By-Laws of First Southern Baptist Church, Pueblo Colorado
DBA Aberdeen Baptist Church

(adopted July 14, 2024)

I. Statement of Faith

We as a church adhere to the "Baptist Faith & Message 2000" (https://coloradobaptists.org/beliefs)

II. Membership

1. **Qualifications**: The membership of this church consists of individuals who have made a public profession of their faith in Jesus Christ as their Lord and Savior, who have experienced believer's baptism by immersion, and have been received into the fellowship of this church by vote of a majority of the members present at any regular worship service.
   Any person may request membership in this church in any of the following three ways:
   - **a.** By profession of faith and baptism;
   - **b.** By promise of letter from another Baptist church;
   - **c.** When no letter is obtainable, by statement of prior conversion experience and testimony of believer's baptism by immersion. If the individual was baptized outside the Baptist tradition, the pastor may deem it necessary for the individual to be baptized again.

   If the approval of an individual is not unanimous, the objection should be voiced in the service in which the request for membership is presented. The objection will be referred to the deacons for investigation. A recommendation from the deacons will be presented to the church within thirty days of the date of the objection. A three-fourths majority of those present and voting is then required to approve the individual for membership.

2. **Orientation**: Every new member of this church is expected to have participated in the church's membership orientation. Any member who has completed membership orientation is eligible for consideration by the membership for elected offices in the church.

3. **Expectations**: Members are expected to be faithful to all the duties essential to the Christian life, to attend services of this church regularly if physically able, to give regularly for its support and its causes, and to share in its ministry. Our church has two membership designations:
   - **a.** Active resident members: members who reside within the church's ministry area and are actively participating in the church
   - **b.** Inactive members: members who reside in the church's ministry area but who are not actively participating in the life of the church, or any person who has moved out of the church's ministry area and has not joined another church. Inactive members who reside in the church's ministry area shall be contacted by the deacon body and encouraged to become re-involved in the life of the church. If, however, they choose not to reestablish fellowship, they shall be notified of being designated as an inactive member. Inactive members may not exercise any voting privileges in church decisions, and are ineligible for elected offices within the church.

   Every member of the church may participate in the ordinances of the church as administered by the church.

4. **Termination of Membership:** Membership may be terminated in the following ways:
    - **a.** Moving of membership to another Baptist Church;
    - **b.** Removal upon written request;
    - **c.** Removal upon proof of membership or active involvement in a church of another denomination;
    - **d.** Exclusion due to immoral or unchristian conduct.

5. **Discipline:**
    - **a.** Should any major conflict arise among members, the offended member is to humbly submit to the instructions given by Jesus in Matthew 18:15-35.
    - **b.** Should any case of gross breach of covenant or public scandal occur, the deacon body is responsible to address the offense, and - if necessary - recommend church action be taken to deal with the offense.
    - **c.** All proceedings will be expected to be conducted in a spirit of Christian kindness and patience, but in extreme cases the deacon body may recommend that the offender be removed from membership of the church. This action must be recommended during a scheduled business meeting of the church, and must be approved by a three-fourths majority of the members present.
    - **d.** The church may restore to membership any person previously excluded for disciplinary reasons by request of the person. The church's decision must reflect upon the evidence of the person's repentance and continued action, and must be approved by a three-fourths majority of the members present at a scheduled business meeting.

III. Church Officers

All church officers must be active members of this church. Church officers fall under the following categories: Pastor, Ministry Staff, Deacons, Church Personnel, and Elected Officers.

1. **Pastor {Titus 1:7-9}:** The pastor is responsible for leading the church in functioning as a New Testament church. He is the leader of corporate worship, preaching, proclamation, education, pastoral ministry and service.

