

CONSTITUTION AND BYLAWS
FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH
ABILENE, TEXAS
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* Hereafter referred to in the bylaws as "deacons" or "the deacon body", consisting of the deacons emeriti and those who have been elected and ordained and who presently serve a current three (3) -year term.

Constitution

Preamble

In order that this body may be governed in a manner consistent with historic Baptist distinctives and in order that the rights inherent to each individual member of this church to have a voice in its deliberations and acts be maintained, we do declare and establish this constitution.

Article I. Name

The name of this church shall be First Baptist Church, Abilene, Texas, incorporated under the laws of the State of Texas.

Article II. Purpose

This church is organized and maintained for the worship of God; for Christian fellowship; for Bible study and instruction in doctrine; for combining the efforts of individual members in evangelism, missions, and benevolences; and for carrying out such other religious, charitable, and educational activities as may be determined by the church.

Article III. Membership

The membership of this church shall consist of persons who have accepted Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior and who have obeyed Him in the scriptural ordinance of baptism.

Article IV. Doctrine

The standard of faith and practice of this church shall be in keeping with the New Testament and in conformity with "Baptist Faith and Message" adopted by the Southern Baptist Convention in the statement of 1963.

Article V. Character

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.

Bylaws

Article I. Membership

Section 1. Qualifications.

The membership of this church shall consist of such persons as confess Jesus Christ to be their Savior and Lord and who (after due examination by the church as to their Christian experience and, if coming from other churches of the same faith and order, upon receipt of their letters of dismissal and recommendations or satisfactory substitutes) have been accepted by vote of the church and have obeyed the scriptural ordinance of baptism.

Section 2. Examination by a Pastor.

Upon the majority vote of the congregation assembled taken after appropriate examination by the church through a pastor or other duly authorized member or members and, in the case of candidates for baptism, after they have been baptized, such persons shall be members of the church, fully qualified to act and vote in the transactions of the church and fully obligated to discharge the duties of membership.

Section 3. Faithfulness of Members.

Members shall strive to be faithful to the teachings of Jesus Christ and shall support the worship services and organized work of the church with their time, talent, and material resources as God shall lead and direct them.

Section 4. Membership by Statement.

A person who joins this church by statement shall be qualified to act and vote in the transactions of the church and shall be obligated to discharge the duties of membership. One may join by statement (1) if the person is or was a member of a church of like faith and order and the person's records, for any reasonable cause, are no longer available or (2) if one is a member of a church of another denomination that has a similar faith and practices immersion according to the scriptural ordinance of baptism.

Section 5. Watchcare Members.

Persons in need of a church home, but not desiring to become voting members, may offer themselves for watchcare and may be accepted as watchcare members upon the majority vote of the congregation assembled taken after appropriate examination as in the case of those offering themselves for membership. Such persons should have had a genuine conversion experience and membership in another church and should agree to live within the framework of this church. Watchcare members are not eligible to be elected to church office or to vote in transactions of the church, but they shall otherwise be fully admitted to the fellowship of the church. No church letter will be granted to watchcare persons who unite with another congregation.

Article II. The Purpose and Organization of the Church

Section 1. Purpose and Objectives.

The purpose of the church shall be to fulfill the biblical and historical functions of a New Testament church and to be a dynamic spiritual organism empowered by the Holy Spirit to share Christ with as many people as possible in this church and community and throughout the world with special objectives and promotional emphases on worship, mission, Bible study, stewardship, prayer, the ordinances, fellowship, training for Christian service, evangelism, music, marriage and family life, concerns for justice and morality, recreation, and counseling.

Section 2. Organization.

The officers, staff members, committees, workers, and other leadership to help fulfill and give direction to the purpose and objectives set out in Section 1 shall be as set out in Articles IV and V. Workers, officers, and teachers needed to staff the various organizations and committees of the church shall be presented to the church for approval each year. Nominations will come from the Committee on Committees and other appropriate nominating committees in the various areas of church activities. Nominations in each case may be made from the floor.

Article III. Meetings

Section 1. Meetings.

