

**THE CONSTITUTION AND BY-LAWS OF
THE FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH OF JOPLIN, MISSOURI
(With amendments as of 2-1-2026)**

For the certain preservation and security of the principles of our faith and to the end that this body may be governed in an orderly manner consistent with the accepted tenets of the Missionary Baptist Denomination, Missouri Baptist Convention, and the Southern Baptist Convention in extending the full gospel and Kingdom of the Lord Jesus Christ over all the world, through Evangelism, Education, Benevolence and Missions, and for the purpose of preserving the liberties inherent in each individual member of this church and the freedom of action of this body with respect to its relation to other churches of the same faith, we do declare and establish this constitution.

I. NAME

This body shall be known at the First Baptist Church of Joplin, Missouri, having obtained a pro forma decree, as a Missouri Corporation, on October 24, 1892.

The original charter being filed in the Recorder's Office of Jasper County, Missouri on October 28, 1892, in Deed Book 114, page 186.

II. ARTICLES OF FAITH AND CHURCH COVENANT

Having been led, as we believe, by the Spirit of God, to receive the Lord Jesus Christ as our Savior, and on the profession of our faith, having been baptized in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit, we do now most solemnly and joyfully enter into covenant with one another, as one body in Christ.

We engage, therefore, by the aid of the Holy Spirit, to walk together in Christian love; to strive for the advancement of this church in knowledge, holiness and comfort; to promote its discipline and doctrines; to contribute cheerfully and regularly to the support of the ministry, the expenses of the church, the relief of the poor, and the spread of the gospel through all nations.

We also engage to maintain family and secret devotions; to educate our children religiously; to seek the salvation of our kindred and acquaintances; to walk circumspectly in the world; to strive to be just in our dealings, faithful in our engagements, and exemplary in our deportment; to avoid all backbiting, tattling and excessive anger; to abstain from the sale and use of intoxicating drinks as a beverage; and to be zealous in our efforts to advance the kingdom of our Savior.

We further commit to watch over one another in brotherly love; to remember each other in prayer, to aid each other in sickness and distress; to cultivate Christian sympathy in feeling and courtesy in speech; to be slow to take offense, but always ready for reconciliation, and mindful of the rules of our Savior to secure it without delay.

We moreover commit that when we remove from this place, we will as soon as possible unite with some other church, where we can carry out the spirit of this covenant and the principles of God's Word.

III. CHARACTER

Section 1. Polity. It's Government is vested in the body of believers who compose its entire membership. It is subject to the control of no other ecclesiastical body, but it recognizes and sustains the obligations of mutual counsel and cooperation which are common among Baptist churches.

Section 2. Doctrine. It accepts the scriptures as it's authority in matters of faith and practice. It's understanding of Christian truth as contained therein is in essential accord with the belief of the Baptist Churches as indicated in the Articles of Faith herewith.

IV. AMENDMENTS

This constitution may be amended by a two-thirds vote of the members present and voting at any annual meeting of the church, or at a meeting specially called for that purpose, the proposed amendment being inserted in the call. One month shall pass after the amendment is proposed before final action can be taken on the same. However, no change shall be made in Articles II and III, entitled "Articles of Faith and Church Covenant," and "Character," except by a two-thirds vote of all the members of the church present entitled to vote, said proposed change having been laid before the church in writing at a regular business meeting not less than one month before the time of the proposed action, and read from the pulpit on the Lord's Day next succeeding such proposal; and that said constitution shall be in keeping with the provisions of the original charter at all times.

BY-LAWS

Article 1. MEMBERSHIP

Section 1. Qualification. It shall be composed of members duly qualified and registered in either of the following ways; (1) Open confession of faith in the Lord Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior, and Baptism by immersion in the name of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit. (2) Upon the receipt of the usual letter of transfer from a corresponding Southern Baptist Church. (3) Upon restoration to membership, by vote of the congregation, of such members as may have, for various reason, been excluded from membership. (4) By personal statement of such Baptists whose church connection may have been, for various reasons, lost track of by them. (5) By personal statement of other Christians concerning their baptism by immersion in the name of the Father, The Son and The Holy Spirit.

Section 2. Duties. Members are expected, first of all to be faithful in all the duties essential to the Christian life; and also to attend habitually the services of this church, to give regularly for its support and its causes, and to share in its organized work.

Section 3. Rights. Such members as are in full and regular standing, and such only, may act and vote in the transactions of the church.

Section 4. Termination. The continuance of membership shall be subject to the principles and usages of the Baptist Churches, and especially as follows:

- (1) Any member in good and regular standing who desires a letter of dismissal and recommendation to any other Baptist Church of like faith and order, is entitled to receive it upon the request of the church with which he is uniting. This letter shall be sent to the church not to the individual member. No letters of dismissal shall be granted except upon vote of the membership at regular Business Meeting.

