, they will submit to the Church a request to increase their number. The number of deacons will be increased by a majority vote of the Church members present at a Members' Meeting or a special called meeting. Prior to such meetings, church members will be given the opportunity to submit written nominations of men willing to serve as deacons. Once the nominations are submitted, the deacons will determine those who are qualified. The nominees then will be examined by the deacons to clarify the nominees' theological and doctrinal understanding of Scripture, with special emphasis upon the duties of deacons. After examination by the deacons, qualified nominees will be recommended to the Church for approval. Voting will be by secret ballot. Ballots will be counted by the Church Clerk and Chairman of Deacons. The person or persons being elected will be announced to the Church by the Chairman of Deacons on the day of election.

E. Ordination:

Newly elected deacons will be ordained. The Senior Pastor and/or deacons will schedule, plan, and officiate at the ordination service. Deacon candidates who previously were ordained by another Southern Baptist Church will not be required to be ordained again.

F. Terms of Service:

Deacons will elect their own officers to include a chairman, vice-chairman, and secretary. The Chairman of Deacons will serve a two-year term. At the conclusion of the Chairman's term and by consent of the deacons, he will be succeeded by the Vice Chairman, at which time a new Vice Chairman will be elected. The deacons will also elect a Secretary, who will serve a two-year term. Deacons may structure their tenures of service on a rotating basis to be determined by the deacon body.

G. Service Levels:

1. **Active Status:** A deacon will remain in active status if he annually indicates his desire and demonstrates his commitment

to serve. While there are many competing activities and ministries outside and within the church, deacons must make their service as deacons a priority.

2. **Inactive Status:** If a deacon decides to become inactive for a period of time, he may notify the Chairman of Deacons in writing. Deacon privileges are suspended during the period of inactive status. If inactive service does not exceed two (2) consecutive years, he can reactivate by contacting the Chairman of Deacons. If he exceeds two years of inactivity, he may seek to become active again by:
 - a. Notifying the Chairman of Deacons in writing his reason for inactivity and his desire for reactivation;
 - b. Meeting with the Senior Pastor and deacon officers for an updated orientation;
 - c. Being approved by a sixty-six percent (66%) majority vote of the quorum present at a regular meeting of the deacons.
3. **Emeritus Status:** While deacons are encouraged to serve for a lifetime, it may become necessary to cease active deacon service when life circumstances require a change due to age or health restrictions. Under such circumstances, a deacon may request in writing to the Chairman of Deacons to have his status changed to "Deacon Emeritus." Such a status exempts him from regular duties without affecting his participation and voting privileges in deacon meetings. This high honor is only available to those deacons who have faithfully and actively served as a deacon to this church. Recommendation of Emeritus Status must be approved by a sixty-six percent (66 %) majority vote of the quorum present at a regular meeting of the deacons.

Section 3. Trustees

A. Duties:

Trustees will be the legal representatives of the Church. They will hold in trust the church property. Upon specific vote of the Church

authorizing each action, they will have the power to buy, sell, mortgage, lease, or transfer any church property. When the signatures of trustees are required, they will sign legal documents involving the sale, mortgage, purchase, or rental of property, or other legal documents related to church approved matters, including but not limited to formal or contractual agreements. The Chairman of Deacons, Chairperson of the Church Council, and Church Treasurer will serve as advisors to the Trustees. The Chairperson of Trustees will represent the Trustees on the Church Council (See Article XIV).

B. Election:

The Church will elect three (3) or more Trustees to serve as legal officers for the Church. Trustees will serve three-year terms on a rotating basis, with one-third (1/3) of the Trustees' term(s) expiring each year and a new Trustee elected to replace the expiring Trustees' term(s).

C. Candidates:

Candidates nominated to serve as Trustees will be recommended by the Nominating Committee for congregational approval at a Members' Meeting (See Article XV, Section 4).

