

**CONSTITUTION AND BYLAWS**

**of the**

**FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH, KYLE**

# I.

# CONSTITUTION

## 1. PREAMBLE

We declare and establish this constitution and bylaws to preserve and secure the principles of our faith, and to govern the body in an orderly manner. This constitution will preserve the liberties of each individual member of the First Baptist Church, Kyle and the freedom of action of this body in its relation to other Baptist churches. The Deacon Body shall maintain a Church Policy Manual that augments these Constitution and Bylaws.

## 2. NAME

This body shall be known as the First Baptist Church, Kyle of 400 West Center Street, P. O. Box 247, Kyle, TX, 78640.

## 3. INCORPORATION

The First Baptist Church of Kyle is incorporated under the laws of the State of Texas as a non-profit religious corporation as of October 21, 1983.

## 4. OBJECTIVES

To be a dynamic spiritual organism empowered by the Holy Spirit to share Christ with as many people as possible in our church, community, and throughout the world.

To be a worshiping fellowship, experiencing an awareness of God, recognizing His person, and responding in obedience to His leadership.

To experience an increasingly meaningful fellowship with God and fellow believers.

To help people experience a growing knowledge of God.

To be a church that ministers unselfishly to persons in the community and world in Jesus' name.

To be a church whose purpose is to be Christ like in our daily living by emphasizing total commitment of life, personality, and possessions to the lordship of Christ.

## 5. STATEMENT OF FAITH

The Holy Bible is the inspired word of God and is the basis for any statement of faith. The church subscribes to the doctrinal statement of "The Baptist Faith and Message" as adopted by the Southern Baptist Convention June 14, 2000. We band ourselves together as a body of baptized believers in Jesus Christ personally committed to sharing the good news of salvation to lost mankind. The ordinances of the church are baptism and the Lord's Supper.

## **6. RELATIONSHIPS**

The government of this church is vested in the body of believers who compose it. 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. Insofar as is practical, this church will cooperate with and support the Bluebonnet Association and Southern Baptist of Texas Convention affiliated with the Southern Baptist Convention.

## **7. NONPROFIT STATUS AND LIQUIDATION**

This church is a non-profit organization. In the event of liquidation or dissolution of the church, all of its assets and property of every nature and description whatsoever shall be paid over and transferred at the direction of the trustees to the Bluebonnet Baptist Association.

## **8. AMENDMENTS**

The Constitution and Bylaws of the First Baptist Church of Kyle, Texas may be amended as follows:

Any member may propose an amendment to the pastor or any active deacon. After prayerful consideration, the pastor and deacon body shall present the proposed amendment in writing to all interested members in a business meeting. At the next business meeting following the presentation of the amendment, the church will vote on the amendment.

A two thirds majority vote of those eligible and present shall be required to approve any amendment.

## II.

## BYLAWS

### 1. MEMBERSHIP

#### 1.1. GENERAL

Membership of First Baptist Church, Kyle shall consist of believers who have

1. made a public profession of their faith in Jesus Christ as personal Lord and Savior
2. have been scripturally baptized by immersion
3. have completed a new members' class provided by the church
4. agreed to the Statement of Faith as defined in Section 1, Article 5 of the Constitution

This is a sovereign and democratic Baptist church under the lordship of Jesus Christ. The membership retains unto itself the exclusive right of self-government in all phases of the spiritual and temporal life of this church.

The membership reserves the exclusive right to determine who shall be members of this church and the conditions of such membership.

All persons presenting themselves as candidates for membership shall be encouraged to be faithful stewards of their time, talents, and material resources.

#### 1.2. CANDIDACY

Any person may offer himself/herself as a candidate for membership in this church. All such candidates shall be presented to the church for membership in any of the following ways:

- By profession of faith and baptism according to the policies of this church.
- By transfer of letter of membership from another Baptist church.
- By a statement of faith of prior conversion experience and baptism by immersion administered by a church of like faith and order. Candidates for membership having received Jesus Christ as personal savior and baptized by means other than immersion or baptized by churches or religious entities not of like faith and order will be counseled to be scripturally baptized. Until scripturally baptized by immersion, they are not a member of this congregation.