- (2) If any member requests to be released from his covenant obligations to this church for reasons which the church may finally deem satisfactory, after it shall have patiently and kindly endeavored to secure his continuance in it's fellowship, such request may be granted, and his membership terminated.
- (3) Should a member become an offense to the church and to it's good name by reason of immoral or unchristian conduct or by persistent breach of his covenant vows, the church may terminate his membership, but only after due notice and opportunity of hearing, and after faithful efforts have been made to bring such a member to repentance and amendment.
- (4) The membership of no person shall be terminated (except by letter) at the meeting when the recommendation for such action is made.
- (5) All requests for termination of membership, except by letter or action looking thereto, shall first be considered by the deacons, who shall make recommendations to the church.

Section 5. Any member uniting with a church not of like faith and order shall automatically be dropped from the membership roll of this church.

Section 6. Human Sexuality and Gender. (Adopted 8/23/15)

This local church affirms God's original design to create two distinct and complementary sexes, male and female, to glorify Him. (Gen. 1:27; Isa. 43:7; Matt. 19:4-6 Mark 10:6) Marriage is the first divine institution, essentially rooted in the created order, uniting one man and one woman in an exclusive covenant commitment for their joint lifetime, for their good and for the good of any children who may be conceived and born into this union. (Gen. 1:28, 2:19-24; Malachi 2:13-16; Mark 10:11-12) The assignment of gender at conception is a gift of God and part of God's glory in creation. The Fall of Man into sin and God's subsequent curse have introduced brokenness and futility into God's good creation (Gen. 3:1-24; Rom. 8:20). We extend love and compassion to those whose experience of this brokenness includes a perceived conflict between their biological sex and their gender identity (Rom. 8:22-23). We affirm God's good design that gender identity should be determined by biological sex and not by one's self-perception—a perception which is often influenced by fallen human nature in ways contrary to God's design. (Eph. 4:17-18) We affirm distinctions in masculine and feminine roles as ordained by God as part of the created order, and that those distinctions should find an echo in every human heart. (Gen. 2:18, 21-24; 1 Cor. 11:7-9; Eph. 5:22-33; 1 Tim. 2:12-14) We believe that efforts to live contrary to birth sex, whether by behavior, attire, cosmetics, or even medical or surgical therapy, are resisting or rebelling against the gift of God and a central dimension of His will for that person, and therefore such behavior is sinful. We condemn efforts to alter one's bodily identity (e.g., cross-sex hormone therapy, gender reassignment surgery) to bring it into line with one's perceived gender identity. We love our homosexual and transgender neighbors and seek their good always. First Baptist Church welcomes anyone who sincerely seeks the faith. However, membership to First Baptist Church requires evidence of a saving faith in Jesus Christ, repentance, and baptism. We continue to oppose steadfastly all efforts by any court, or legislature or policymaker to validate transgender identity as morally good, right or praiseworthy (Isa.5:20). We commit ourselves to make decisions about membership, personnel and other church matters based on this biblical perspective of human sexuality.

Section 7. Marriage and Civil Unions (adopted 8/23/15)

This local church affirms the biblical truths that marriage is the first divine institution, essentially rooted in the created order, uniting one man and one woman in an exclusive covenant commitment for their joint lifetime, for their good and for the welfare of any children who may be conceived and born into this union. Marriage is based on the truth that men and women are complementary, the biological fact that reproduction depends on a man and a woman, and the lived experience that children need both a mother and a father. Re-defining marriage to fit popular norms rejects these truths. By encouraging the norms of true marriage—man-woman monogamy, sexual exclusivity, and permanence—the state strengthens civil society and promotes human flourishing, including the well-being of children.

Christian marriage is God's unique gift to reveal the union between Christ and His Church, as illustrated by the wedding of a Christian man and woman in this exclusive and permanent covenant relationship. As such, this local Church believes that Christian wedding ceremonies on Church property are spiritual observances of worship of God who created this divine institution. As worship services, weddings on Church property shall be officiated by one or more ordained ministers of the gospel approved by the pastor.

The Church may decline to make its facilities or ministers available for any wedding if it is determined that one or both of the parties are not biblically qualified to marry. Such determinations may be made by the [*pastor, Church council, or wedding committee, etc.*], subject to the direction of the Church.

The Church may also decline to participate in or recognize in any manner any marriage, so-called marriage, civil union, commitment ceremony or other activity which may, directly or indirectly affirm, approve or communicate behavior or beliefs which are contrary to the Church's beliefs about biblical morality. Such actions would violate the religious conscience of this Body and its members. We must obey God, who is Lord of our conscience.

No minister [*or employee*] of the Church shall officiate at any marriage or similar ceremony unless such event or ceremony is consistent with this policy. No minister [*or employee*] of the Church shall officiate at any civil union or commitment ceremony that is not approved by the Church as being consistent with this policy.

Article II. OFFICERS

The officers of this corporation shall be the Trustees.