The meetings of the church shall be as follows:

- A. Services of worship which shall be held each Sunday.
- B. Midweek gatherings for prayer and Christian formation shall be held on Wednesdays.
- C. Revival services and special worship services which may be held as recommended by the Senior Pastor, or by the deacons if the office of Senior Pastor be vacant, and authorized by the church.
- D. Church conference shall be held four (4) times a year during the months of August, October, January, and April and at other times after due notice to the congregation as need may require. All nonbudgetary financial matters shall be presented and discussed at least one week prior to a vote by the congregation.
- E. The number of members present at the church conference shall constitute a quorum.

Section 2. Priorities.

The regular worship services and church conference set forth in Section 1 herein shall take precedence over any and all other church meetings and programs and gatherings of any other organization or group.

Article IV. Church Officers

Section 1. Senior Pastor.

A. Call.

The church shall call a Senior Pastor to be the undershepherd of the church and the spiritual leader of the congregation in a procedure set out in Article V. Section 2.A. of the bylaws.

B. Duties.

The Senior Pastor shall be the spiritual leader of the church and shall lead all other staff members as called by the church to assist in the ministries of the congregation. The responsibilities of the Senior Pastor shall be set out by the Personnel Committee and approved by the church. The Senior Pastor shall be an ex officio member of all church organizations and committees.

C. Termination.

The Senior Pastor may resign his or her service with the church or may be terminated. Any person in the church can recommend the termination of the Senior Pastor, however that recommendation must first go to the Personnel Committee for its consideration. Such termination must be approved by the Personnel Committee, a two-thirds (2/3) vote of the deacons present at any regular or called meeting of the deacon body, and a majority of votes cast at a regular or special church conference. Notice of the time and purpose of such meeting shall be given by the clerk of the

church at the worship services and in the church newsletter and the church bulletin on two alternating weeks prior to the date of any meeting at which the action of termination is to be taken.

D. Rapid Response Team

If the Senior Pastor is incapacitated, a Rapid Response Team (made up of the first three available persons of the Chair of Deacons, Chair of Personnel Committee, Vice-Chair of the Deacons, and Vice-Chair of the Personnel Committee) will be responsible for providing pulpit supply for the next four weeks.

Section 2. Other Leadership Staff Members.

A. Leadership Positions and Duties.

Designation of and changes in leadership staff positions of the church shall be recommended by the Personnel Committee and shall then be approved by two thirds (2/3) of the deacons present at any regular or called meeting of the body of deacons and by a majority vote of the church members present and voting at any regular or called church conference of the church. The duties and job description of each such leadership staff member shall be established by the Personnel Committee. All leadership staff members shall be Baptist.

B. Employment Procedure.

The Committee on Committees shall recommend a search committee to fill a vacant or new leadership staff position. The search committee members shall be approved by a majority of church members present and voting at any regular or called church conference. The recommendation of the search committee for the vacant or new leadership staff position shall be approved by two thirds (2/3) of the deacons present at any regular or called meeting of the deacon body and by a majority vote of the church members present and voting at any regular or called church conference of the church.

C. Termination.

Any leadership staff member employed under this section may be terminated upon recommendation of the Senior Pastor and a consultation and vote by the Personnel Committee,

Section 3. Selection of Interim Pastor and Other Interim Leadership Staff Positions.

A. Interim Senior Pastor.

The Personnel Committee will fill the interim Senior Pastor position and schedule pulpit supply during the interim. The Personnel Committee will evaluate the time commitment of whether the interim will be full-time, part-time, or Sunday only and the responsibilities during the interim. In the event of the retirement or resignation of the Senior Pastor, the Personnel Committee will help set a timeline and guide the transition. The recommendation of the Personnel Committee shall be approved by two thirds (2/3) of the deacons present at any regular or called meeting of the deacon body and a majority vote of the members present and voting at any regular or called church conference.

B. Other Interim Leadership Staff Positions.

Interim leadership staff shall be employed by majority vote of the Personnel Committee upon the recommendation of the Senior Pastor and/or the Pastor for Administration.

Section 4. Non-leadership Staff Members.

Employment of non-leadership staff members shall follow the procedure outlined in the church personnel policy.

Section 5. Deacon Body and Its Selection.

A. Purpose.

1. Deacons shall be servant/leaders involved in the ministry and mission of the church.
2. Deacons shall seek to preserve and promote the spirit of unity and peace within the church.