#### 1.3. VOTING RIGHTS OF MEMBERS

Every member, thirteen years of age or older, of the church is entitled to vote at all elections and on all questions submitted to the church, provided the member is present and with the understanding that children are under the parent's authority.

#### **1.4. TERMINATION OF MEMBERSHIP**

Membership shall be terminated in the following ways: (1.) death, (2.) transfer of letter to another Baptist church, (3.) exclusion by action of this church, (4.) affiliation with another Christian faith or denomination.

#### **1.5. DISCIPLINE**

It shall be the basic purpose of the First Baptist Church, Kyle, to emphasize to its members that every reasonable measure will be taken to assist any troubled member. The pastor, other members of the church staff, and deacon body are available for counsel and guidance. Redemption rather than punishment should be the guideline which governs the attitude of one member toward another.

Should some serious condition exist which would cause a member to become a liability to the general welfare of the church, every reasonable measure will be taken by the pastor and by the deacon body to resolve the problem. See Matthew chapter 18. All such proceedings shall be pervaded by the spirit of Christian kindness and forbearance. But, finding that the welfare of the church will be served by the exclusion of the member, the church may take this action by a two-thirds vote of the members present at a meeting called for this purpose; and the church may proceed to declare the offender to be no longer in the membership of the church.

Any person, whose membership has been terminated for any condition which has made it necessary for the church to exclude them, may upon their repentance, reformation, and request be restored to membership by a two-thirds vote of the members present at a business meeting.

## **2. CHURCH OFFICERS AND STAFF**

The church shall call or employ such church staff or officers as the church shall need. A job description shall be written when the need for staff members is determined.

Personnel actions for all church staff, with the exception of the pastor, shall be recommended by the pastor and Personnel Committee. The Personnel Committee shall evaluate the circumstances of the recommendation and at their discretion make a recommendation to the church for approval by majority vote.

### **2.1. PASTOR**

The qualifications for pastor shall be consistent with those listed in 1 Timothy 3:1-7. His training, skills, and experiences are needed in this area of leadership. A pastor shall be chosen and called by the church whenever a vacancy occurs upon recommendation from the church's Pastor Search Committee. His calling shall take place at a business conference called for the purpose, of which at least one week's public notice shall be given. Calling shall be by affirmative vote taken by secret ballot of at least 80% of those present and voting. Upon being called as pastor, both he and his family shall present themselves for membership at their earliest convenience.

The pastor shall serve until the relationship is terminated. This relationship may be terminated by the church or the pastor. The procedure followed by the church to terminate the pastor's relationship with the church shall have the same voting requirements as that in the calling of a pastor. The pastor and his family shall be given the same consideration as any other member in matters of discipline as outlined in the section entitled discipline, except the church may terminate his services should he be found guilty of adultery, child abuse, criminal activity, should he become divorced, or any behavior the church deems improper. The pastor may be put on a leave of absence if voted on by three-fourths of the deacons until the next business meeting.

The pastor is responsible for leading the church to function as a New Testament church. The pastor will lead the congregation, the organizations, and the church staff to perform their tasks.

The pastor is leader of pastoral ministries in the church and serves as an ex-officio member of all committees except for the Pastor Search Committee. As such, he will work with the deacon body and the church staff to:

Lead the church in the achieving of its mission;

Proclaim the gospel to believers and unbelievers;

Care for the church's members and other persons in the community.

## 2.2. DEACONS

In accordance with the meaning of the work and practice of the New Testament, deacons are to be servants of the church (1 Tim 3:8-13). A task of the deacon is to serve with the pastor and staff in performing pastoral ministries tasks, proclaiming the gospel to believers and non-believers; care for church members and other persons in the community; lead the church to engage in fellowship of worship, education, ministry and application of Biblical principals in daily life; also helping to reconcile fellowship problems of the church.

The office of a deacon is a life long service. As the need for additional deacons is identified, new candidates will be nominated by the church membership as described in the Church Policy Manual. The First Baptist Church deacon body will consist of men selected by the church, that are willing to serve, and that meet the Deacon Qualifications specified below.