The duties of such officers shall be those as are normally performed by the holders of such offices.

Vacancies in the Trustee Board shall be filled by vote of the church for unexpired terms; and no person shall be elected to any such office who has not been a member of the church in good standing at least for a period of one year.

The officers of this church shall be as follows:

1. PASTOR

A pastor is to be chosen and called by the church whenever a vacancy occurs. His selection shall take place at a meeting for that purpose, of which at least one week's notice shall be given from the pulpit and in the church publications. A pulpit committee shall be nominated by the deacons, approved and

elected by the church to seek out a suitable pastor, and their recommendation will constitute a nomination. The committee shall bring to the consideration of the church only one man's name at a time. An affirmative vote of three-fourths of those present being necessary to constitute a call. The pastor, thus elected, shall serve until the relationship is terminated by mutual consent or by the majority vote of the church in regular business session. The pastor shall have in charge the welfare and oversight of the church. He shall preside at all meetings of the church, except as hereinafter provided.

That said pastor chosen shall counsel with the other officers, deacons, and trustees, and advise with them, and not make any monetary obligation in behalf of said church, and shall leave the finances of said church to the officers elected by said church.

**PASTOR AND PILLAR TEAM
QUALIFICATIONS
FOR FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH OF JOPLIN
Adopted February 1st, 2026**

That said pastor chosen shall counsel with the other officers, deacons, and trustees, and advise with them, and not make any monetary obligation on behalf of said church, and shall leave the finances of said church to the officers elected by said church.

Section 1: Biblical foundation. The pastor will endeavor to follow scripture's teaching in his character, conduct, and ministry.

1 Timothy 3:1-7, Now the overseer is to be above reproach, faithful to his wife, temperate, self-controlled, respectable, hospitable, able to teach, not given to drunkenness, not violent but gentle, not quarrelsome, not a lover of money. He must manage his own family well and see that his children obey him, and he must do so in a manner worthy of full respect. (If anyone does not know how to manage his own family, how can he take care of God's church?) He must not be a recent convert, or he may become conceited and fall under the same judgment as the devil. He must also have a good reputation with outsiders, so that he will not fall into disgrace and into the devil's trap.

Titus 1:7-9, Since an overseer manages God's household, he must be blameless—not overbearing, not quick-tempered, not given to drunkenness, not violent, not pursuing dishonest gain. Rather, he must be hospitable, one who loves what is good, who is self-controlled, upright, holy and disciplined. He must hold firmly to the trustworthy message as it has been taught, so that he can encourage others by sound doctrine and refute those who oppose it.

1 Peter 5:1-4, To the elders among you, I appeal as a fellow elder and a witness of Christ's sufferings who also will share in the glory to be revealed: Be shepherds of God's flock that is under your care, watching over them—not because you must, but because you are willing, as God wants you to be; not pursuing dishonest gain, but eager to serve; not lording it over those entrusted to you, but being examples to the flock. And when the Chief Shepherd appears, you will receive the crown of glory that will never fade away."

Section 2: Accountability. The pastor shall be accountable to the Pillar Team, so named from Galatians 2:9 where Paul named foundational leaders in the early church.

1. Qualifications. Pillars will be godly men who have demonstrated spiritual maturity, stability of character, and wisdom. The members of this team shall exhibit lives marked by faithfulness, humility, unity, and discernment. They must maintain strict confidentiality. Each member must have been an active member for no less than seven years and in active service to the church

for no less than five years. Active service means that they are consistent, regularly present, and faithfully serving. Service outlets include, but is not limited to, serving on committees, teaching classes, and serving in church ministries. Staff and their spouses are not eligible to be Pillars.

2. Duties. The Pillar Team shall meet with the pastor no less than quarterly for spiritual encouragement, mutual accountability, and evaluation of the health of the pastor's ministry and the church. This team's role is not to govern or control the pastor but to stand as pillars of support and accountability, ensuring biblical integrity, healthy leadership, and alignment with the church's mission. The team shall also hold itself mutually accountable to the qualifications for biblical leadership outlined in 1 Timothy 3:1–13, Titus 1:5–9, and 1 Peter 5:1–4.

Any concerns or disciplinary matters shall be addressed according to Matthew 18 and church bylaws, with the aim of restoration, spiritual health, and the protection of the flock.

This team will also serve as the group who joins with the pastor in dreaming and visioning for the future of the church. The team ought to only interject or deter when the dream and vision either runs counter to the health of the church or against Scripture. Otherwise, they ought to seek to equip the pastor to lead as the Lord leads him, and refine and sharpen as needed.

Members of the Pillar Team will have an ex officio seat on church committees (one Pillar Team member for each committee). Pillars will have no voting rights, nor will they speak on behalf of the committee (or Pillar Team) unless expressly enabled by a vote of said committee.

