

**THE CONSTITUTION AND BY-LAWS**  
**OF**  
**THE FIRST SOUTHERN BAPTIST CHURCH**  
**OF**  
**EVANSVILLE, INDIANA**

**Last amended: September 24, 2008**

# TABLE OF CONTENTS

## PREAMBLE

I.	Name	1
II.	Statement of Faith	1
III.	Church Covenant	1
IV.	The Scriptures	2
V.	God	2
	A. God the Father	2
	B. God the Son	2
	C. God the Holy Spirit	3
VI.	Man	3
VII.	Salvation	3
	A. Regeneration	3
	B. Sanctification	3
	C. Justification	4
	D. Glorification	4
VIII.	God's Purpose of Grace	4
IX.	The Church	4
X.	Baptism and the Lord's Supper	5
XI.	The Lord's Day	5
XII.	The Kingdom	5
XIII.	The Second Coming	5
XIV.	Evangelism and Missions	6
XV.	Education	6
XVI.	Stewardship	6
XVII.	Cooperation	6
XVIII.	The Christian and the Social Order	7
XIX.	Peace and War	7
XX.	Religious Liberty	7

Character

	Section 1 – Policy	8
	Section 2 – Doctrine	8

## BYLAWS

XXII.	Membership	
-------	------------	--

	Section 1 – General	9
	Section 2 – Candidacy	9
	Section 3 – Duties	9
	Section 4 – Rights	9
	Section 5 – Termination of Membership	9
	Section 6 – Restoration	10
Church Officers		
Section 1 – Pastor		10
	Section 2 – Asst Pastor, Associates, Mission Pastor, Etc	11
	Section 3 – Church Staff	11
	Section 4 – Deacons	11
	Section 1. Number, Election, Terms	11
	Section 2. Duties	13
	Section 5 – Trustees	15
	Section 6 – Moderator	15
	Section 7 – Quorum	15
	Section 8 – Clerk	15
	Section 9 – Treasurer	16
	Section 10 – Financial Secretary	16
	Section 11 – Church Council	16
Committees		
Section 1 – General Committees		17
	Section 2 – Pulpit Committee	17
	Section 3 – Nominating Committee	17
	Section 4 – Baptism Committee	18
	Section 5 – Lord’s Supper Committee	18
	Section 6 – Budget Committee	18
	Section 7 – Kitchen Committee	18
	Section 8 – Nursery Committee	18
	Section 9 – Mission Committee	18
	Section 10 – Flower Committee	18
	Section 11 – Auditing Committee	19
	Section 12 – Bus Committee	19
	Section 13 – Planning Committee	19
	Section 14 – Church Ushers	19

Section 15 – Personnel Committee	19
Section 16 – CLC Ministries Committee	19
Section 17 – Counting Committee	20
XXV. Church Finance	
Section 1 – Unified Budget System	20
XXVI. Program Organizations	
Section 1 – General	20
Section 2 – Sunday School	21
Section 3 – Church Training	21
Section 4 - Women's Missionary Union	21
Section 5 – Baptist Men’s Organization	21
Section 6 – Church Music	21
XXVII. Church Meetings	
Section 1 – Worship Services	22
Section 2 – Regular or Special Business Mtgs	22
Section 3 – Parliamentary Rules	22
Section 4 – Fiscal Year	22
XXVIII. Amendments	22

# **PREAMBLE**

We declare and establish this constitution for the preservation and security of the principles of our faith, and that this body may be governed in orderly manner. This constitution will preserve the liberties of each individual member of this church and the freedom of action of this body in its relation to other churches.

## **Name**

This body shall be known as the First Southern Baptist Church of Evansville, Indiana, located at 5225 East Division Street.

## **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 doctrinal statement of the “Baptist Faith and Message” as adopted by the Southern Baptist Convention in 1963. We band ourselves together as a body of scripturally 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.

Our statements concerning our faith will be listed in this constitution in the materials following the church covenant.

## **Church Covenant**

Having been led, as we believe by the Spirit of God, to receive the Lord Jesus Christ as our Saviour and Lord and, on the profession of our faith, having been baptized in the name of the Father, and the Son, and of the Holy Spirit, we do now, in the presence of God, Angels, and this assembly, 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 prosperity and spiritually; to sustain its worship, ordinances, discipline, and doctrines; to contribute cheerfully and regular to the support of the ministry, the expense of the church, and the relief of the poor, and the spread of the gospel through all nations.

We also engage to maintain family and secret devotions; to religiously educate our children; to seek the salvation of our kindred and acquaintances; to walk circumspectly in the

world, to be just in our dealings, faithful in our engagements, and exemplary in our deportment; to avoid all tattling, backbiting, and excessive anger; to abstain from the sale and use of intoxicating drinks as a beverage; to be zealous in our efforts to advance the kingdom of our Saviour. We further engage to watch over one another in brotherly love; to remember one another in prayer; to aid one another 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 Saviour to secure it without delay.

We moreover engage 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.

## **The Scriptures**

The Holy Bible was written by men divinely inspired and is the record of God's revelation of Himself to man. It is a perfect treasure of divine instruction. It has God for its author, salvation for its end, and truth, without any mixture of error, and will remain to the end of the world, the true center of Christian union, and the supreme standard by which all human conduct, creeds, and religious opinions should be tried. The criterion by which the Bible is to be interpreted is Jesus Christ.

Ex. 24:4; Deut. 4:1-2; 17:19; Josh. 8:34; Psalm 19:7-10; Romans 15:4; Romans 16:25-26; 2 Tim 3:15-17; Heb. 1:1-2; 4:12.

## **God**

There is one and only one living and true God. He is an intelligent, spiritual, and personal Being, The Creator, Redeemer, Preserver, and Ruler of the universe. God is infinite in holiness and all other perfections. To Him we owe the highest love, reverence, and obedience. The eternal God reveals Himself to us as Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, with distinct personal attributes, but without division of nature, essence or being.

### **A. God the Father**

God as Father reigns with providential care over His universe, His creatures and the flow of the stream of human history according to the purpose of His grace. He is all powerful, all loving, and all wise. God is Father in truth to those who become children of God through faith in Jesus Christ. He is fatherly in His attitude toward all men.