### Church Interpretation of Deacon Qualifications:

**Biblical qualifications for a Deacon provided in 1 Timothy 3:8-12 shall be used as a resource for evaluating candidates for the office of Deacon.**

1. ***“men of dignity”***  
*The Deacon should be worthy of respect, trustworthy and honorable,*
2. ***“not double-tongued”***  
*The Deacon should be consistent in his statements wherever they may be made and he should not say one thing and mean another.*
3. ***not “addicted to much wine”***  
*In view of the teaching of scripture that we strive not to cause fellow believers, or potential believers, to stumble (1 Cr 10:31-33; 1 Cr 8:7-12), and acknowledging that the use of alcoholic beverages could constitute a significant stumbling block for many within our church and community, Deacons of First Baptist Church are requested to refrain from the use of alcoholic beverages as a gesture of loving concern for those whom they are called to serve.*
4. ***not “fond of sordid gain”***  
*The Deacon should not seek to obtain riches, money or anything of value by anything other than by honest and moral means and he should not be too fond of worldly possessions.*
5. ***“holding to the mystery of the faith with a clear conscience”***  
*The Deacon must be a Christian, saved by the grace of God, scripturally baptized, and subscribe to and support the “Baptist Faith and Message” as adopted by the Southern Baptist Convention, June 14, 2000.*

6. ***“these men must also be first tested”***  
*Candidates for the office of Deacon are to have been active members of First Baptist Church, Kyle for two years prior to being elected as Deacons, during which time the character and actions of these men can be observed by the Church. A Deacon is one that has shown that he stands for the truth, lives by Christian beliefs and is spiritually mature*
7. ***“beyond reproach”***  
*This does not mean that a Deacon is sinless or is perfect because we know that all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God and that only Jesus is sinless. Rather the Deacon’s life-style, generally speaking, should be such that no one can legitimately accuse him of conduct which is unbefitting of a mature believer - his character is proven to all who know him.*
8. ***“husbands of only one wife”***  
*Recognizing that the phrase “husband of one wife” is subject to varying interpretations, the church shall not interpret it simply as a prohibition from consideration for a person who has been scripturally divorced (Mt 19:9; 1 Cr 7:15). Due to the leadership role in which the Deacons of First Baptist Church, Kyle serve, Deacons are to be only male (1 Tim 2:12). Candidates for Deacon must not be homosexual (1 Cr 6:9-10; Rom 1:26-28).*
9. ***“good managers of their children and their own households”***  
*This qualification refers to a deacon as a manager of his children raising them based on Christian principals and beliefs until they reach the age of eighteen (18). This recognizes that legally a person is considered as an adult at the age of eighteen (18) and that a father may no longer have much, if any, influence or control over his child after that point.*
10. ***“Their wives likewise must be dignified, not slanderers, but sober-minded, faithful in all things.”***  
*Since the service of a deacon is a team effort, before a man can serve as a deacon his wife must meet the qualifications specified in verse 1 Tim 3:11.*

If at any time a deacon fails in continuing to meet these qualifications, the Pastor shall counsel him. If the counseling is disregarded, then the Pastor and one or more active Deacons shall counsel him. If that counseling is also disregarded, a vote will be taken by the active Deacons for the purpose of determining whether to recommend that the Deacon in question be placed on an inactive list subject to a majority vote approval by the church. A Deacon placed on an inactive list by this process is not necessarily permanently disqualified, but may later be considered for active deacon service if at some later time he meets the Deacon qualifications.

### **2.3. MODERATOR**

The moderator shall be the pastor at all business meetings, special called meetings, etc. In the absence of the pastor, the Chairman of the Deacons shall preside. In the absence of both the pastor and the Chairman of Deacons, the Vice-Chairman will preside.

### **2.4. CLERK**

All church records are church property and shall be filed in the church office. The clerk shall keep a suitable book of records of all the actions of the church, except as otherwise herein provided. The clerk is responsible for keeping a register of the names of members, dates of their admission, transfer of letter, and a record of baptisms.

The clerk shall issue letters of recommendations that are requested by other Baptist churches. The clerk shall also drop from the church roll any member meeting the requirements of termination of membership defined in section 1.4 of these Bylaws.

## **2.5. TREASURER**

The church treasurer and assistant treasurer shall be elected annually to oversee the handling of all finances of the church. He/she shall be nominated by the Nominating Committee and elected by the church.