When the office of pastor is vacant, the overall leadership of the church shall rest with the Pillar Team. They will not take over responsibilities expressly given to other staff, deacons, individuals, and committees by the bylaws, but will provide direction and serve as a council to promote harmony during times of transition.

The Pillar Team will honor the congregational polity of the church and not override congregational authority.

3. Number, Election, Terms of Service. The Pillar team will consist of six members who shall be elected at the first business meeting after the adoption of this amendment, 1/3 to serve one year, 1/3 to serve two years and 1/3 to serve three years. In case of death or removal or incapacity to serve, the Pillar Team may select a member to serve the remainder of the unexpired term. After serving a regular term, no member shall be eligible for re-election to office until the lapse of at least one year. Pillars will not be eligible to serve on church committees and the Pillar Team concurrently. Election of future Pillars will use the same process as is used in the election of Trustees. The pastor and staff will refrain from influencing whom the church elects, but those who are elected will be screened by the Ministry Placement Team, who may eliminate nominees who do not meet the qualifications outlined above. In the case where too few qualified candidates are nominated, the Pillar Team will function with fewer than the six members allowed. Otherwise, the number of Pillar Team members may be increased or decreased only by amendment to the bylaws.
4. Accountability Procedure. Any serious allegation against the pastor or Pillar Team member brought to the Pillar Team's attention must be substantiated by two or more witnesses (1 Tim. 5:19). The group will then pursue biblical repentance and reconciliation as directed by scripture and led by the Holy Spirit. If a majority of the group finds the charges to be valid, the pastor or lay leader will be given 30 days to correct the problem or engage in a plan of correction. Should an issue not be resolved, the Pillar Team may present the charge to the church body in a special-called business meeting with a motion to dismiss the pastor or Pillar Team Member, in accordance with the rules for special-called business meeting elsewhere in these by-laws. A majority vote of agreement is required to dismiss the pastor or Pillar Team member, whose duties will cease immediately upon dismissal. The pastor may receive severance as

determined by personnel committee policy. In the case of issues requiring church discipline, such as serious moral failure, the issue may be referred to the deacons who will follow the procedures outlined in the deacon section of these bylaws.

2. OTHER EMPLOYEES

MINISTRY STAFF

Ministers are to be chosen and called by the church whenever a vacancy or a need occurs. Their selection shall take place at a meeting for the purpose for which at least one week's notice shall be given by the search committee and in the church publications. The search committee shall consist of one deacon nominated by deacon body, one member of the personnel committee nominated by that committee, and three at large committee members as selected by the pastor. The search committee recommendation shall constitute a recommendation. The committee shall bring to the consideration of the church only one person's name at a time. An affirmative vote of 3/4 of those present at the meeting will be necessary to constitute a call. The minister, thus elected, shall serve until the relationship is terminated by mutual consent or by majority vote of the church in regular business session. The meeting minister shall have in his charge the welfare and oversight of their particular ministry.

All other employees shall be elected by the church upon nomination by the Nominating Committee, or as the church may otherwise direct; duties and compensation shall be specified by the committee named for this purpose, under the general direction of the pastor, in an advisory capacity, and subject to the approval of the church.

3. DEACONS

Section 1. Qualifications

(1) The qualifications for the office of deacon shall be found in I Timothy 3:1-13.

Section 2. Number, Election, Terms of Service

(1)) The deacon body shall consist of up to 21 members, the number maybe increased by majority vote of the church members. The deacons, under counsel with the pastor, may choose to fill a smaller number of deacons if there are not enough qualified individuals during a particular voting cycle. Upon the adoption of these by-laws, approximately 1/3 of this number will be elected each year to replace those deacons rotating to inactive status

Then at each annual election thereafter, about 1/3 of the members of the deacon body shall be elected. Deacon nomination will be submitted by the members of the Church. The nominees will then be screened by the Committee of Deacons (see Deacon Qualification). A final list of nominees will be voted on by the church by paper ballot.

(2) In case of death or removal or incapacity to serve, the church may elect a deacon to fill the unexpired term or ask the person with the next highest number of votes in the last deacon election to serve. There is no obligation to place in the office of a deacon, a brother who comes to the church from another church where he has served as deacon.

- (3) After serving a regular term, no deacon shall be eligible for re-election to the office until the lapse of at least one year.
- (4) If there are not enough candidates eligible or willing to serve, any deacon rotating off the active list may volunteer to be elected to another term of one (1) year.

Section 3. Duties. The duties of the deacons shall be in accordance with the meaning of the word and the practice in the New Testament.