Gen. 1:1; 2:7; Ex. 3:14; Psalm 19:1-3; Jer. 10:10; 17:13; Gal. 4:6; Col. 1:15; 1 John 5:7.

## **B. God the Son**

Christ is the eternal Son of God. In His incarnation as Jesus Christ he was conceived of the Holy Spirit and born of the virgin Mary. Jesus perfectly revealed and did the will of God, taking upon Himself the demands and necessities of human nature and identifying Himself completely with mankind yet without sin. He honored the divine law by His personal obedience, and in His death on the cross He made provision for the redemption of men from sin. He was raised from the dead with a glorified body and appeared to His disciples as the person who was with them before His crucifixion. He ascended into heaven and is now exalted at the right hand of God where he is the One Mediator, partaking of the nature of God and of man, and in whose Person is effected the reconciliation between God and man. He will return in power and glory to judge the world and to consummate His redemptive mission. He now dwells in all believers as the living and ever present Lord.

Gen. 18:1; Psalm 2:7; Isa. & 14; Matt. 1:18-23; Mark 1:1; John 1:1-18; Romans 1:3-4; Phil. 2:5-11; Rev. 1:13-16.

## **C. God the Holy Spirit**

The Holy Spirit is the Spirit of God. He inspired holy men of old to write the Scriptures. Through illumination He enables men to understand truth. He exalts Christ. He convicts of sin, of righteousness and of judgment. He calls men to the Saviour, and effects regeneration. He cultivates Christian character, comforts believers, and bestows the spiritual gifts by which they serve God through His church. He seals the believer unto the day of final redemption. His presence in the Christian is the assurance of God to bring the believer into the fullness of the stature of Christ. He enlightens and empowers the believer and the church in worship, evangelism, and service.

Gen. 1:2; Psalm 51:11; Isa. 61:3; Mark 1:10; John 4:24; Acts 1:8; Rev. 1:10; John 16:7-14.

## **Man**

Man was created by the special act of God in His own image, and is the crowning work of His creation. In the beginning man was innocent of sin and was endowed by His Creator with freedom of choice. By his free choice man sinned against God and brought sin into the human race. Through the temptation of Satan man transgressed the command of God and fell from his original innocence; whereby his posterity inherit a nature and an environment inclined toward sin, and as soon as they are capable of moral action become transgressors and are under

condemnation. Only the grace of God can bring man into His holy fellowship and enable man to fulfill the creative purpose of God. The sacredness of human personality is evident in that God created man in His own image, and in that Christ died for man; therefore every man possess dignity and is worthy of respect and Christian love.

Gen. 1:26-30; Psalm 1; Isa. 6:5; Matt. 16:26; Col. 1:21-22; Rom. 5:6-12.

## **Salvation**

Salvation involves the redemption for the whole man, and is offered freely to all who accept Jesus Christ as Lord and Saviour, who by His own blood obtained eternal redemption for the believer. In its broadest sense salvation includes regeneration, sanctification, glorification and justification.

### **A. Regeneration**

Regeneration, or the new birth, is a work of God's grace whereby believers become new creatures in Christ Jesus. It is a change of heart wrought by the Holy Spirit through conviction of sin, to which the sinner responds in repentance toward God and faith in the Lord Jesus Christ.

Repentance and faith are inseparable experiences of grace. Repentance is a genuine turning from sin toward God. Faith is the acceptance of Jesus Christ and commitment of the entire personality to Him as Lord and Saviour. Justification is God's gracious and full acquittal upon principles of His righteousness of all sinners who repent and believe in Christ. Justification brings the believer into a relationship of peace and favor with God.

### **B. Sanctification**

Sanctification is the experience, beginning in regeneration, by which the believer is set apart of God's purposes, and is enabled to progress toward moral and spiritual perfection through the presence and power of the Holy Spirit dwelling in him. Growth in grace should continue throughout the regenerate person's life.

### **C. Justification**

Justification is God's gracious and full acquittal upon principles of righteousness of all sinners who repent and believe in Christ. This blessing is bestowed, not in consideration of any words of righteousness which we have done, but through the redemption that is in and through

Jesus Christ. It brings us into a state of most blessed peace and favor with God, and secures every other needed blessing.

#### **D. Glorification**

Glorification is the culmination of salvation and is the final blessed and abiding state of the redeemed.

Gen. 3:15; Ex. 3:14-17; Matt. 1:21; Acts 2:21; Rom. 1:16-18; Gal. 2:20, 5:22-25; Eph. 1:7;  
2:8-22; Col. 3:1.

### **God's Purpose of Grace**

Election is the gracious purpose of God, according to which He regenerates, sanctifies, and glorifies sinners. It is consistent with the free agency of man, and comprehends all the means in connection with the end. It is a glorious display of God's sovereign goodness, and infinitely wise, holy, and unchangeable. It excludes boasting and promotes humility.

All true believers endure to the end. Those whom God has accepted in Christ, and sanctified by His Spirit, will never fall away from the state of grace, but shall preserve to the end. Believers may fall into sin through neglect and temptation whereby they grieve the Spirit, impair their graces and comforts, bringing reproach on the cause of Christ, and temporal judgments on themselves, yet they shall be kept by the power of God through faith onto salvation.

Gen. 12:1-3; Isa. 5:1-7; Matt. 16:18-19; Rom. 5:9-10; Eph. 1:4-23; 2:1-10; 1 John 1:7-9;  
1 Peter 1:2-5.

### **The Church**

A New Testament church of the Lord Jesus Christ is a local body of baptized believers who are associated by covenant in the faith and fellowship of the gospel, observing the two ordinances of Christ, committed to His teachings, exercising the gifts, rights, and privileges invested in them by His Word, and seeking to extend the gospel to the ends of the earth.

This church is an autonomous body, operating through democratic processes under the Lordship of Jesus Christ. In such a congregation members are equally responsible. Its Scriptural officers are pastors and deacons.

Matt. 16:15-19; 18:15-20; Acts 2:41-42; Rom. 1:7; Eph. 1:22-23; Phil. 1:1; 1 Tim. 3:1-15;  
Rev. 2:3.