3. Deacons shall serve as counselors and advisors with the pastoral staff in matters pertaining to the purpose, welfare, and work of the church.
4. Deacons shall help provide spiritual oversight for all of the membership of all the church, especially seeking to know the physical, emotional, and spiritual needs and struggles of church members and to assist in every way possible.
5. Deacons shall be aware of and advocate for the financial condition and stability of the church.

B. Meetings.

1. The Deacon Body shall meet regularly as agreed upon by the Deacon Body.
2. Special meetings may be called by the Senior Pastor or the deacon chair or upon the request of three (3) or more deacons.
3. The Deacon Body, or any committee thereof, may participate in and hold a meeting by means of conference telephone call, video-conferencing, or by other electronic means including but not limited to electronic mail (e-mail - an electronic meeting). A quorum shall be required and a report shall be recorded in the minutes. Any action taken during such electronic meeting shall be reported during the next called meeting of the Deacon Body or the committee where attendance is in person.

C. Term.

1. Deacons shall be nominated annually for three-year terms by the Deacon Selection Committee and approved by the Deacon Body and the Church. Each deacon, upon completing one (1) term of office, shall rotate off the body and shall be ineligible for reelection to the body for a period of one (1) year.
2. The term of service shall be from the January deacons' meeting of the first year through the December deacons' meeting of the third year.

D. Number.

1. The deacon body shall consist of sixty (60) deacons and the deacons emeriti.
2. The number of deacons to be elected each year shall equal the number needed to maintain the body's membership at sixty (60).

E. Quorum and Voting.

The deacon body shall not consider itself properly convened for the transaction of business unless the meeting is attended by at least fifty-one percent (51%) of the elected deacons. Except as may be otherwise provided herein, any motion or request for action shall be approved if a quorum exists and a majority of those in attendance (whether in person or participating electronically) vote in favor of the motion or request for action.

F. Qualifications.

1. Deacons shall exhibit the personal, moral, and spiritual qualities required of deacons in I Timothy 3:8-13 and shall also have a consistent Christian witness in business, home, and the community.
2. Deacons shall be required to have been members of First Baptist Church, Abilene, for a period of at least one year, and shall be twenty-five (25) years of age or older.

G. Standards.

1. Deacons should consistently attend all regular and called deacons' meetings. (A deacon who anticipates more than three [3] or four [4] absences per year perhaps should decline to serve.)
2. Deacons shall practice tithing as a minimum standard of giving.
3. Deacons shall accept places of leadership and ministry consistent with their gifts and talents.
4. Deacons shall serve when called upon to receive the offering and to serve the Lord's Supper.

5. Deacons shall participate in other ministries of the church as needed and as they are called on to serve.
6. Deacons shall be expected to participate in regular Bible study and church worship and to pray for the ministry of the church.
7. Deacons shall view themselves as part of the spiritual leadership of the church alongside the Senior Pastor and pastoral staff.

H. Organization.

1. The deacons shall have as officers a deacon chair, a vice-chair/chair-elect, a recording secretary, and an attendance secretary.
2. The Deacon Nominating Committee
 - a. This committee shall consist of nine (9) members, with three (3) members rotating off each year.
 - b. Each year, three (3) new members shall be nominated by the current chair and vice chair/chair elect of the deacons, along with the chair and vice chair/chair elect of the previous two (2) years, for election by the deacons in January of each year. At the January deacons meeting nominations from the floor shall be allowed.
 - c. Duties.
 - (1) Prior to September 1 of each year, the committee shall select four (4) deacons to serve on the Deacon Selection Committee
 - (2) In February of each year, this committee shall, with recommendations from the Committee on Committees, nominate the new members of the Committee on Committees, which shall also be approved by the deacon body and the church. The Deacon Nominating Committee shall name the chair of the Committee on Committees.
 - (3) In November of each year, this committee shall nominate deacon officers for the new year for election by the Deacon Body. Nominations from the floor shall be allowed.
 - (4) In December, this committee shall designate the coordinator to schedule those who will receive the offering.
3. Deacon Selection Committee
 - a. Members of the Deacon Selection Committee shall be selected annually and shall be composed of the current chair of the Deacon Body, the Senior-Pastor, four (4) deacons selected by the Deacon Nominating Committee, and four (4) at large members selected by the Committee on Committees from the Church Body who represent, to the extent possible, a cross section of the church. The membership of this committee shall be presented for approval by the Deacon Body and the church by September 1 of each year. The chair will be selected at the first meeting.
 - b. Duties
 - (1) The Committee shall solicit recommendations of church members to serve as deacons as follows:
 - (a) The Church Body and Sunday school classes will be encouraged to recommend members to serve as deacons.
 - (b) The pastoral staff may submit recommendations of church members serving in Preschool, Youth, Children, College, and Missions Ministries.
 - (2) A Comprehensive list of all church members who are eligible to serve as deacons will be made available to the church body on September 1 of each year.