- (1) They are to be zealous to guard the unity of the spirit within the church in the bonds of peace.
- (2) They are to serve as a council of advice and conference with the pastor in all matters pertaining to the welfare and work of the church. With the pastor they are to consider and formulate plans for the constant effort and progress of the church in all things pertaining to the saving of souls, the development of Christians and the extension and growth of the Kingdom of God.
- (3) By proper organization and method among themselves they are to establish and maintain personal fraternal relations with, and inspiring oversight of, all the membership of the church. Especially are they to seek to know the physical needs and the moral and spiritual struggles of the brethren; and to serve the whole church in relieving, encouraging, and developing all who are in need.
- (4) In counsel with the pastor and by such methods as the Holy Spirit may direct in accordance with the New Testament teaching, they are to have oversight of the discipline of the church. In administering the discipline they are to be guided always by the principles set forth in Matthew 18:15-17; I Corinthians 5:9-13; I Thessalonians 5:12-14. The deacons shall be free to call upon any member of the church to aid in the discipline of the church members.
- (5) The deacons shall serve as a general Pulpit Committee. In case of absence or inability of the pastor, subject to the advice from and in conference with him, they shall provide for pulpit supplies. In any period when the church is without a pastor unless the church shall otherwise provide, the deacons shall arrange the temporary ministry and take counsel with reference to securing a pastor.
- (6) It shall be the responsibility and duty of the Church Treasurer to supervise in counting all the offering of monies received in the services of the church. Please refer to "Internal Financial Controls Policy" adopted 14 October 2012.
- (7) The deacons shall assist in the observance of the Lord' Supper.

Section 4. Method of procedure.

- (1) The whole body of deacons shall be organized as a unit for the consideration of all larger problems and general policies of the church and shall meet regularly on an agreed time, or at a called meeting, They may organize themselves into such committees as their wisdom may direct for efficiency in service. The chairman may call a special meeting of the deacons, and shall call one upon the request of five deacons. All members of the Board of Deacons shall be notified of such a meeting.
- (2) Each deacon shall confer freely with the pastor about all matters and cases of discipline which in his judgment could be most wisely and spiritually handled in private.

**DEACON QUALIFICATIONS
FOR FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH OF JOPLIN
Adopted November 11, 1992**

As the New Testament is studied it becomes clear that there was an office of deacon in the early church and that much more is written about the spiritual qualifications for the office than about their specific role. Since the word deacon means “to serve” it is believed that the deacons served the needs of the congregation in a wide variety of ways. Major attention was given to setting forth high standards for these spiritual leaders, similar to what was expected of their pastors. Deacons were not selected in the New Testament church because of popularity, personality, success, business acumen, influence, or any lesser reason, but because they had met high spiritual standards and had proven themselves as servants of the church.

Deacons are important spiritual leaders of First Baptist Church. In order for their leadership to be influential and effective in promoting God’s Kingdom work to members and prospects, the following basic qualifications have been established. Without expecting perfection, deacons should give evidence of having the qualifications identified by the church in their lives to a significant degree. No candidate or deacon has all of these qualifications brought to perfection and it is reasonable to expect spiritual growth and maturity to be an unfolding process.

1. The qualifications found in 1 Timothy 3:8-13; (Exegetical comments added for clarification only.)

(v. 8) “Men of Dignity” – worthy of respect, men of high principle.

“Not double tongued” – (1) someone who says one thing and thinks another; (2) someone who says one thing to one person, and another thing to another. Not a gossip or a tale-bearer.

“not addicted to much wine” – avoid being controlled by alcohol or drugs.

“Not fond of sordid gain” – not greedy; not involved in immoral or illegal methods of gaining wealth.

(v.9) “Holding to the mystery of the faith with a clear conscience.” – having clear beliefs regarding the eternal purposes of God revealed in Jesus Christ; having spiritual convictions.

(v.10) “Let these also first be tested” – examined as to the required qualities (dokimazo – “to test in the hope of being successful”), a trial period, proven in character and service. **“Let them serve as deacons if they are beyond reproach”** of good reputation; blameless.

(v.11) “Women must likewise be dignified. Not malicious gossips, but temperate, faithful in all things.”

(v.12) “Let deacons be husbands of one wife;” good managers of their children and their own household” – maintains quality family relationships, leads his family and household.

(v.13) “For those who have served well as deacons obtain for themselves a high standing and great confidence in the faith that is in Christ Jesus.” – good service as a deacon earns a position of respect and in turn leads to great confidence, “influence is a by-product of character.”

2. Maintain a personal program of spiritual growth and enrichment. As a spiritual leader, the deacon needs to maintain a devotional life of prayer, Bible reading, and fellowship with the Lord. It is

expected that spiritual growth will be an ongoing process, which, while marked by progress and at times defeat, will generally result in increased spiritual maturity.

3. Deacons are expected to be active participants in corporate worship and small group life of the church. (Examples: worship services, Sunday School, home cell group, study groups, etc.)

4. Since the key role of deacons is summed up in the word “servant” it is expected that the deacon will actively function in at least one substantial ongoing ministry that serves the Body of Christ. This ministry should seek to utilize the deacon’s spiritual gifts in an effective manner resulting in the church being cared for, strengthened, and grown. Types of ministries would be subject to deacon approval.