    - **a. Calling:** A pastor will be chosen and called by the church whenever a vacancy occurs using the following timeline:
        - **i.** A Pastor Search Team must be nominated and then elected by the church. One week's official notice to the church is required before this vote.
        - **ii.** The Pastor Search Team nominated by the church will be approved by majority vote of church members present. The team will then elect their chairman, and work together to seek out a suitable, God-called man to serve as pastor.
        - **iii.** Only one candidate at a time may be presented to the church. The candidate must be in agreement with this church's Statement of Faith and polity. A minimum of one week's notice must be given before a called meeting to elect a new pastor. Election must be by ballot, with an affirmative vote of three-fourths majority of members present for approval of the candidate.

b. **Role:** We believe that the role of the pastor is to be the undershepherd of the church and its congregation, who teaches and applies God's Word in order to nourish, strengthen, and guide the church in following the Lord. The pastor must exhibit the qualities of an overseer outlined in Scripture (1 Timothy 3:1–7, Titus 1:5–9, 1 Peter 5:1–3), and is accountable to the congregation to model Christ-like character and servant-leadership. The pastor leads the church in the ministry of proclaiming the Word, in caring for the congregation's needs, and in directing the church's ministry of outreach.

c. **Termination:** The pastor may tender his resignation at any time he believes he should do so by giving the church at least two weeks' notice. In extreme circumstances, the church may end the pastor's employment under the following conditions:
   - **i.** Every effort has been made privately, according to Matthew 18:15-35, to avoid this action before any public action is taken.
   - **ii.** A meeting to recommend termination may be called for by a joint 2/3 majority of the Deacon Body and 3/4 majority of the Church Leadership Team, or by written petition signed by not less than 51% of active church membership.
   - **iii.** Public announcement of the meeting and its purpose must be made at least one week in advance, and serious effort must be made to inform every active member of the meeting and its purpose.
   - **iv.** The pastor will be informed by the deacon body of the prospect of such action and be given a chance to face his accusers.
   - **v.** The church moderator will preside over this meeting. In his absence, a moderator will be chosen by majority vote of the members present. This individual cannot be the pastor.
   - **vi.** The vote to terminate the pastor's employment will be by ballot, and termination must be approved by three-fourths majority of active members present.
   - **vii.** The church will compensate the terminated pastor with no less than one-twelfth of his total annual salary package. Termination will be effective immediately, and compensation will be rendered within thirty days of the effective date.

2. **Ministry Staff:** Ministry Staff are responsible for serving the church in specific areas, and assisting the pastor as he leads the church in functioning as a New Testament church. These positions include (but are not limited to) the Music Ministry Coordinator, the Children's Ministry Coordinator, and the Church Business Administrator.

   a. **Calling**: Ministry Staff members are to be called and employed after the church determines there is a need for such position(s) by the following process:
      - **i.** The pastor will prepare and present the staff position need and a written job description to the Church Leadership Team;
      - **ii.** The Church Leadership Team will review, and if needed revise, the pastor's recommendation, then work with the Finance Committee to determine the compensation and expenses required to fill this position;
      - **iii.** Together, the Church Leadership Team and Finance Committee will make a joint recommendation to the church concerning the drafted position description and estimated compensation;

iv. Upon approval by the church, the Church Leadership Team will begin the process of searching for a suitable, God-called individual to fill the proposed position;

v. Upon identifying a suitable candidate, the Church Leadership Team will present their recommendation to the church. One week's notice will be given to the church of the vote, and a two-thirds majority of voting members must approve that a call be extended.

b. **Termination**: A member of the ministry staff may tender his or her resignation to the church by giving at least two weeks' notice.

i. If the Church Leadership Team believes it to be necessary to request a ministry staff member to present his or her resignation, this request is to be considered sufficient by the ministry staff member.

ii. The resignation will be presented to the Church Leadership Team, who then will present it to the church. In this situation, compensation conditions will be the same as described for the pastor in section III.1.c.vii.

3. **Deacons {1 Timothy 3:8-10}**: The New Testament teaches that deacons are to be servants of the church - the active arms ministering to and serving the congregation. Deacons must meet the qualifications for the office found in Acts 6 and 1 Timothy 3.

a. **Nomination process and Structure:**

i. Candidates for deacon ministry must be members of the church for at least 12 months, and already be ordained or be eligible for ordination.

ii. In preparation for the following calendar year, members will be given the opportunity to nominate, in writing, men who are believed to be qualified and eligible for service.

iii. The deacon body will meet with and interview nominees before making a recommendation to the membership.

iv. Upon recommendation from the deacon body, the church will elect by secret ballot the new individuals to serve. Unless a mid-year addition to the deacon body is deemed necessary, this process should be completed before December 15.

v. The deacon body will elect one of its members to serve as Head Deacon for the calendar year. The Head Deacon leads the deacons in fulfilling their role in the church.

vi. The number of deacons will be determined by the ministry needs of the church, but should never be less than three.