- (3) All recommendations shall be submitted on or before October 1 to the Deacon Selection Committee, which shall examine those recommended and their qualifications to serve. Those who are found to be qualified will be contacted by members of the Deacon Selection Committee to determine their willingness to serve as deacons. The Deacon Selection Committee shall develop a proposed slate of candidates sufficient to replace the deacons whose terms are expiring, and to maintain the total number of sixty (60) deacons. In developing this slate, the Deacon Selection Committee will, to the extent possible, insure that the makeup of the slate represents a cross section of the church membership. Those candidates not previously ordained as deacons shall, and other candidates may, be interviewed by the Senior-Pastor and deacon chair to discuss the role of a member of the Deacon Body, and to determine the candidate's qualifications to serve.
- (4) The final slate of candidates shall be submitted by the Deacon Selection Committee to the Deacon body for approval at the November deacons' meeting and to the Church body for approval at a morning worship service following the November deacons' meeting. If the slate is not approved, the Deacon Selection Committee shall select a new slate and submit it to the deacon body and the church body as soon as possible.

I. Vacancies.

1. Any vacancy created when a deacon (whose term extends beyond the end of the year) dies, moves away, or resigns may be filled immediately.
2. The Deacon Selection Committee shall use the list of members who were previously qualified to fill any vacancy.

J. Deacons Emeriti.

1. The deacon chair may appoint a committee at any time and from time to time to consider the nomination of deacon emeriti in order to honor deacons who have reached the age of seventy-five (75) and who have given to First Baptist Church outstanding, meritorious, and loyal service in the past.
2. Those nominated shall be presented by the deacon body to the church for approval.
3. Such deacons are especially welcome to attend and participate in the deacons' meeting with full voting rights, but they are not under any obligation to do so.
4. Deacons emeriti are not subject to annual election by the deacons or the church.

Section 6. Moderator.

The deacon chair shall be the moderator of all regular and called church conference of the church. In the event of the absence of the deacon chair or at his/her request, the vice-chair/chair-elect of the body of deacons shall serve as moderator. If both the deacon chair and the deacon vice-chair/chair-elect are absent at any regular or called church conference, the recording secretary or the attendance secretary shall serve, in that order. If all of the aforementioned are absent at any regular or called church conference, a moderator for that meeting shall be elected from the floor. In that event, church clerk shall call the church to order, and a temporary moderator shall be elected by a simple majority vote of the members present.

Section 7. Church Clerk (Church Secretary).

A. Election Procedure.

The church secretary shall be elected as church clerk by a majority of the members present at a regular or called church conference whenever a new church secretary has been hired.

B. Duties.

The duties of the church clerk shall be to keep a correct record of the proceedings of all church conferences, to act as custodian of all papers and records pertaining to such meetings, to prepare and forward letters of transfer of membership, to make changes in the church roll as directed by the church, to prepare and present the annual report of the church for the association and the conventions, and to sign legal instruments when required.

C. Assistant Church Clerk.

The Senior Pastor's secretary shall be elected to serve as the assistant church clerk according to procedures outlined above in Section 7.A.

Section 8. Treasurer.

A. Election Procedure.

The treasurer of the church and two (2) assistants shall be recommended by the Committee on Committees, approved by two thirds (2/3) of the deacons present at any regular or special meeting of the deacon body, and elected by a majority of the members present at any regular or special church conference.

B. Duties.

The duties of the treasurer shall be to take charge of all funds belonging to the church and, in cooperation with the chair of the Finance Committee and/or any other person or committee appointed by the Finance Committee, to disburse such funds by check as authorized and approved by the Finance Committee. The treasurer shall also serve as a member of the church Finance Committee and, upon request, sign legal documents with at least one trustee on conveyances of title to church property; all legal documents involving the sale, mortgage, purchase, or rental of property; all notes and loan instruments; and such other legal documents as may require execution on behalf of the church.