5. Spiritual leaders lead through modeling a mature Christian lifestyle. Jesus had more to say about the proper stewardship of financial resources than almost any other subject. **Being a spiritual and church leader, a deacon is to be an example of a biblical steward.** While not to be treated legalistically, the tithe is a mark of faithful stewards. Actually the New Testament goes beyond the tithe to stress that all of what we have belongs first to the Lord. It is a mark of leadership to be a tithing deacon. At the very least a deacon ought to be giving consistently, proportionately, and substantially to the support of the Lord’s work through First Baptist Church. There may be occasions when unusual circumstances interfere with a deacon’s normal giving plan, however, leadership in giving should resume at the earliest possible time. (Read 2 Cor. 8 & 9) Giving records will not be checked, however, deacons being screened for active status will be asked what their current giving practice is. Deception in this matter is a serious spiritual error (Acts 5:1-11).

6. It is expected that deacons will attend the monthly and special deacons’ meetings unless providentially hindered. Deacons with a pattern of missing meetings without legitimate reasons may be asked to resign as an active deacon.

4. TRUSTEES

1. There shall be six (6) Trustees, all of which shall be elected at the first annual meeting after the adoption of these by-laws, 1/3 to serve one year, 1/3 to serve two years and 1/3 to serve three years. In case of death or removal or incapacity to serve, the church may elect someone to serve the un-expired term.
2. They shall hold in trust the deeds of all properties of the church and they shall keep all properties properly insured, repair same, and have contractual management of the business of said church and church property.
3. They shall have the actual care of the place of worship or other properties of the church, but they shall have no power to buy, sell, mortgage, lease, or transfer any property without a specific vote of the church for such an action.
4. They shall make recommendations to the church concerning the custodian as to his salary, term of office and supervision of his work.
5. They shall, or along with other church appointed committees be charged with the responsibility to invest building fund money or other special funds as authorized by the church, and make recommendations as to changes in the present properties or proposed new properties.

6. The number of trustees may be increased or decreased by amendment to the charter only.
7. After serving a regular term, no trustee shall be eligible for re-election to office until the lapse of at least one year.
8. All New Equipment purchases of \$500.00 or more must be preapproved by the trustees.

5. MODERATOR

The Moderator will be the pastor of the church. In the absence of the pastor, the Chairman of the Deacons will preside, or, if neither one is present, the Clerk, or some other officer, will call the church to order and a moderator pro-tem shall be elected. The moderator will preside at all business sessions of the church.

6. CLERK

The Clerk of the church shall be elected annually by the church and shall keep in a suitable record book, a record of all the actions of the church, except as otherwise herein provided. The Clerk shall keep a register of the names of members, with dates of admission and dismissal or death, together with a record of baptisms. The Clerk shall also notify all officers, members of committees, and messengers of their election or appointments. The Clerk shall issue letters of dismissal voted by the church, preserve on file all the communications and written official reports, and give legal notice of all meetings where such notice is necessary, as indicated in these by-laws. The Clerk shall consider it a part of his responsibility to promote loyalty and efficiency in church life. The Clerk may enlist the service of the Church Secretary in carrying out these prescribed duties. However, the Clerk shall not be relieved of the responsibility for the performance of these prescribed duties.

7. TREASURER

The church shall elect annually a Church Treasurer. The Treasurer shall be bonded at the expense of the church in an amount determined by the Board of Trustees. It shall be the duty of the Treasurer working with the Financial Secretary to receive, preserve, and pay out all money upon receipt of vouchers approved by the Audit and Finance Committee, or things of value paid or given to the church, keeping at all times an itemized account of all receipts and disbursements. Payments of bills for local work and expenses shall be paid promptly by check, and all funds received for denominational or other causes shall be remitted at least monthly by check. **It shall be the duty of the treasurer to render to the deacons at each regular monthly meeting an itemized report of receipts and disbursements for the preceding month, and this report shall be read to the church in its regular quarterly business meeting.** Within thirty days after the end of each fiscal year the treasurer shall render to the deacons and to the church an annual statement of all disbursements. **Prior to the rendition of this annual report, upon its completion by the treasurer, the report shall be audited by the Audit and Finance Committee and their signatures placed at the end of the report before it is presented to the church.** All books, records, and accounts kept by the treasurer shall be considered the property of the church. The books shall be open to inspection at all times by any member of the church.

Upon rendering the annual accounts at the end of each fiscal year, and upon its approval by the Audit and Finance Committee, and its acceptance and approval by the church, the same shall be delivered by the Treasurer to the Church Clerk, who shall keep and preserve the same as a part of the permanent records of the church. The Treasurer shall upon the election of his successor and upon the completion of the fiscal report, deliver promptly to the active Chairman of the Board of Deacons, all books, records

and accounts in his hand pertaining to or relating to in any manner the duties of the office he is relinquishing. He shall consider it a part of his responsibility to promote in every proper way scriptural giving on the part of the entire membership of the church. The Treasurer will review the document "Internal Financial Controls Policy" with the Audit and Finance Committee and the Financial Secretary at a minimum of once a year when new committee members rotate on, or a new Financial Secretary is employed, to insure that the policy and spirit of good stewardship and accountability remain in practice.