b. **Role**: We believe Deacons are to be spiritual leaders who model servanthood through their ministry to and representation of the church body.

i. The deacons' primary ministry is to the church body. They set an example of Christ-like care for the flock by visiting with and caring for the church's elderly, homebound, and infirm members, as well as meeting with visitors and prospective members.

ii. Deacons set the example of church unity by engaging in prayer, fellowship, corporate worship,group Bible study, ministry opportunities, and living out the Christian faith.

iii. The Head Deacon serves on the Church Leadership Team, and the other members of the deacon body are encouraged to serve on various committees and ministry teams.

iv. Deacons may serve as general Pulpit Supply in absence or inability of the Pastor. During times when the church is without a pastor, the deacons will arrange for temporary preaching supply, unless the church makes other provisions.

c. **Term of Service:**

i. Standard service period for individual deacons will be 3 years. Each year, the terms of 1/3 of the deacon body will expire, and new individuals will fill those positions.

ii. Deacons are expected to take one year sabbatical after their three years' service. If an extended term is necessary, the church body must approve the term extension by majority vote at a regular business meeting.
NOTE: There is no obligation to activate an ordained man who becomes a member of this church after serving in another church as an active deacon.

4. **Church Personnel:** These positions include (but are not limited to) Custodial Staff, Nursery Workers, and other non-ministerial staff members as needed and authorized by the church.

a. **Establishment of Church Personnel positions:**

i. When a need or opening is identified, the Church Leadership Team will work to create or modify the job description for the position as needed;

ii. The Church Leadership Team will work with the Finance Committee to determine the compensation and expenses required to fill this position;

iii. Together, the Church Leadership Team and Finance Committee will make a joint recommendation to the church concerning the drafted position description and estimated compensation;

iv. Upon approval by the church, the Church Leadership Team will begin the process of searching for a suitable individual to fill the position;

v. Church Personnel positions operate under the direct supervision of the Church Business Administrator.

b. **Employment and Termination of Church Personnel positions:**

i. The Church Leadership Team holds the authority to employ individuals to fill the non-ministerial staff positions created by the church.

ii. The Church Leadership Team may request the resignation of any employee when it is deemed to be in the best interest of the church. In extreme cases (i.e. moral issues, insubordination, fraud), the Church Leadership Team holds the authority to terminate the employment of an employee of the church.

iii. In any and all cases, however the resignation or termination occurs, the Church Leadership Team has been given final authority by the church to act on its behalf in all matters regarding non-ministerial staff.

5. **Elected Officers:**

a. **Church Moderator** – This position is to be elected by the church annually to moderate the church's business meetings. In the absence of the elected moderator, the pastor or head

deacon may preside. In the absence of any of these individuals, the church clerk will call the church to order and an acting moderator will be elected for that meeting.

b. **Church Clerk** – This position is elected annually and is expected to attend all church business meetings (or find a suitable individual to substitute) and will be responsible for keeping an organized record of all business of the church during these meetings.
   - **i.** The church clerk works alongside the Church Business Administrator and is responsible for keeping a register of the names of members with dates of admission, dismissal, or death, as well as a record of baptisms.
   - **ii.** The church clerk will issue letters of membership as voted by the church, preserve on file all communication and written official reports, and give notice of all meetings where such notice is necessary as indicated in these by-laws.
   - **iii.** The Church Business Administrator may be assigned any and all of these tasks in the absence of an elected church clerk. All church records are church property, and must be kept on church grounds.

c. **Trustees** – Five trustees will be elected on a rotation basis by the church to serve for three years. Until their successors shall be elected, trustees will hold in trust the property of the church
   - **i.** No person shall be elected to serve as Trustee for more than two consecutive terms.
   - **ii.** Trustees shall have no power to buy, sell, mortgage, lease, or transfer any property without a specific vote of the church authorizing each action.
   - **iii.** It is the responsibility of the Trustees to affix their signatures to legal documents involving the sale, mortgaging, purchase, or rental of property, or other legal documents where the signatures of Trustees are required. On all property transfers, at least two signatures of trustees are required. On all other legal documents one trustee's signature is required.
   - **iv.** Trustees hold the responsibility for upkeep or recommendations of upgrade of all church property, including but not limited to ministry facilities, grounds, and parsonage.

IV. Church Leadership Team

The Church Leadership Team is responsible for planning, implementing, and overseeing the ministry of the church.