The treasurer shall see that a timely and accurate itemized accounting of all receipts and disbursements is maintained. The treasurer shall make itemized written financial reports available to the church at the end of each cycle, monthly or annually. The current monthly report will be brought to the church business meeting at least quarterly. The annual report will be brought to the church business meeting at the end of the fiscal year.

The financial report shall be reviewed at least quarterly by the Budget and Finance Committee. It shall be the duty of the treasurer or assistant treasurer to sign all church checks. The church shall maintain copies of all checks, vouchers and financial statements of the church.

## **2.6. FINANCIAL SECRETARY**

The financial secretary shall maintain contribution records and provide the records annually to the contributors in a form that is acceptable to the Internal Revenue Service.

All church records are church property and shall be filed in the church office.

## **2.7. TRUSTEES**

There shall be three trustees nominated by the Nominating Committee and elected by the church. They are to serve on a rotating basis for three years and may succeed themselves. The trustees will hold in trust the church property in all legal matters.

They shall have no power to buy, sell, mortgage, lease or transfer property without specific authorization by vote of the church in business meeting.

It shall be the function of the trustees to affix their signature to legal documents involving the sale, mortgaging, purchasing or renting of property, or any other legal documents where the signatures of trustees are required.

## **2.8. SECRETARY**

The secretary shall be present at all business meetings to record the minutes and preserve on file all official written communications and reports.

The secretary is to present the minutes of the preceding business meeting. In the event the secretary is unavailable, a temporary recording secretary shall be appointed by the moderator. All church records are church property and shall be filed in the church office.

### **3. COMMITTEES**

All committee members shall be church members in good standing, recommended by the Nominating Committee, and approved by the church. Members elected to serve on these committees shall be limited to non-consecutive three-year terms with staggered rotations. These committees generally have six members with two members rotating each year, unless otherwise indicated in the descriptions below or policy manual. Any committee member elected to fill any vacancy shall serve the unexpired term of the position vacated. Each committee will be responsible for asking for resignations of its members in case of disinterest or inability to serve. Other committees that are established to help administer the needs of the church are included in the Church Policy Manual, which shall meet the committee requirements defined in these Bylaws unless noted otherwise in the Church Policy Manual.

#### **3.1. NOMINATING COMMITTEE**

Members shall be nominated by the active deacons and elected by the church. This committee shall elect its own chair.

The Nominating Committee will present to the church the Sunday School teachers, committee members, and officers of the church on an annual basis to be voted on in the September business meeting. The committee will be responsible for filling any vacancies created by resignation of any committee member or officer of the church until the first of October.

#### **3.2. PERSONNEL COMMITTEE**

The Personnel Committee assists the church in matters related to employed personnel.

They shall assist in determining staff needs, salaries, benefits and personnel services in consultation with the Budget and Finance Committee where specific items are budgeted. On budgeted items it will work with the Budget and Finance Committee.

This committee shall have the authority to hire or relieve of duties any personnel, including the custodian and nursery workers, after consultation with department directors.

#### **3.3. LONG RANGE PLANNING COMMITTEE**

The purpose of this committee is to project long range plans and goals for the church. They are to set up a program of growth expansion and building development; study the growth pattern of the church area; make long range projections for expansions and development; and make goal recommendations to the other church committees for meeting expansion needs and development. Committee is responsible to report to the church as needed.

### **3.4. PASTOR SEARCH COMMITTEE**

In the event that the pastor position becomes vacant, the Pastor Search Committee is charged with the task of working through the process of finding the man that God has to lead the church. The committee will be comprised of eight members of the church plus the Chairman of the Deacons and two alternates. Members will be nominated at-large by the church membership as described in the Church Policy Manual.

### **3.5. BUDGET AND FINANCE COMMITTEE**

The church treasurer will serve as chairman of this committee. The committee will consist of the Treasurer, assistant treasurer, Financial Secretary, plus five church members. The committee will analyze the past giving and anticipate future growth in giving.

The committee will present to the church an annual proposed budget to become effective at the beginning of the calendar year. This budget shall be presented at the November business meeting for approval at the December business meeting.

The committee will present to the church, for approval, any non-budgeted items that may arise during the church year and explain changes to budgeted items that are exceeded. They have the authority to request an independent review of the Treasurer's books after notification to the active Deacons and approval by the church in a business meeting. A review shall be done at least every two years.