Section 4. Administrative Staff

A. Church Clerk:

The Clerk is the clerical officer of the Church. The Church Clerk will include the following responsibilities:

1. Take minutes of all Church Council and Members' Meetings;
2. Ensure that decision cards are properly filled out in response to an invitation;
3. Issue membership letters of transfer from the Church;
4. Provide minutes to the Church Administrator or assigned administrative team member to preserve on file all communications including written official reports or minutes and give required notice of all meetings when necessary (See Article XIII, Section 4).

B. Church Administrator:

The Church Administrator or assigned administrative team member will be responsible for keeping a register of names of members, with dates of admission, transfer, death, or exclusion, together with a record of baptisms. All church records are church property and will be filed by the Church Administrator or assigned administrative team member in the church office or on an electronic device which can be backed up. Clerical responsibilities assigned to the Church Administrator are specified in the Administrator's position description.

C. Administrative Team:

The Administrative Team consists of church volunteers who assist with data collection, filing, records management, and organization.

Section 5. Church Treasurer

The Church will elect a Church Treasurer as its chief financial officer for a three (3) year term. Although the Church Treasurer will not be paid a salary, the position will be bonded. The duty of the Church Treasurer is to receive, preserve, and pay out, upon receipt of vouchers approved and signed by authorized personnel all monies or things of value paid or given to the Church, always keeping an itemized account of all receipts and disbursements. The Church Treasurer also will serve as the Chair of the Finance Committee.

The Church Treasurer has the following authorities:

- A. To approve expenses within the Church approved budget plus ten percent (10%) per line item in the budget;
- B. To reassign funds from one line item of the budget to another line item within related areas of the budget;
- C. To approve use of funds from the 'Most Needed Fund' up to one thousand dollars (\$1000.00) per transaction above which the Finance Committee needs to approve such expenditures.

In addition, the Treasurer will render to the Church at its quarterly Members' Meetings an itemized report of receipts and disbursements since the previous meeting. The Church Administrator will maintain and file a copy of these reports, either physically or electronically, as part of the permanent records of the Church. These records are to be preserved for the time

prescribed by the Internal Revenue Service, then destroyed unless otherwise instructed by the Finance Committee.

The Church Treasurer will be nominated by the Nominating Committee (See Article XV, Section 4) and elected by the Church. The Church Treasurer in conjunction with the Finance Committee will prepare an annual budget for the Church's approval.

All books, records, and accounts kept by the Church Treasurer are subject to audit by the Finance Committee or a certified audit agency. Under all circumstances, tithes and financial gifts to the Church will remain confidential. All other church financial books and records are open to inspection with a minimum of five (5) business days' notice, during normal office hours, by any member of the Church.

ARTICLE XII. STAFF

Section 1. Employment

The Senior Pastor, Associate Pastors, and Administrative Staff members shall be employed as the Church determines the need. Congregational approval and termination of Associate Pastors' employment will be consistent with procedures followed for the call and termination of a Senior Pastor (See Article XI, Section 1, Paragraphs E, G and J). Employment and termination of Administrative Staff employees will be at the discretion of the Personnel Committee, in consultation with the Church Council. (See Article XV, Section 1).

Section 2. Responsibilities

The primary responsibilities of Associate Pastors and the Administrative Staff are (1) to fulfill the responsibilities for which they were hired; (2) to ensure their job performance contributes to the overall church mission; and (3) to support the Senior Pastor as the spiritual leader of the church (see Article VII and Article XI, Section 1, B). Senior Pastor responsibilities are listed in Article XI, Section 1, A and B and in his position description. Responsibilities and duties for Associate Pastors, Education Directors, and Administrative Staff members are listed in their position descriptions.

Section 3. Position Descriptions

Each staff position will be accompanied by a position description written by the Personnel Committee. Compensation Packages will be determined in coordination with the Finance Committee. For validation, staff position descriptions will be reviewed by the Church Council.

ARTICLE XIII. CHURCH MEETINGS

Section 1. Worship Services

The Church will meet for worship each Sunday morning for prayer, praise, proclamation of God's Word, instruction, and evangelism. Bible studies, worship opportunities, prayer gatherings, youth programs, and various educational, outreach and enrichment programs will be scheduled throughout the week as the Church determines appropriate.