1. **Organization:** The Church Leadership Team is intended to be a representation of both the Church Officers and the Membership.
   - **a.** This team is made up of the Pastor, the Head Deacon, a Trustees Representative, the Music Ministry Coordinator, the Children's Ministry Coordinator, the Church Business Administrator, as well as At-Large (non-staff) team members elected by the church from the membership. An odd number of team members is to be maintained for voting purposes.
   - **b.** Every member has one vote. A spirit of Christian unity and kindness is expected to be nurtured and maintained.
   - **c.** At-Large (non-staff) team members can be elected to up to three consecutive one year terms. After three consecutive years' service, a person is required to be off the team for one

year. Pastor and ministry staff members are voting members of the Church Leadership Team for the duration of their employment by the church.

d. The addition of any additional ministry staff positions to this team must be presented to the church on recommendation from the Church Leadership Team at a regularly scheduled business meeting, and approved by 3/4 majority vote of the members present (this may impact the number of At-Large members needed for voting purposes).

e. If a team member is under investigation for any reason, he or she is to be removed from the Church Leadership Team for the duration of the investigation.

2. **Areas of Responsibility:** The Church Leadership Team shall meet monthly to prayerfully plan, coordinate, and administer the ministries of the church.

   a. Programs:

   i. All programs & events must be presented to and approved by the Church Leadership Team.

   ii. This team will plan and oversee church programs by enlisting church members to serve in ministry roles to fulfill the vision of the church.

   iii. This team will be responsible for administration of the education programs of the church. These programs include, but are not limited to, Small Group Bible Study (Sunday School or other weekly groups), Family Ministries, Missions, Men's and Women's Ministries, and Music Ministries.

   b. Staff Accountability & Discipline:

   i. The Church Leadership Team is responsible for church staff and personnel decisions and any recommendations made to the church regarding such decisions.

   ii. The Church Leadership Team is charged by the church to hold ministry staff accountable to fulfilling the vision of the church.

   iii. The Church Leadership Team shall conduct an annual review of all church staff members before the end of each fiscal year. Any new staff members hired by the church shall participate in an additional review conducted by the Church Leadership Team after six months of service. The purpose of these reviews is to provide accountability, as well as the opportunity to receive productive feedback in order to keep the church's ministry focus vibrant and in touch with the needs of the church body. The criteria for these reviews shall be the individual job descriptions for each position.

   iv. Any discipline situations involving church officers will be handled through this team. In such times, the Pastor is to act as shepherd of the church and assume the role of chairman.

   v. In the event that the situation involves the Pastor, the Head Deacon will act as chairman in his absence.

   c. Ministry Teams:

   i. Ministry Teams may be formed by the Church Leadership Team at any point when a ministry need presents itself. A primary goal of each team will be to enlist individuals not already involved in other ministries to fulfill the vision of the church.

ii. Team Goals & Objectives will be established by the Church Leadership Team for each ministry team.

iii. Team Leaders for specific ministry needs are to be appointed by the Church Leadership Team, and presented to the church for approval. Team Leaders must be active members of the church. These individuals are accountable to the Church Leadership Team to administer the needs of their particular ministry. Team Leaders have the authority to recruit qualified individuals from the congregation to fulfill the team's purpose.

d. **Policies, & Procedures:** The Church Leadership Team shall provide for development of a church operations manual to include church policies and procedures, organization flow-charts, and lines of responsibility in the administration of the church.

i. This manual will be available through the church office and maintained by the Church Business Administrator. The manual will be reviewed annually by the Church Leadership Team and be revised as needed.

ii. Any church member or ministry team may request reviews to policies and procedures at any regularly scheduled business meeting of the church.

iii. Addition to, revision of, or deletion of church policies requires the following:

1. Recommendation by a church officer involved in the affected areas;
2. Discussion and recommendation to the congregation by the Church Leadership Team;
3. Approval by a 2/3 majority of members present and voting at the scheduled business meeting where such a recommendation is made.

V. Church Finances

The church will depend on tithes and offerings for the financial support of ongoing ministries of the church (Matthew 6:19-21). Every member is encouraged to practice wise financial stewardship and to prayerfully support the ministries of the church in the ways they are able. We as a church pledge to be completely honest in all financial matters and prompt in discharging our obligations.