[ Note: This section was amended to be effective September 26, 2007.]

### **3.6. TECHNOLOGY COMMITTEE**

The Technology Committee will routinely check for the appropriate use of church computers. They will work with church staff to maintain and update technology items. As necessary, they will make recommendations to the Budget and Finance committee.

### **3.7. MISSIONS COMMITTEE**

The Missions Committee will coordinate and oversee all missions emphasis of our church. They should lead church efforts in carrying out the "Great Commission" both local and worldwide. They will furnish reports for business and deacon's meetings. The chairman of the deacons will serve on this committee.

## **4. PROGRAM ORGANIZATIONS**

All organizations of the church shall be under church control, all officers being elected by the church and reporting regularly to the church. Other organizations shall exist as defined in the Church Policy Manual as necessary to meet ministry objectives of the church.

### **4.1. SUNDAY SCHOOL**

A Sunday School program, lead by the Minister of Education, shall be organized into departments and classes for all age groups for the purpose of teaching God's word. The Sunday School program shall preferably meet each Sunday morning prior to, or immediately after, scheduled worship services.

The tasks of the Sunday School shall be to teach the biblical revelation; to lead persons to a saving knowledge of Jesus Christ; to encourage persons to become members of First Baptist Church, Kyle, Texas; to encourage church members to become active participants in church ministries; and to provide and interpret information regarding the work of the church, the association, and the Southern Baptist Convention.

### **4.2. VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL**

Vacation Bible School will be held one week during the summer. There will be two coordinators nominated by the Nominating Committee.

### **4.3. AWANA'S**

This children's outreach program's goal is to reach boys and girls with the gospel of Christ. AWANA's will be held during the school year. The AWANA commander will be nominated by the Nominating Committee.

## **5. ORDINANCES**

### **5.1. BAPTISM**

A person who receives Jesus Christ as Savior by personal faith; who professes him publicly at any worship service; and who indicates a commitment to follow Christ as Lord, shall be received for baptism.

Baptism shall be by immersion in water. Baptism shall be administered by the pastor or whomever the church shall authorize. Baptism shall be encouraged and administered as an act of worship during any worship service.

A person professing Christ and failing to be baptized after a reasonable length of time shall be counseled by the pastor and/ or staff.

### **5.2. LORD'S SUPPER**

The Lord's Supper is a symbolic act of obedience whereby members of the church and those who have received Jesus Christ as their Lord and Savior, through partaking of the bread and fruit of the vine, commemorate the sacrificial death of Jesus Christ as the atonement for our sins, His resurrection as the assurance of eternal life, and His second coming as the fulfillment of His promise.

The Lord's Supper shall be observed at least one Sunday per month. The pastor and deacons shall be responsible for the administration of the Lord's Supper.

## **6. CHURCH MEETINGS**

### **6.1. WORSHIP SERVICE**

The church shall meet regularly each Sunday morning, Sunday evening, and Wednesday evening for preaching, prayer, instruction, evangelism, and for the worship of the Almighty God. These meetings will be open for all people and shall be conducted under the direction of the pastor or the designated church officer in the absence of the pastor.

### **6.2. SPECIAL SERVICES**

Revival services and any other church meetings which will be essential in the promotion of the objectives of the church shall be placed on the church calendar.

### **6.3. BUSINESS MEETINGS**

Business meetings of First Baptist Church for the purpose of reports and other necessary information shall be held on the second or third Wednesday of the month. These meetings will be no less than quarterly. Reports will be available each month through the church office.

### **6.4. SPECIAL BUSINESS MEETINGS**

A special called business meeting may be called by the pastor, the Chairman of Deacons, or by the designated church officer in the absence of the pastor, to consider special matters of significant nature.

### **6.5. PARLIAMENTARY RULES**

"Robert's Rules of Order, revised," is the authority for parliamentary rules of procedure for all business meeting of the church.

### **6.6. CHURCH FINANCES**

The Budget and Finance Committee shall prepare and submit an inclusive budget, indicating by line items the amount needed and sought for all local and worldwide expenses.

### **6.7. FISCAL YEAR**

The fiscal year of the church shall run concurrently with the calendar year.

[Note: This section was amended to be effective September 26, 2007.]