## **Baptism and the Lord's Supper**

Christian baptism is the immersion of a believer in water in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. It is an act of obedience symbolizing the believer's faith in a crucified, buried, and risen Saviour, the believer's death to sin, the burial of the old life, and the resurrection to walk in newness of life in Christ Jesus. It is a testimony to his faith in the final resurrection of the dead. Being a church ordinance, it is prerequisite of the privileges of church membership and to the Lord's Supper. The Lord's Supper is a symbolic act of obedience whereby members of the church, through partaking of unleavened bread and the unfermented fruit of the vine, memorialize the death of Redeemer and anticipate His second coming.

Matt. 3:13-17; 26:26-30; Mark 1:9-11; Luke 3:21-22; 22:19-20; John 3:23; 1 Cor. 10:16; 11:23-29.

## **The Lord's Day**

The first day of the week is the Lord's Day. It is a Christian institution for regular observance. It commemorates the resurrection of Christ from the dead and should be employed in exercises of worship and spiritual devotion, both public and private, and by refraining from worldly amusements, and resting from secular employments, and work of necessity and mercy only being excepted.

Ex. 20:8-11; Mark 2:27-28; Luke 24:1-3; 24:33-36; John 4:21-24; Col. 2:16; Rev. 1:10.

## **The Kingdom**

The Kingdom of God includes both His general sovereignty over the universe and His particular kingship over men who willfully acknowledge Him as King. Particularly the Kingdom is the realm of salvation into which men enter by trustful, childlike commitment to Jesus Christ. Christians ought to pray and to labor that the Kingdom may come and God's will be done on earth. The full consummation of the Kingdom awaits the return of Jesus Christ and the end of this age.

Gen. 1:1; Isa. 9:6-7; Matt. 3:2; 4:8-10; Luke 4:43; John 4:3; Acts 1:6-7; Heb. 11:10; Rev. 1:6.

## **The Second Coming**

God, in His own time and in His own way, will bring the world to its appropriate end. According to His promise, Jesus Christ will return personally and visibly in glory to the earth;

the dead will be raised; and Christ will judge all men in righteousness. The unbelievers will be consigned to Hell, the place of everlasting punishment. The believers in their resurrected and glorified bodies will receive their reward and will dwell forever in Heaven with the Lord. The following scriptures further emphasize our belief in the second coming.

Isa. 2:4, 11:9; Matt. 16:27, 18:8-9, 19:28, 24:27, 30, 36, 44, 26:64; Mark 8:38, 9:43-48; Luke 12:40, 48, 16:19-26, 17:22-37, 21:27-28; John 14:1-3; Acts 1:11; Col. 1:5, 3:4; I Thess. 4:14-18, 5:1; II Thess. 1:7, 2; I Tim. 6:14; II Tim. 4:1, 8; Titus 2:13; Heb. 9:27-28; James 5:8; II Peter 3; Jude 14; Rev. 1:18, 3:11, 20:1-22:13.

## **Evangelism and Missions**

It is the duty and privilege of every follower of Christ and of every church of the Lord Jesus Christ to endeavor to make disciples of all nations. The new birth of man's spirit by God's Holy Spirit means the birth of love for others. Missionary effort on the part of all rests thus upon a spiritual necessity of the regenerate life and is expressly and repeatedly commanded in the teachings of Christ. It is the duty of every child of God to seek constantly to win the lost to Christ by personal effort and by all other methods in harmony with the gospel of Christ.

Gen. 12:1-3; Isa. 6:1-8; Matt. 9:37-38; 28:19-20; Luke 10:1-18; John 14:11-12; Eph. 3:1-11; Rev. 22:17.

## **Education**

The cause of education in the Kingdom of Christ is to co-ordinate with the causes of missions and general benevolence, and should receive along with these the liberal support of the churches. An adequate system of Christian schools is necessary to a complete spiritual program for Christ's people.

In Christian education there should be a proper balance between academic freedom and academic responsibility. Freedom in any orderly relationship of a Christian school, college, or seminary is limited by the pre-eminence of Jesus Christ, by the authoritative nature of Scriptures, and by the distinct purpose for which the school exists.

Deut. 4:1, 5, 9, 14; 6:1-10; Prov. 3:13; Eccl. 7:19; Eph. 4:11-16; Phil. 4:8; Col. 2:3; I Tim. 1:3-7; II Tim. 2:15; James 1:5.

## **Stewardship**

God is the source of all blessings, temporal and spiritual; all that we have and are we owe to him. We have spiritual debtorship to the whole world, a holy trusteeship in the gospel, and a

binding stewardship in our possessions. We are therefore, under obligation to serve him with our time, talents, and material possessions; and should recognize all these as entrusted to us to use for the glory of God and helping others. Christians should cheerfully, regularly, systematically, proportionately, and liberally contribute of their means to advancing the Redeemer's cause on earth.

Monies shall only be raised according to the Bible and the approved standards adopted by the denomination.

Gen. 14:20; Lev. 27:30-32; Deut. 8:18; Mal. 3:8-12; Matt. 6:1-4; 19:21; 23:23.

## **Cooperation**

Christ's people should, as occasion requires, organize such associations and conventions as may best secure cooperation for the great objects of the Kingdom of God. Such organizations have no authority over one another or over the churches. They are voluntary and advisory bodies designed to elicit, combine, and direct the energies of our people in the most effective manner. Members of New Testament churches should cooperate with one another in carrying forward the missionary, educational, and benevolent ministries for the extension of Christ's Kingdom. Christian unity in the New Testament sense is spiritual harmony and voluntary cooperation for common ends by various groups of Christ's people. Cooperation is desirable between the various Christian denominations, when the end to be attained is itself justified, and when such cooperation involves no violation of conscience or compromise of loyalty to Christ and His Word as revealed in the New Testament.

Ex. 17:12; 18:17; Judg. 7:21; Matt. 10:5-15; 28:19-20; I Cor. 1:10-17; Phil. 1:15-18.