Section 2. Regular Members' Meetings

Regular Members' Meetings will be scheduled at least once a quarter. Such meetings normally will be scheduled for the third (3rd) Sunday of the first month, of each quarter. The purpose of these meetings will be to conduct church business.

Section 3. Special Members' Meetings

The Church Council Chairman (Church Moderator) or Trustee Chairperson may request a special (called) meeting at any time, for reasonable purposes, by giving notice to church members in accordance with Article XIII, Section 4.

Section 4. Notice Requirements for Meetings

When members are requested or required to act at a meeting, notice of the meeting, whether regular or special, will be publicized in the following ways: (1) an oral announcement at a Sunday morning worship service and/or (2) a written announcement in the Church worship bulletin. Notice of Members' Meetings will be made to church members no less than two (2) weeks prior to a meeting. Distribution of relevant written materials and documentation regarding Members' Meetings agenda items will be provided as needed.

Section 5. Moderator

The Church Council Chairman will serve as the Moderator for quarterly Members' Meetings and special, called meetings. In the absence of the Church Council Chairman, the Church Council Vice Chairperson will serve as the Moderator for Members' Meetings and special, called meetings. If both the Church Council Chairman and Church Council Vice Chairperson are unavailable, the Trustee Chairperson will serve as the Church Moderator.

Section 6. Quorum

Unless otherwise specified herein, the members present at a properly scheduled Members' Meeting will constitute a quorum of the membership for the transaction of church business. Decisions will be determined by at least fifty-one percent (51%) of the persons present at the meeting.

ARTICLE XIV. CHURCH COUNCIL

Section 1. Responsibilities

The Church Council, empowered by the congregation, is responsible for church polity. The Church Council will serve the Church by leading in planning, coordination, administration, and providing oversight of church committees, ministries, organizations, programs, policies, and procedures. It will receive and consider recommendations from church members and committees. As a representative body, the Church Council is accountable to church members for its actions.

Section 2. Officers

The Church Council members shall elect a Chairman and a Vice-Chairperson. The Church Clerk will serve as the Church Council Secretary. These Church Council officers will serve no more than two (2) year terms. The Chairman will not be the Senior Pastor, an Associate Pastor, or an Administrative Staff member. At least sixty-six percent (66%) of the Church Council's members must be lay leaders.

Section 3. Meetings

The Church Council will meet monthly. In the event committee or program co-chairs serve on the Church Council, only one co-chair can vote.

Recommendations must be approved by a sixty-six percent (66%) majority of the quorum present at a regular Church Council meeting. Written ballots may be used when appropriate.

Section 4. Functions

The specific functions of the Church Council are:

- A. to represent the interests of church members;
- B. to recommend to the Church objectives and goals;
- C. to support church committees and programs;
- D. to foster communication among church organizations;
- E. to review and coordinate ministry and program plans as well as policies and procedures recommended by church officers, committee chairpersons, and church members;
- F. to bring recommendations before Members' Meetings for consideration;
- G. to serve as an advisory group for the Church staff;
- H. to identify and publicize resources according to program priorities;
- I. to evaluate achievements in terms of the Church mission;
- J. to develop an annual church calendar.

Section 5. Membership

Members of the Church Council will be the Senior Pastor; Associate Pastor(s); Children's Director; Adult Education Director; Church Clerk; Treasurer/Finance Chairperson; Chairman of Deacons; Chairpersons of House, Grounds, and Improvement; Personnel; Missions; Trustees; Worship; Hospitality; Local Missions; Safety and Security committees; and two (2) At Large members. The Church Council Chairman and Vice Chairperson will be elected by Church Council members (see Article XIV, Section 2, Officers).

Section 6. At Large Members

Two (2) At Large members will be appointed by the Nominating Committee and voted on by the Church Membership. At Large members will serve a two (2) year term and rotate one (1) member off every year.