8. FINANCIAL SECRETARY

The Financial Secretary shall be elected by the church.. He or she will receive the empty collection envelopes after the money has been removed and counted by the proper persons selected, and from these, he shall give each donor individual credit as per provision in the improved record system offered by the Baptist Sunday School Board or some other system approved by the church. He shall keep the envelopes for reference throughout the fiscal year. He will also fill out the sheet for the monthly balance and report found in the above named record book which will indicate receipts from envelopes, plate or loose, and miscellaneous or special offerings. He shall also be responsible for getting out and mailing annual statements to any contributing member if requested by such member.

9. MUSIC DIRECTOR

The Music Director shall be elected by the church and shall be charged with the responsibility of providing worshipful music for all services and departments of the church, and shall have general oversight and direction of graded choir programs. He (or she) may direct the choirs in their practice or public services; and cooperate with the pastor and other leaders in the selection of suitable music and the devising of appropriate musical programs for all occasions where such services are needed. He may be required to do additional church duties and responsibilities if the situation demands.

11. CHAIRMAN OF USHERS

Upon the approval of the church, he shall associate with himself and nominate for church approval a sufficient number of ushers to care for the seating and comfort of the congregation; the greeting and introduction of visitors; and the prevention of interruptions and distractions; and similar needed services.

12. OFFICERS OF CHURCH ORGANIZATIONS

All organizations of the church shall be under church control, It is understood that the pastor is ex-officio head of all the organizations, and his leadership is to be recognized in all of them.

At least three months before the close of the church year, the General Superintendent of the Sunday School, shall be elected upon recommendation of the Ministry Placement Team. The Nominating Committee shall consist of six members, serving three year terms, with two members rotating off each year. New Nominating Committee members shall be appointed at the beginning of the calendar year by the Deacon Body. Their duty shall be to bring to the church nominations of church officers and positions requiring church approval.

Special committees may be selected from time to time as needed and as authorized by the church.

ARTICLE III.

1. The Budget Committee, in consultation with the pastor, deacons and responsible leaders of various organizations shall prepare and submit to the church for approval at its annual business meeting (or at such other time as may be deemed best by the church) an inclusive budget, indicating the items and amount needed and sought for all local expenses and purposes and in like manner for all denominational or other approved non-local causes. The Budget Committee shall be composed of the Chairman of the Deacons, Chairman of the Trustees, the Treasurer, the Financial Secretary, The Superintendent of the Sunday School, the two members at large from the church, together with the pastor.

2. All funds, for any and all purposes, shall pass through the hands of the Treasurer and a suitable offering steward so that two persons are present at any time church monies are handled.. The monies will be properly recorded on the books of the church, and deposited promptly in a bank authorized by the church. The expenses of all organizations, as approved by the church, shall be paid from the local expense fund as heretofore provided.

3. Special offerings may be sought by the church, or by any of its organizations, only upon approval of the church after recommendation of the Audit and Finance Committee. This does not preclude individuals making special or designated offerings at any time as the Spirit of God may move them.

4. It is understood that membership in this church involves financial obligation to support the church and its causes with regular, proportionate gifts. Each new member may therefore be approached by a representative of the Audit and Finance Committee for enlistment of the church's inclusive budget; and at least annually, plans shall be put into operation for securing the worthy support from each member of the church.

ARTICLE IV. SPECIAL FUNDS

Section 1. Any gifts, devises, or bequests made to the church for a special purpose shall be used only for the purposes given unless the donor or his heirs consent in writing for such gift to be used otherwise. Such designated funds will be reported on a sepatare report indicating the purpose, the amount donated, the amount spent, and any unspent balance at each financial reporting time.

Section 2. Any undesignated funds in the General Treasury may be transferred to any particular fund upon the affirmative vote of the majority of members present in any regular business meeting.

ARTICLE V. MEETINGS

Section 1. For Worship

Public morning and evening services shall be held on the Lord's Day and prayer service on each Wednesday evening, or as determined by the church.

The Lord's Supper shall be observed on the fifth Sunday of the month, or such other times as the church may designate.

Occasional religious meetings may be designated and called by the pastor at his discretion, or by vote of the church.

Section 2. For Business.

At any of the meetings of worship the church may, without special notice, act upon the reception of members and upon the appointment of messengers to councils, but not upon other business, except as to emergency matters requiring immediate action.

The pastor may call, or when requested by the deacons, trustees, or any standing committee, will call from the pulpit special business meetings, the particular object of the meeting being clearly stated in the notice, and special meetings of the church may also be called by the clerk upon the written application of any five adult members specifying the object thereof.