## **The Christian and the Social Order**

Every Christian is under obligation to seek to make the will of Christ supreme in his own life and in human society. Means and methods used for the improvement of society and the establishment of righteousness among men can be truly and permanently helpful only when they are rooted in the regeneration of the individual by the saving grace of God in Christ Jesus. The Christian should oppose in the spirit of Christ every form of greed, selfishness, and vice. He should work to provide for the orphaned, the needy, the aged, the helpless, and the sick. Every Christian should seek to bring industry, government, and society as a whole under the sway of the principles of righteousness, truth, and brotherly love. In order to promote these ends Christians should be ready to work with all men of good will in any good cause, always being careful to act in the spirit of love without compromising their loyalty to Christ and His truth.

Ex. 20:3-17; Zech. 8:16; Matt. 5:13-16; Luke 4:18-21; Romans 12-14; Eph. 6:5-9; Philemon; James 1:27.

## **Peace and War**

It is the duty of Christians to seek peace with all men on principles of righteousness. In accordance with the spirit and teachings of Christ they should do all in their power to put an end to war.

The true remedy for the war spirit is the gospel of our Lord. The supreme need of the world is the acceptance of His teachings in all affairs of men and nations, and the practical application of His law of love.

We urge Christian people throughout the world to pray for the reign of the Prince of Peace. Isa. 2:4; Matt. 5:9; Luke 22:36-38; Rom. 12:18-19; James 4:1-2.

## **Religious Liberty**

God alone is Lord of the conscience, and He has left it free from the doctrines and commandments of men which are contrary to His Word or not contained in it. Church and state should be separate. The state owes to every church protection and full freedom in the pursuit of its spiritual ends. In providing for such freedom no ecclesiastical group or denomination should be favored by the state more than others. Civil government being ordained of God, it is the duty of Christians to render loyal obedience thereto in all things not contrary to the revealed will of God. The church should not resort to the civil power to carry on its work. The gospel of Christ contemplates spiritual means alone for the pursuit of its ends. The state has no right to impose taxes for the support of any form of religion. A free church in a free state is the Christian ideal, and this implies the right of free and unhindered access to God on the part of all men, and the right to form and propagate opinions in the sphere of religion without interference by the civil power.

Gen. 1:27; 2:7; Matt. 6:6-7; John 8:36; Rom. 6:1-2; Phil. 3:20; James 4:12; 1 Peter.

## **Character**

### **Section 1 – Policy**

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 Association and State convention affiliated with the Southern Baptist Convention.

## **Section 2 – Doctrine**

This church receives the Scriptures as its authority in matters of faith and practice. Its understanding of Christian truth as contained therein is in essential accord with the belief of other Southern Baptist Churches.

# **BYLAWS**

## **Membership**

### **Section 1 – General**

This is a sovereign and democratic Baptist church under the Lordship of Jesus Christ. The membership retains onto itself the right of exclusive 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.

### **Section 2 – Candidacy**

Any person may offer himself as a candidate for membership in this church. All such candidates shall be presented to the church at any regular worship service for membership with the church reserving the right to counsel with anyone before presenting them for approval. This counseling shall be under the direction of the pastor, assistant pastor, deacons and elected counselors or any of the fore mentioned. A person may present themselves in the following way:

- [1] By profession of faith and for baptism according to the policies of this church.
- [2] By promise of a letter from a Baptist church of like faith and order.
- [3] By restoration upon a statement of prior conversion experience and baptism in a Baptist church of like faith and order when no letter is obtainable.

Should there be dissent as to any candidate, such dissent shall be referred to the pastor, assistant pastor, and the deacons for investigation and the making of a recommendation to the church within thirty (30) days. A majority vote of those members present and voting shall be required to elect such candidates to membership.

### **Section 3 – Duties**

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

## **Section 4 – Rights**

Each member of this church shall have equal rights and shall be recognized and given the privilege to exercise these rights and may act and vote in the transaction of business of this church.

## **Section 5 – Termination of Membership**

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

Should a member become an offense to the church and to its good name by reason of immoral or unchristian conduct, or by persistent breach of his covenant vows, or non-support of the church, the church may terminate his membership by a three-fourths vote, but only after due notice and hearing, and after faithful efforts have been made to bring such member to repentance and amendment.

The membership of no person shall be terminated (except by letter) at the meeting when the recommendation for such action is made.

## **Section 6 – Restoration**

Any person whose membership has been terminated for any offense may be restored by the vote of the church upon the evidence of his repentance and reformation or upon satisfactory explanation.

# **Church Officers**

## **Section 1 – Pastor**

A pastor shall be chosen and called by the church whenever a vacancy occurs. His election shall take place at a meeting called for that purpose of which at least two weeks public notice shall be given. A pulpit committee shall be appointed by the church to seek out a suitable pastor and their recommendations will constitute a nomination, though any member has the privilege of making other nominations according to the policy established by the church. The committee shall bring to the consideration of the church only one man at a time. Election shall be by secret ballot. An affirmative vote of three-fourths of those present being necessary for a

choice. The pastor thus elected shall receive an indefinite call and shall serve until the relationship is terminated by his request or the church's request. He shall preside at the meetings of the church. He shall be ex-officio chairman of all committees and ex-officio head of all church organizations. The pastor is responsible for leading the church in functioning as a New Testament Church. He shall have the welfare and oversight of the entire church at heart. The pastor will lead the congregation, the organizations and the church staff in performing their tasks. A major concern of the pastor is to perform pastoral responsibilities. He is to be the leader of worship, proclamation, education, and pastoral ministries.

The initial amount of the pastor's salary shall be determined by a vote of the church upon the recommendation of the personnel committee or budget committee. The salary shall be subject to revision from time to time in fair proportion to the prosperity of the church and after due consideration has been given to the needs of the pastor and his family.

The pastor shall be permitted to hold two revival meetings (one weekend per revival) each year outside the church (with the church paying for the pulpit supply in his absence). He shall also be permitted to hold one other revival (one weekend) with the pastor paying the pulpit supply during his absence. The pastor shall be permitted to attend the Indiana Baptist State Convention and the Southern Baptist Convention with the church paying all legitimate expenses.