1. **Budget & Finance Committee** - This committee is made up of 5-9 active members and works with the Church Leadership Team to prepare and submit the annual budget for church approval. In this process, the committee will solicit projected needs from ministry leaders for consideration.

a. The committee is responsible for addressing financial needs as they arise through the year. All church funds shall be accounted for and recorded by the Finance Committee.

b. Terms of service shall be three years. New members will be nominated and approved as needed at the first business meeting of the year.

c. The annual budget will be presented by the Budget & Finance Committee to the congregation in writing at least two weeks prior to the first scheduled business meeting of the fiscal year.

d. Copies of the proposed budget must be made available to each active member (either in physical or digital form) ahead of the first business meeting of the fiscal year.

e. At the first business meeting of the year, the annual budget for that fiscal year must be submitted for approval. Approval requires a 2/3 majority vote of members present at the business meeting. Fiscal Year will begin January 1 and conclude December 31.

VI. Church Meetings

1. **Worship Services:** The church shall hold services each Sunday for Worship and Bible Study.
2. **Business Meetings:**
    - **a.** Regular Business Meetings are to be held quarterly in the months of January, April, July, and October on the Sunday afternoon or Wednesday evening that best fits on the church calendar. Appropriate notice will be provided when major decisions of the church are placed on the agenda.
    - **b.** Special Business Meetings may be called when necessary. These meetings and their purpose will be announced a minimum of one week prior to the meeting. Only the announced topic(s) will be discussed in these meetings.
    - **c.** A quorum shall consist of 5% of active resident membership as recorded in the last annual church letter to the Southern Baptist Convention.
    - **d.** Parliamentary Procedures - Unless otherwise agreed upon, the latest publication of Robert's Rules of Order shall serve as a guide in all matters of procedure in business meetings.
3. **Special Services:** When necessary and appropriate, special services will be planned, approved, and scheduled through the Church Leadership Team.

VII. Amendments

Amendments to the church constitution and by-laws may be made at any regularly scheduled business meeting of the church.

1. Such amendments must have been presented by the Church Leadership Team to the congregation in writing at least two weeks prior to the meeting.
2. Copies of proposed amendments must be made available to each active member (either in physical or digital form).
3. Amendments to the church constitution will require a 2/3 majority of a quorum of 25% of active resident members
4. Amendments to the by-laws will require a 2/3 majority vote of members present at the business meeting.

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By-Laws Amendment 1 {adopted October 12, 2025}

This amendment shall apply to any and all teams, committees, and/or boards of First Southern Baptist Church of Pueblo DBA Aberdeen Baptist Church.

1. **Purpose**: The purpose of this Amendment is to form and build up good and faithful stewards within the church, who will look after and protect the resources God has given to the church, while also being zealous for growth, advancement and further Gospel Kingdom work.

2. **Ministry Teams:** The ministry teams in question include, but are not limited to the Church Leadership Team, the Deacons, the Trustees, the Budget & Finance Committee, and any subsequently created ministry teams that may be created to accomplish church business.

3. **Frequency**: The members of the indicated teams shall meet on a regular basis - no less than quarterly - in order to prepare sufficient reports of their meetings to present to the membership at the Quarterly Business Meetings.
   - **a.** The frequency of meeting, if more than quarterly, is entirely up to the individual team to determine based on the needs and goals of the ministry team.
   - **b.** It is the responsibility of the chairperson of the ministry team to schedule each meeting, unless otherwise designated to another ministry team member who is in agreement to schedule the meetings.
   - **c.** Communication of meeting scheduling should be sent out at least 2 weeks prior in at least two (2) forms of communication: email, text message, phone call, Sunday morning announcement, mailed letter; preference being given to email and phone call.

4. **Minutes**: Minutes will be kept as record for the church as a whole to be able to request at any time in order to better understand the operations of each team.

5. **Goals**: This will serve several functions, including but not limited to the following:
   - **a.** Accountability of members within the team to one another
   - **b.** Accountability of members within the team to the church as a whole
   - **c.** Broad and in-depth understanding of issues/concerns, projects, events, ministry opportunities, and the like that need to be brought to the church, as a whole, in the next quarterly business meeting or in the event of a special called business meeting

6. **Accountability:** The accountability and discipline of said team and/or member(s) shall be in accordance with practices already defined and laid out in the existing by-laws and Scripture.