ARTICLE XV. CHURCH COMMITTEES

The committees of this church will include but not be limited to the Personnel Committee; Finance Committee; Missions Committee; Nominating Committee; House, Grounds and Improvement Committee; Worship Committee; Hospitality Committee; Local Missions Committee; Long Range Planning Committee; Safety and Security Committee; Member Care Committee and such other committees as the Church shall authorize. While all committees are vital to the life of the Church, the preceding committees are considered essential for the administrative, fiscal, and spiritual operation of the Church. Additional committees essential to the administration and operation of the Church may be added as needed. Any committee formed will present a mission statement and description of responsibilities and authorities to the Church Council for approval. All church committee members will be recommended by the Nominating Committee and elected by the Church unless otherwise specified within this constitution. Only members of the Church will be eligible for appointment to church committees. Committee membership is based upon one's calling and gifts of service. Each committee will develop its own guidelines for term limits.

Section 1. Personnel Committee

The mission of the Personnel Committee is to ensure church employees have the training and tools to perform their job and are held accountable for achieving goals. The Personnel Committee is responsible for determining ministerial and non-ministerial staff needs, employment, salaries, benefits, and other compensation, personnel policies, position descriptions, and all other personnel related matters, as well as legal compliance, performance management and staff training. The Personnel Committee will be authorized to employ and terminate non-ministerial staff members. Ministerial staff issues will be coordinated with the deacons and monetary considerations will be coordinated with the Finance Committee. The Personnel Committee will schedule a minimum of one performance evaluation annually with each employee. Individuals present at a

performance evaluation will be the employee, direct manager and two (2) members from the Personnel Committee.

Section 2. Finance Committee

The Finance Committee is responsible for developing an annual budget. The fiscal calendar year will be from 1 January to 31 December. The annual budget will be presented to the Church no later than December 1st of each year. Notice of a Members' Meeting to approve/disapprove the budget will comply with Article XIII, Section 4, of this constitution. The Finance Committee will have the responsibility of assuring that the adopted budget is adhered to while being pro-active in supporting church committees, ministries, organizations, programs, and outreach. This committee normally meets monthly to account for receipts and expenditures. The Finance Committee also will coordinate with the Treasurer in the preparation and presentation to the Church of required reports regarding the financial affairs and status of the Church. Moreover, this committee will recommend financial policies to the Church and shall promote stewardship programs. Special offerings will be coordinated with this committee. The Finance Committee will conduct an annual audit of the Treasurer's books or hire an external, certified auditor (See Article XI, Section 5).

Section 3. Missions Committee

The Missions Committee will maintain a support network for First Baptist Church sponsored missionaries and International Mission Board (IMB) missionaries who have a direct FBC connection. The committee will schedule missionary speakers and promote local and global mission outreach initiatives. The committee also will recommend goals for mission offerings and provide oversight for the Direct Missions Fund. In addition, this committee will lead the Church in its involvement with Bluebonnet Baptist Association, Texas Baptist state conventions, and other Southern Baptist Convention mission ministries or programs that mutually benefit the Church.

Section 4. Nominating Committee

The Nominating Committee will be comprised of three (3) to five (5) members of the Church Council (See Article XIV). The Nominating Committee will coordinate the staffing of all church leadership positions unless otherwise specified herein. This committee will nominate and recommend to the Church candidates to serve in various church positions. The list of nominees will be presented to the Church no later than the last

Sunday of June and recommended to the Church for approval in the July Members' Meeting. Those candidates approved will begin their duties effective 1st August of the calendar year.

Section 5. House, Grounds, and Improvements Committee (HGI)

The HGI will be responsible for maintenance and repairs of the Church's buildings, the parsonage, and the surrounding grounds of each. This committee will develop and coordinate plans, secure bids, oversee improvements to the facilities and make recommendations to ensure inviting and safe facilities for church activities.

Section 6. Worship Committee

The Worship Committee is responsible for providing inspirational worship programs. To accomplish this objective, the committee will plan and coordinate worship services with the pastor(s), church musicians, choir director(s), media specialists and other individuals and organizations as required. Committee members will periodically evaluate the worship program, schedule choral presentations and special music, coordinate media and drama presentations, and promote prayer and Bible reading as the catalysts for enhancing worship experiences.