When the pulpit is vacant by resignation, death or removal, the ordinances by Baptism and the Lord's Supper can be administered by the interim pastor if he is a member of our church or any member of our deacon body.

Terms under which the pastor may be dismissed from his responsibility:

Failing to strictly adhere to the articles of faith.

Committing acts which would bring disgrace to the church.

Failing to abide by the authority of the church.

Any complaint against the pastor must first be brought before pastor and deacons in conference. He can only be dismissed at a special meeting after a conference with the pastor and deacons.

## **Section 2 – Assistant Pastor, Associates, Mission Pastor, etc.**

As the church deems it necessary to call any of the afore mentioned officers, it shall so do by a personnel committee which shall consist of members suggested by the nominating committee. The pastor shall serve as either chairman or co-chairman of the personnel committee.

The pastor should always have whole-hearted support from such workers. He shall have the privilege of asking the church for replacement of any of the officers mentioned if it seems advisable for the well-being of the relationship of the pastor and people.

Terms of service and job description are to be made with the worker when such are needed and called for.

### **Section 3 – Church Staff**

This church shall call or employ such staff members as the church shall need. A job description shall be written when the need for staff members is determined. The secretary shall be recommended to the church by the personnel committee and employed by church action. The custodian shall be recommended by the Personnel Committee, to be approved by church action.

### **Section 4 – Deacons**

#### **Number, Election, Terms of Service**

[1] The church shall have as many deacons as may be deemed necessary by the church, with a suggested number of one (1) deacon per twenty-five (25) resident members. The Rotation System will be the policy under which the deacon body will function.

[2] When more deacons are needed, the Screening committee of the church will suggest names from the membership rolls. These men will be whom they feel will qualify for this important office. These men will have already been studied by said committee, and have proven to the satisfaction of this committee their worthiness and cooperation to the church and the qualifications laid down in the Bible when these names are presented to the church.

#### **[A] SCREENING COMMITTEE:**

When possible, this committee will be made up of both deacons and non-deacons. The pastor will serve as an ex-officio member of said committee. This will be a standing committee of the church, consisting of five (5) male members with two members rotating off annually unless a special need necessitates an extension of their term, in which it would be approved by a 2/3 vote of all members of the church present and voting in the business session. Committee members shall be recommended by the deacon body unless the church desires to submit the names whom it wishes to serve on said committee. When vacancies

appear for reasons other than rotation, they shall be replaced in the same manner as rotation members are nominated.

A chairman shall be elected to serve for a one (1) year term with eligibility to serve two (2) consecutive terms after which one (1) year must pass before his eligibility to serve again. The duties of this committee will be to screen the male membership roll of our church, looking for prospective deacons, using the principles set forth in Matt. 18:15-20; 1 Cor. 5:9-13; I Thess. 5:12-14; and I Tim. the 3<sup>rd</sup> chapter. These men will be observed in the secrecy of this committee as they work and serve in the church. After a satisfactory period of time of observation has passed, and the committee is in agreement to this man being a potential deacon, the full committee or sub-committee shall then meet with this man and his family to explain the qualifications and duties of a deacon. He and his family shall be asked if they are willing to serve if the church should see fit to select and ordain him as a deacon. Should they desire, they shall be given a reasonable length of time for prayer and study of this matter before giving their reply. This committee shall make it clear to the prospective candidate and his family that the committee does not have the power to select them as deacons, but their responsibility is to seek out men whom they feel are prospective deacons and present them to the church, with the church having the power to select whom they desire to serve as deacons.

The committee will have the responsibility of preparing the ballots of prospective deacons using the names of men they have decided upon, and the names of the men who are already ordained but are at that time on the inactive list. There shall also be a place left on the ballot for a "write-in" candidate should the church desire such an action. This secret ballot will be given to the members of the church on the morning of the day of voting at the time of rotation.

It will be the responsibility of this committee to work in strict confidence in all their discussions and works. They are charged to spend much time in prayer over these matters.

[3] Each deacon will serve no more than one term in succession unless the church desires to freeze them on the active list for a period of time the church may see fit. This factor may arise due to insufficient number of men to rotate, or any other reason the church might desire to apply this method.

[4] INACTIVE LIST: Deacons will be placed on the inactive list when rotated off the active list. This list shall be in no special order, other than alphabetical. Time and age will

be no factor in this listing. This list shall be kept both by the church clerk and clerk of the deacon body.

[5] It shall be understood, that the church is under no obligation to accept any member from any other faith and other church as a deacon, though they might have been a deacon at that church. Their names will be placed on the inactive list upon uniting with this church.

## **Duties**

[1] The active deacons shall have the power to call upon the men listed on the inactive list for the consideration of a larger problem or items of which they feel they need advice.

[2] In accordance with the meaning of the Word and the practice of the New Testament, deacons are to be the servants of the church. They are to be zealous to guard the unity of the spirit within the church and to be an example by tithing. They shall serve with the pastor in all matters pertaining to the welfare and work of the church.

Deacons are to work with the church in soul-winning, to counsel with the pastor and by such methods as the New Testament teaches. They are to have oversight of the discipline of the church, in administering which they are to be guided always by the principles set forth in Matt. 18:15-17; I Corin. 5:9-14; I Thess. 5:12 and I Tim. 3.

In the case of absence or inability of the pastor, subject to advice from and in conference with him, the deacons will provide for the pulpit supplies. At no time shall any person be permitted to occupy the pulpit of this church who does not meet the consent of the pastor or deacons, who shall in joint counsel pass on the qualifications of any temporary pulpit supply should this need be felt.

In any temporary period when the church is without a pastor, unless the church shall otherwise provide, the deacons (chairman leading) will arrange for the pulpit supply.

[A] The deacons on the active list shall meet regularly each month with the time and date being decided by the deacon body. Special meetings can be called by the church itself, the pastor, deacons, or anyone seeing a definite need can suggest such a meeting.

[B] The chairman of this body shall be elected annually by the deacons themselves, by the method of secret ballot. His name shall then be presented to

the church for the final approval, with the understanding that the church has the final authority in either accepting or rejecting the name. The church also has the power to submit the name of a deacon that it wishes to serve as chairman, thereby giving the final authority to the church. The chairman shall only be eligible to serve as chairman for a period of two (2) years. After which he must wait one (1) year before he is eligible to again serve in this office.