Section 9. Trustees.

A. Election Procedure.

There shall be five (5) trustees. They shall be elected upon recommendation of and nominations from time to time by the Committee on Committees, upon a two thirds (2/3) vote of the deacons present at any regular or special meeting of the deacon body, and upon a two thirds (2/3) vote of all the members of the church present and voting at a regular or special church conference.

B. Duties.

When authorized and instructed by the church, the trustees shall execute all conveyances of title to church property; all legal documents involving the sale, mortgage, purchase, or rental of property; all notes and loan instruments; and such other legal documents as may require execution on behalf of the church.

Article V. Church Committees, Boards, and Ministry Teams

Section 1. Standing Committees and Boards.

- A. The following committees and boards of the church shall constitute the standing committees and boards.

Budget/Stewardship	GLO Day Care Ministry Board
Building and Grounds	Ministry of Counseling and Family Enrichment Board
City Light Community Ministries Board	Missions
Committee on Committees	Personnel
Constitution, Bylaws, and Policies	Recreation Ministry Board
Finance	Treasurer (Article IV, Section 8)
First Baptist Church Foundation Board	Trustees (Article IV, Section 9)

- B. This list shall be up-dated each year by the Constitution and Bylaws Committee as changes are made relative to Article V, Section 2.B.5.
- C. The Committee on Committees shall keep an up-to-date list of said committees setting out the duties of each committee. These committees shall have the duties and membership, which have heretofore been approved by the church. All standing committees, unless otherwise provided, shall operate under a rotation plan whereby one third (1/3) of the committee members shall rotate off each year and shall be replaced by members who have been active members of First Baptist Church for the past six (6) months as recommended by the Committee on Committees and approved by the church in a regular or special church conference. Each church member shall be limited to serving on one (1) standing committee or board at a time. The members on these standing committees must be members of First Baptist Church, Abilene, unless stated otherwise in the bylaws of the incorporated board.

Section 2. Special Committees.

- A. Senior Pastor Search Committee.

1. Each Member may nominate up to nine (9) members of the church. Such nominations shall be made by the designated Sunday morning worship service within four (4) weeks of the resignation, announced retirement, or termination of the Senior Pastor. Nominations may also be submitted by mail, or electronically, including the name of the church member making the nominations. The Committee on Committees shall review the results to ensure that the nominees reflect the diversity of the church membership. Any changes to accomplish diversity shall be made reflecting the results of the nomination process. During a Sunday morning worship service within four (4) weeks of the nomination, the Committee on Committees shall present for a vote the names of the nine (9) nominees who have agreed to serve, to be voted on at that time. When the stated method for voting is not feasible due to extenuating circumstances, the Committee on Committees will provide alternative methods. The Senior Pastor Search Committee shall elect its own chair.
2. The function of the Senior Pastor Search Committee shall be to develop, using available resources, a profile of First Baptist Abilene, create a summary of gifts and leadership strengths needed in the Senior Pastor, and present to the church a comprehensive report of the church and Senior Pastor profiles. The committee will investigate candidates and recommend the person to serve as Senior Pastor using the developed profiles of the needs of the church and leadership strengths of the candidate.

3. When the Senior Pastor Search Committee is ready to make its recommendation of a prospective Senior Pastor, the church congregation shall be notified at a Sunday morning worship service that, on the following Sunday morning, the Senior Pastor Search Committee will recommend to the church the name of the prospective pastor to be called as Senior Pastor of the church.
4. At the close of the morning worship service on the designated Sunday, the recommendation of the Senior Pastor Search Committee shall be received together with the reasons for its recommendation. After a motion is made and seconded that the recommended person be called as Senior Pastor and, after a full discussion, a vote shall be taken by secret ballot. Under no circumstances shall a call be extended if less than two thirds (2/3) of those present and voting vote affirmatively. The wisdom of the call after balloting shall be left to the discretion of the Senior Pastor Search Committee.
5. If a call is not extended by the church to the person recommended by the Senior Pastor Search Committee as above provided or if the person called by the church declines to accept such a call, then the Senior Pastor Search Committee shall begin anew its investigation and come before the church in the same manner with its second recommendation. This method shall proceed until a Senior Pastor has been secured by the church.