Section 7. Local Missions Committee

The Outreach Committee is responsible for encouraging and mobilizing the Church to engage the Blanco community by creating and facilitating opportunities to display the love of Christ by meeting needs, offering programs, and demonstrating kindness.

Section 8. Safety & Security Committee

The Safety and Security Committee is responsible for establishing policies and procedures that ensure church facilities provide the congregation and staff with a safe and secure environment. This ministry also equips volunteers who will protect and assist the congregation in the event of emergency situations.

Section 9. Hospitality Committee

The Hospitality Committee is responsible for planning, purchasing, and preparing meals or snacks for a multitude of church wide events. Meals for the Wednesday night youth event are taken care of by the Wednesday Night Food Team. Light Night, Vacation Bible School, Senior Breakfast,

Discover Now, Kidz Kamp, New Member Receptions and Bereavement meals or snacks are coordinated by the sponsoring committee. The Chair of the Hospitality Committee orders supplies and replaces kitchen equipment as needed.

Section 10. Member Care Committee

The Member Care Committee focuses on caring for church members with compassion and unity through Christian love. It actively seeks to encourage church members, help them make connections, extend support and aid during difficult times, and offer prayer support. In addition, it welcomes new members and encourages them to attend the New Member Class and to engage in the life of the Church.

Section 11. Long Range Planning Committee

The Long Range Planning Committee is charged with evaluating the needs of the church to support the church mission for the foreseeable future and to propose plans to address those needs. This charge includes evaluation of church strengths and areas for improvement, understanding potential opportunities and threats, and proposal of long-term (5 to 10 years) strategic directions and short term (1 to 3 years) tactical plans. The committee coordinates with the Church Council, Fellowship of Deacons, church staff, church committees, and the congregation to identify needs. The committee researches demographics and trends of the communities we live in and are served by the church.

ARTICLE XVI. Support Committees and Organizations

Numerous committees and organizations are indispensable to the growth and well-being of the Church. These committees and organizations include but are not limited to the History Committee, Prayer Committee, Bereavement Committee, and Baptism Committee.

ARTICLE XVII. CHURCH MINISTRIES

Church Ministries are multifaceted and broad in scope. Church ministry directors, leaders, teachers, and assistants will be church members. They also will complete background checks, classroom and subject matter training, and be approved by a vote of church members (see Article XV. Section 4. Nominating Committee). As an exception, when church ministry or community outreach personnel shortfalls occur, positions may be filled with non-member volunteers. These non-member volunteers will be considered on a case-by-case basis. To be qualified for service, they will be

vetted following the same guidelines for background checks and training as their church member counterparts. If church members or non-church members volunteer after the annual Nominating Report is validated, church approval will be granted by ministry directors or committee chairpersons.

Section 1. Bible Studies.

Bible Studies will be the Church's primary organization for Christian education, instruction and fellowship. Its tasks shall be to teach biblical truth, reach persons for Christ and church membership. Bible Studies will be organized by departments and classes, as appropriate for all ages, and will be conducted under the direction of the Children, Youth, and Adult Education Directors. These directors will serve on the Church Council.

Section 2. Discipleship Training

Discipleship training will promote spiritual growth among new believers, train church leaders, orient new members, teach Christian theology, ethics, history, and church policy, as well as the Church organization, mission, and history of Southern Baptists.

Section 3. Women's Ministry

Women's Ministry focuses on discipleship and fellowship that leads women to embrace a Christ-centered life. Accordingly, programs and events such as Bible studies, worship, retreats, conferences, and other activities are scheduled.

Section 4. Men's Ministry

The Men's Ministry focuses on Christ-centered living. Through discipleship ministry, men are taught the biblical principles of leading and shepherding their families as well as how to grow spiritually themselves. These goals are achieved through a variety of self-directed applications and church sponsored activities.