[C] The clerk of this body shall be elected by the body itself and will be given the responsibility of recording and filing items of business and importance of said body. He shall have the responsibility of presenting any recommendations from this body to the church in its regular business session.

[D] Deacons on the active list should attend all the regular and called meetings of the deacons, but if circumstances prevent attendance, the chairman of the deacons should be notified. Three (3) consecutive unexcused absences from the deacon's meetings shall automatically place a deacon on the inactive list, without any official action from the church.

[E] Reconciliation: It is the desire of the church that no deacon would ever have to be placed on inactive status because they did not attend deacon meetings. However, in the event that this did occur and the deacon later wanted to become active, he would have to attend deacon meetings for six (6) consecutive months and then advise the deacon body he wished to be placed on active status.

[F] The church shall have the power to place men on the inactive list as it may deem fit. "Failure to be faithful in attendance to Sunday worship services and mid-week prayer services is cause for placement on the inactive list." A man may also request to be placed on the inactive list.

[3] They shall organize themselves into such committees as their wisdom may direct for efficiency in service. They shall apportion the membership of the church among themselves with a suggested amount of one (1) deacon per every twenty-five (25) members, and make plans whereby the entire membership may have the benefit of the oversight in Christ of their brethren.

[4] Each deacon shall confer freely with the pastor about matters and cases of discipline which in his judgment would be wisely and spiritually handled in private.

[5] ROTATION: This will take place the first of April, with the votes being cast by the church during March. The men listed on the active list shall be placed in order according to time served on this list. The man or men with the longest length of service will be rotated off each year. The remaining men's names will at that time be moved down the list according to time of their service on the active list. These being rotated onto the list shall have their names placed at the top and will move down toward the bottom each year as other men rotate off.

The church will select the men who are to serve them by voting for deacons or prospective deacons listed on a secret ballot prepared by the screening committee. There shall be a place left on the ballot for a "write-in" candidate should the church desire to do so. The screening committee shall secure this list of prospective deacons by the means set aside in Section 4 Part 2 [A]. The other portion of the ballot listing which shall consist of the names on the inactive list, this shall be taken from the list kept by the deacon clerk and church clerk.

These ballots shall be cast on Sunday morning during a period set aside for such an important matter. The ballots shall be counted by the chairman of the screening committee and the pastor, or a special committee set aside by the church. Should there be a tie vote, then ballots shall be recast in the night service until the tie is broken.

Should unordained men be selected by the church to serve, they shall be permitted to meet with the deacons in their regular meetings, but in an ex-officio fashion until the church sets a date for their ordination at its nearest convenience, after which time they will take on the full responsibility of a deacon.

The church shall have the power to place men on the inactive list as it may deem fit. A man may also request himself to be placed on the inactive list.

## **Section 5 - Trustees**

A Committee of Trustees, consisting of twelve (12) members, four of whom shall be elected annually, to serve for three years and/or until their successor shall be elected. The trustees will hold in trust the property of the church. They shall have no power to buy, sell, mortgage, lease, or transfer any property without a specific vote of the church authorizing each action. It shall be the function of the Trustees to affix their signature to legal documents involving the sale, mortgaging, purchase, or rental of property or other legal documents where the signature of Trustees are required. This committee shall assist the church in matters related to properties

administration. Its work includes such areas as maintaining all church properties for ready use, recommending policies regarding use of properties.

The Trustees shall be authorized to spend a maximum of \$1,000.00 for each instance of repair or upkeep of church property or for the purchase of supplies without church authorization. If at any time the need arises to spend an amount in excess of \$1,000.00, the church shall be consulted for its approval.

### **Section 6 - Moderator**

The moderator shall be the pastor and if possible the church shall elect annually an assistant moderator. In absence of the pastor, the assistant moderator shall preside. In absence of the above forenamed it shall be the responsibility of the chairman of the deacons or in the absence of all these, the clerk shall call the church to order and an acting moderator shall be elected. If the above-mentioned are not present, a deacon may call the church to order, and an acting moderator shall be elected. If none of the above are present, the business session shall be delayed.

### **Section 7 - Quorum**

The Quorum consists of those who attend the business meeting, provided it is a slated meeting or one that has been properly called.

### **Section 8 - Clerk**

The church shall elect annually a church clerk. The clerk shall keep in a suitable book a record of all the actions of the church except as other wise herein provided. He is responsible for keeping a register of the names of members with dates of admission, dismissal, or death together with a record of baptisms. He shall issue letters of dismissal voted by the church, preserve on file all communications and written reports and give legal notice of all minutes where such notice is necessary as indicated in this by-laws. Should the church so desire it may delegate some of the clerical responsibilities to a church secretary. All church records are church property and should be filed in the church office when one is maintained, when other provisions are made this must meet church approval. The clerk shall consider it a part of his responsibility to promote loyalty and efficiency in church life.

All requests for termination of membership or action looking thereto shall first be brought to the attention of the pastor and deacon body for consideration before any recommendation is made to the church.

## **Section 9 - Treasurer**

The church shall elect annually a church treasurer. It shall be the duty of the treasurer to receive, preserve, and pay out upon receipt vouchers approved and signed, if necessary, by authorized personnel, all money, or things of value paid or given to the church, keeping at all times an itemized account of all receipts and disbursements. It shall be the duty of the treasurer to render to the church at each regular business meeting itemized report of the receipts and disbursements for the preceding month. The treasurer's report shall be audited yearly by an auditing committee or public accountant (see Section 11.) Upon rendering the annual account at the end of each fiscal year, and its acceptance and approval by the church, the records shall be delivered by the treasurer to the church clerk who shall keep and preserve it as a part of the permanent records of the church.

The treasurer shall upon the election of his successor, at the completion of his fiscal report, promptly deliver to his successor all books, records, and accounts in his hands pertaining to in any manner the duty of his office. The books shall be open for inspection at all times, for legitimate purposes, by any member of the church. He shall consider it a part of his responsibilities to promote in every proper way scriptural giving (with the tithe as the basic minimum) on the part of the entire membership of the church.