Notice of such a meeting shall be read at the public services on the Lord's Day next preceding the day fixed for such meeting and advertised in the church paper or local newspaper.

The annual meeting of the church shall be held on the third Sunday in September unless the church authorizes a different date. Annual reports shall be presented and officers elected, and such other business transacted as may be specified in the call or as authorized by the by-laws.

The regular quarterly business session shall be held on the third Sunday of the month, unless notice of change in date is given in the church publication or from the pulpit three days before such meeting is to be held.

A quorum shall consist of at least 30 active members of the church present, for all meetings of the church, and for the transaction of church business after notice of said meeting is given as therein set forth. A majority of the members present and voting shall be necessary for passage of business.

ARTICLE VI. DISCIPLINE

Section 1. Should any unhappy difference between members arise, the aggrieved member shall follow, in a tender spirit, the rules given by our Lord in the 18th chapter of Matthew.

Section 2. Should any case of gross breach of covenant, or of public scandal occur, the deacons shall endeavor to remove the offence; and if such effort fail, may report the base to the church.

ARTICLE VII. CHURCH YEAR

The church year shall be from January 1 to December 31. (adopted July 28, 2019)

ARTICLE VIII. AMENDMENT OF BY-LAWS

These by-laws may be amended by a majority vote of the members present at any regular business session, provided however, that notice of the proposed change shall have been presented and read at least four weeks previous to the regular business meeting when action is to be taken.

Article IX. FACILITIES USE POLICY (adopted 8/23/15)

All real property facilities of FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH JOPLIN (collectively, the "Church Facilities"), including without limitation its sanctuary auditorium, fellowship hall, gymnasium, educational facilities, conference rooms and other meeting rooms or facilities used for the mission of the Church, wherever located,

(1) when used by the Church, its ministers, officers, staff or employees or its congregation members or Church attendees, and

(2) if used by other persons or groups with the permission of the Church or the ministerial or administrative staff of the Church,

shall be used solely for purposes consistent or compatible with the mission, faith and doctrine of the Church, as defined in its Articles of Incorporation, Constitution and Bylaws, or in Statements of Faith adopted by the local Church from time to time, it being acknowledged and understood that the Church Facilities are intended not to be facilities of “public accommodation” as defined by law, but are facilities owned by the Church, a Missouri Non-Profit Corporation, dedicated solely for such permitted uses.

The Church’s facilities were provided through God’s benevolence and by the sacrificial generosity of Church members. The Church desires that its facilities be used for the fellowship of the Body of Christ and always to God’s glory. Although the facilities are not generally open to the public, we do on occasion make our facilities available to non-members, both individuals and groups, after approval by the Church consistent with this policy.

Facility use will not be permitted to persons or groups holding, advancing, or advocating beliefs, or advancing, advocating, or engaging in practices that conflict with the Church’s faith or moral teachings, which are summarized in, among other places, the Church’s [Articles,] Constitution, Bylaws and other policies or statements of faith adopted by the Church. Nor may facilities be used for activities that express viewpoints that contradict, or are deemed by the pastor to be inconsistent or incompatible with the Church’s faith or moral teachings. The Church designates the pastor as its final decision-maker on whether a person or group is allowed to use Church facilities for particular activities.

This restricted facility use policy is necessary for two important reasons. First, the Church may not in good conscience materially cooperate or participate in activities or beliefs that are contrary to its faith. Allowing its facilities to be used for purposes that contradict the Church’s beliefs would be viewed by some as material cooperation with that activity and complicity in that viewpoint, and would be a grave violation of the faith and religious practice of the Body and its individual members. See 2 Corinthians 6:14; 1 Thessalonians 5:22.

Second, it is very important to the Church that it presents a consistent message to the community, which the Church staff and members conscientiously maintain as part of their witness to the Gospel of Jesus Christ. To allow facilities to be used by groups or persons who express beliefs or engage in practices contrary to the Church’s faith would have a severe negative impact on the message that the Church strives to promote. It could also be a source of confusion and scandal to Church members and the community because they may reasonably perceive that by allowing use of our facilities, the Church is in agreement with the beliefs or practices of the persons or groups using Church facilities.

Therefore, in no event shall persons or groups who hold, advance, or advocate beliefs, or advance, advocate, or engage in practices that contradict the Church’s faith use any Church facility. Nor may facilities be used in any way that contradicts the Church’s faith. See Colossians 3:17.

The foregoing policy shall apply to any ceremony, whether or not recognized by law, involving persons of the same birth gender or transsexual persons, including a civil union, commitment ceremony, or so-called same-sex marriage.

This Policy was adopted by vote of the membership of FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH JOPLIN on August 29, 2018.

Amendment to MINISTRY STAFF section presented by the Deacon Body for vote on Feb 28, 2021.

Amendment to Internal Financial Controls presented by Audit/Finance committee for vote on Feb 28, 2021.