Section 5. Youth Ministry

Youth Ministry focuses on building relationships with middle school and high school students to teach, disciple and share the gospel in a way that is relatable and applicable in their lives through technology, worship, activities, mission opportunities and fellowship. This goal is achieved through Sunday and Wednesday ministry events, camps, Bible Study, conferences, and other activities.

Section 6. Children's Ministry

Children's Ministry serves all infants through 5th grade and is responsible for outreach and discipleship through programs such as nursery care, Bible Studies, worship programs, Wednesday night activities, Vacation Bible School, camps, and summer activities. New programs and events will be added as needed.

Section 7. Public Relations Ministry

This ministry is multi-faceted, inclusive of Greeters, the Welcome Center, and various forms of publicity promoting the Church mission and programs. The ministry's purpose is to project a positive church image by making members and guests feel welcome, valued, and informed.

ARTICLE XVIII. AMENDMENTS

Proposed amendments to the constitution shall be referred to the Church Council in writing for its review and recommendation to the Church. The constitution may be amended or changed by a sixty-six percent (66%) majority vote of the membership present at a Members' Meeting. Prior notice and explanation of the amendment or changes shall be given to the Church in writing at least two (2) weeks before the vote.

ARTICLE XIX. INDEMNIFICATION

Section 1. Purpose

The purpose of indemnification shall be to protect directors, officers, leaders, employees, committee members, and/or volunteers who work for or represent the Church from incurring out-of-pocket costs not covered by the Church's liability insurance, if they are sued in connection with their work or activities on behalf of the Church. If an individual(s) is sued in connection with his or her church ministry or church-related activities, the Trustees will be authorized to determine when and if such an individual(s) will be indemnified for out-of-pocket costs associated with a lawsuit. The Trustees will have discretion to assess whether the individual(s) being sued was truly acting on behalf of the Church when the loss occurred. Indemnification will not apply to legal costs incurred by church directors, officers, leaders, employees, committee members, or volunteers if their actions are associated with any criminal activity such as sexual misconduct, physical assault, or theft that an individual(s) committed while working for or representing the Church.

Section 2. Indemnification Provision

A. **Insurance:**

The Church will purchase and maintain liability insurance on behalf of any and all persons who are or were a director, officer, leader, employee, committee member, or volunteer of the Church. Such insurance will be purchased for the purpose of protecting such persons from the covered loss resulting in liability asserted against the above individuals in connection with activities on behalf of the Church.

B. **Indemnification Requests:**

Should any director, officer, leader, employee, committee member, or volunteer of the Church incur any liability as a result of their affiliation with or service to the Church that is not covered by the Church's insurance policy, and should such liability result in out-of-pocket cost to such an individual(s), then such individual(s) may request indemnification from the Church. The granting of full or partial indemnification will be at the discretion of the Church Trustees as set forth in Section 1 herein.

C. **Indemnification Decisions:**

In relation to any indemnification request that is made pursuant to Article XX, Section 2, Paragraph B herein, if such a request is made by an individual who is not currently serving as a Trustee, then the indemnification decision (whether to indemnify the requesting individual and the dollar amount of such indemnification) will be made by the Trustees. Such a decision by the Trustees will be final subject to the approval of the majority of church members present at a Members' Meeting. If the indemnification request is being made by a person who is currently serving as a Trustee, then the indemnification decision (whether to indemnify the requesting individual and the dollar amount of such indemnification) will be made by the remaining disinterested Trustee members. A decision on the indemnification request by a majority of disinterested Trustee members will be final, subject to the approval of the majority of church members present at a Members' Meeting.

ARTICLE XX. CONFLICT RESOLUTION

Believing that the Bible commands Christians to make every effort to live at peace and resolve disputes with each other in private or within the Christian Church (see Matthew 18:15-20 and 2 Corinthians 6:1-8), the Church will encourage its members to resolve conflict among themselves

according to biblical principles, without reliance on secular courts. Consistent with its call to peacemaking, the Church will encourage the use of biblical guidelines to resolve disputes between itself and those outside the Church, whether Christian or otherwise and whether individuals or corporate entities.

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