The treasurer should be a consistent tither. If an assistant is needed for purposes of counting money, etc., the church shall elect such a person or persons.

## **Section 10 - Financial Secretary**

Any qualified member of the church may be elected to this office. The secretary shall receive the empty collections envelopes after the money has been removed and counted by the proper persons selected by the church to serve in term and from these individual donors shall be given credit. The envelopes shall be kept for reference for a period of two years. A sheet shall be kept for the monthly balance which will indicate receipts from envelopes, or special offering envelopes. The secretary shall also have the responsibility for preparing annual statements to all contributing members. A notice shall be issued as to how these statements can be obtained.

## **Section 11 - Church Council**

The primary functions of the council shall be to recommend to the congregation suggested objectives and church goals; to review and coordinate program plans recommended by church officers, organizations, and committees; to recommend to the congregation the use of leadership,

calendar time, and other resources according to program achievements in terms of church goals and objectives.

The council, unless otherwise determined by vote of the church, shall have as regular members the Pastor, Church Staff Members, Sunday School Director, the Church Training Director, WMU Director, Baptist Men Director, Chairman of the Deacons, Chairman of the Trustees, Chairman of the Budget Committee, the Treasurer, and church related elected offices may serve as ex-officio members.

All matters agreed upon by the council, calling for action not already authorized, shall be referred to the church for approval or disapproval.

## **COMMITTEES**

### **GENERAL GUIDELINES FOR CHURCH COMMITTEES**

These committees and responsibilities can be changed without a constitutional change. They must be approved in regular business meeting with changes in printed form noting both changes and original.

#### **Section 1 - General Committees**

The following committee members shall be selected by the nominating committee (with the exception of the nominating committee), and elected by the church unless otherwise indicated in the description below. The chairpersons of all committees shall be nominated by the respective committee and elected annually by the church. All chairpersons shall be eligible to serve 2 consecutive years, after which they must wait 1 year before becoming eligible to serve again in this office.

#### **Section 2 - Pulpit Committee**

When the pulpit becomes vacant, a Pulpit Committee shall be elected by the church. It shall consist of seven (7) men and two (2) women. The Chairman of the Deacons shall be on the

committee. The committee may be elected at any regular business meeting. The chairman of this committee shall be elected by the members within the committee. This committee shall cease to function after a Pastor has been acquired.

All reasonable expenses incurred by this committee carrying out their duties in securing a new pastor shall be paid by the church.

The Pulpit Committee shall bring to the consideration of the church only one man at a time; however, this does not mean that more than one can be visited at a time.

### **Section 3 - Nominating Committee**

A committee on nominations shall be appointed annually by the pastor and educational director. In the absence of a pastor, the associate pastor/educational director and chairman of the deacons shall make the appointments. It shall be their duty to bring to the church the nomination of officers and committees. This committee shall bring to the church the nomination of the department heads (committee or committees). Upon the approval of the department heads, they shall work jointly with the nomination committee in selecting the proper personnel for the various places of service.

### **Section 4 - Baptism Committee**

The baptismal committee shall consist of deacons and their wives. It shall be the duty of this committee to make all necessary arrangements for the administration of the ordinance of baptism and to render such assistance to the pastor and to the candidates as may be necessary.

### **Section 5 - Lord's Supper Committee**

The deacons shall name of their number a committee responsible for the preparation and observance of the Lord's Supper.

### **Section 6 - Budget Committee**

It shall be the responsibility of the budget committee (composed of the different department heads) to study and develop a recommended budget each year, using sound principles of financial management. They shall with consultation with the pastor, 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 by items the amount needed and sought for all local purposes and expenses.

## **Section 7 - Kitchen Committee**

The kitchen committee is responsible for formulating and recommending to the church policies for the kitchen and for communicating these policies to church members. This committee shall also have the responsibility of helping prepare the facilities for church-wide socials and activities of this nature.

## **Section 8 - Nursery Committee**

The educational and preschool directors are to coordinate the nursery activities and to help nursery parents and teachers work together. The committee will see that adequate provisions are made for nursery children each time they are at church.

## **Section 9 - Mission Committee**

Should the need be felt by the church, a missions committee shall be selected from the membership. It will be the responsibility of this committee to seek to discuss possibilities for local missions projects, share findings with church program organizations, and serve the church in establishing and conducting such missions projects as may be assigned to it.

## **Section 10 - Flower Committee**

The flower committee shall consist of a person of the church office as designated by the pastor/administrator. It shall be their responsibility to secure floral arrangements (or church plaque) for members in the event of their death or their immediate families (husband, wife, mother, father, sister, brother, son or daughter). The church shall also have a committee or persons who shall have the responsibility of overseeing the decorating of the church for regular services.

## **Section 11 - Auditing Committee**

The trustees shall have the responsibility of having the financial records audited once a year and shall submit a written report to the church after the audit is completed. If the treasurer resigns, dies, or is removed from office in any way, the books will be audited before a new treasurer takes office. The new treasurer or interim may serve pro-tem until the audit has been completed.

## **Section 12 - Bus Committee**

When the church is involved in a bus ministry, the trustees shall be in charge of such ministry. The pastor/administrator may assign responsibility of this operation to a coordinator and as many others as needed. It will be their responsibility to coordinate the bus activities as necessary.

## **Section 13 - Planning Committee**

When the church sees fit to have a planning committee it shall consist, when possible, of trustees, deacons, and others to study and seek out possible church growth, development needs, and recommend to the church facilities, improvements, and how it can best be accomplished.

## **Section 14 - Church Ushers**

Every regular church usher shall be selected by the nominating committee and elected by the church. The ushers shall be led by the chairman of ushers also selected by the nominating committee and elected by the church. The chairman of ushers will also be responsible for the assignments to the various ushers as to their duties. Their duties shall be the seating of the congregation, provide bulletins and/or other materials, and the receiving of the tithes and offerings.

## **Section 15 - Personnel Committee**

The Personnel Committee shall consist of five (5) members. Two (2) members shall rotate off each year (unless a special need necessitates an extension of their term, in which case it would be approved by the church with a two-thirds majority vote).

It shall be the responsibility of this committee to study wages, salaries and benefits using sound principles of financial management regarding all personnel called by the church and to recommend to the church their findings.

Elected by the church, serving two (2) year terms and three (3) year terms.

## **Section 16 - CLC Ministries Committee**

The Church will elect annually a CLC Ministries Committee. The CLC Ministries Committee will have as its primary function the task of being an advisory group working with the Minister of Recreation and special area coordinators in establishing a comprehensive program that meets spiritual, physical, emotional and social needs of our church membership and prospects.

The Committee will be representative of the membership of the Church and shall elect a chairman and secretary annually.

### **Section 17 - Counting Committee**

It shall be the responsibility of this committee to count, properly record for church records and deposit all regular receipts and all other special offerings as requested.

This committee shall be under the supervision of the trustees who are the legal agents of the church. They shall work in confidential and secure fashions, seeing that all receipts are properly accounted for. Personal giving of the membership shall be held in strict confidence.

## **Church Finance**

### **Section 1 - Unified Budget System**

This church accepts the Scriptural method of “tithes and offerings” as its plan of finance. All members will be encouraged to underwrite the church budget by tithing their incomes into the treasury of the church. Each member of this church should be a tither and the church goes on record as accepting the doctrine of “Storehouse Tithing” as taught in the scriptures and commonly accepted by Southern Baptists. Individual Offering envelopes shall be supplied to members of the church for use in making this weekly contributions.

There shall be a Unified Treasury – one church treasury and one church treasurer, except when a building is under construction or extensive repairs, there can be elected a building treasurer. At no time shall there be permitted to exist a separate Sunday School treasury and treasurer.

### **Section 2**

All funds, for any and all purposes, shall pass through the hands of the treasurer and be properly recorded on the books of the church. The expenses of all organizations as set forth by budget and approved by the church, shall be paid from the regular treasury.

### **Section 3**

It is understood that membership in this church involves financial obligation to support the church and its causes with regular proportionate gifts (tithes and offerings).

## **Program Organizations**

### **Section 1 - General**

All organizations of the church shall be under church control, all officers being elected annually by the church and reporting regularly to the church. It is understood that the pastor is an ex-officio officer of all the organizations named, and his leadership is to be recognized in them.

### **Section 2 - Sunday School**

There shall be a Sunday School, divided into departments and classes for all ages and conducted under the direction of the Sunday School Director for the study of God's Word. Sunday School is to be conducted each Sunday morning.

The task of the Sunday School shall be to teach the Biblical revelation; lead in reaching all prospects for the church; lead all church members to worship, witness, learn, and minister daily; provide and interpret information regarding the work of the church and the denomination.

### **Section 3 - Church Training**

There shall be a Church Training Department, divided into departments for all ages and conducted under the direction of a general director. Training Union is to be conducted each Sunday evening. The Training Union shall serve as the training organization of the church.

The tasks of the Training Union shall be to teach systematic theology, Christian history, Christian ethics, and church policy and organization; give orientation to new church members; train all church members to worship, witness, learn, and minister daily, train leaders for the church and denomination; discover, recruit, and train potential leaders; provide for specialized training; provide organization and leadership for special projects of the church and the denomination.

### **Section 4 - Women's Missionary Union**

There shall be a Woman's Missionary Union with such officers and such forms of organization as needed. This program shall be directed by a director who shall be elected annually by the church. The tasks of the Woman's Missionary Union shall be to teach missions; lead persons to participate in missions; provide organization and leadership for special mission projects of the church; provide and interpret information regarding the work of the church and the denomination.

### **Section 5 - Baptist Men's Organization**

There shall be a Baptist Men's Organization made up of such standard organizations, including Royal Ambassadors, as needed. This program shall be directed by a director who shall be elected annually by the church. The tasks are to teach missions; lead all men, young men, and boys to participate in mission activities; provide organization and leadership for special projects of the church; provide and interpret information regarding the work of the church and the denomination.

### **Section 6 - Church Music**

There shall be a church music program under the guidance of the music director. Such officers and/or organizations shall be included as needed. The music tasks shall be to teach music and harmony, provide music and musicians for the congregational services and the organizations of the church; lead persons to participate in hymn singing, train persons to lead, sing, and play music; provide organization and leadership for special projects of the church. The director is to direct the choir or choirs in public singing and practice, and is to cooperate with the pastor and other church leaders in the selection of suitable music and the devising of appropriate musical programs for all organizations where such services are needed.

The music director shall be permitted to hold two one-week revival meetings (only one Sunday per week) or one two-week revival outside the church per year. The music director shall also receive two-weeks' vacation with pay.

## **Church Meetings**

### **Section 1 - Worship Services**

The church shall meet regularly each Sunday morning and evening for preaching, instruction, evangelism, and for the worship of the Almighty God, and on Wednesday evening

for prayer and Bible study. These meetings will be open for the entire membership of the church and for all people, and shall be conducted under the direction of the pastor.

## **Section 2 - Regular or Special Business Meetings**

Regular business meetings shall be held monthly on a designated Wednesday night, this Wednesday shall be the first Wednesday after the third Sunday. Should there be any unusual business or matter of unusual interest to be brought before such regular monthly meeting, notice shall be given the membership two regular worship services prior to the meeting – object of the meeting being clearly stated.

## **Section 3 - Parliamentary Rules**

Robert's Rules of Order is the authority for parliamentary rules of procedure for all business meetings of the church.

## **Section 4 - Year Fiscal**

The fiscal year of the church shall run concurrently with the church year, which begins on January 1 and ends on December 31.

## **Amendments**

Changes in this constitution and by-laws may be made at any regular business meeting of the church, provided such amendments shall have been presented in writing at a previous and copies of the proposed amendment be furnished to each member present. Amendments to the constitution shall be by two-thirds vote of all members of the church present entitled to vote; amendments to the by-laws shall have a concurrence of a majority of the members present voting.

A supply of constitutions shall be made available to any and all members.

Date Approved: June 6, 1973

*Last amended: September 24, 2008*

22

PAGE