B. Committee on Committees.

1. This committee shall be composed of six (6) men and six (6) women between the ages of twenty (20) and seventy-five (75) who have been active church members for at least one (1) year and shall be well-balanced to represent each age group between such ages. This shall be a rotating committee.
2. Two (2) men and two (2) women shall be nominated by the Nominating Committee for the Deacons in February of each year for approval by the deacons and the church. The Nominating Committee for the Deacons shall name the chair.
3. The committee shall learn the committee structure of the church.
4. The committee shall make a constant study of the church members with the purpose of placing them in service.
5. The committee shall continually review all church committees with regard to their duties, size, makeup, and relevancy. If it is determined that additional committees are needed and/or if one or more committee(s) should be deleted, the Committee on Committees shall propose the changes to the deacons for their consideration before being presented to the church for final action.
6. The committee shall prepare recommendations each year concerning the general church officers, committee chairs, and committee members and shall present those recommended for approval at a called church conference in November.
7. The committee shall attempt to fill all vacancies created in the various committees by special appointment throughout the year.
8. The term of office for the members of the Committee on Committees shall be from the first of March of the year elected to the last day in February completing three (3) years.

Section 3. Ministry Teams.

A. Ministry teams shall be formed in two ways.

1. Ministerial staff/directors shall select/enlist ministry team leaders and shall act as staff liaisons for the ministry teams. Staff liaisons shall write the purpose of the ministry and describe how the ministry team leader and team members may be involved.

2. Church members who desire to form a ministry team shall consult a staff liaison and, with the staff liaison, write the purpose of the ministry and describe how team members may be involved.

B. Ministry teams shall consist of the following members.

1. The team leader shall be a member of First Baptist Church for a minimum of six (6) months.
 2. There may be as many team members as the leader deems helpful. These team members do not have to be members of First Baptist Church.
- C. Ministry team leaders and members need not be approved by the church, but they shall provide the purpose and description of the ministry team to anyone who requests it.
- D. The length of the time of service on a ministry team will be determined by the team leader.
- E. The number of ministry teams on which a person may serve is not limited. Church members may serve on one (1) committee or board that is listed in Article V, Section 1, A and on any number of ministry teams at the same time.
- F. The ministerial staff may form short-term project groups/ministry teams, as they deem necessary.

Section 4. Vision Coordinating Team

- A. The Vision Coordinating Team shall be recommended by the Committee on Committees and elected by the church. It shall consist of seven (7) non-pastoral staff members of the church. Six (6) of those members shall represent a core group of ministry teams focused on a specific initiative of the church vision plus a chairperson. The vice-chair shall rotate into the role of chair and a member with at least one year remaining will serve as vice-chair. Additionally, the current deacon chair and vice-chair shall serve as members. The Senior Pastor will serve as an ex-officio member and the Pastor for Administrator shall serve as an advisory member.
- B. Team members shall be asked to serve a term of three (3) years. At the end of the term, the member rotating off the Vision Coordinating Team shall be asked to suggest two (2) or more possible replacements from those working with the initiative the person represents. The Committee on Committees shall choose a person, preferably from those suggested, to recommend to the church to fill the vacant position.
- C. The Vision Coordinating Team shall meet at least quarterly and shall report to the church at least once annually.
- D. The function of the Vision Coordinating Team is to assure that the ministry teams support the vision established by the church, to encourage ministry teams and their leaders, to measure the effectiveness of ministry teams, and to communicate the work and opportunities of the ministry teams to the church.

Article VI. Messengers to the Abilene Baptist Association, the Baptist General Convention of Texas, the Cooperative Baptist Fellowship, and the Southern Baptist Convention

Section 1. Number.

The number of persons to serve as messengers from the church shall be determined by the rules of the association or convention concerned.

Section 2. Election Procedure.

- A. Messengers shall be elected by the church from those who have notified the church office and indicated they plan to attend the association or convention.
- B. If more than the allowable number have registered, a ballot vote shall be taken by the church, and those receiving the highest number of votes shall serve as messengers.

- C. As many as five (5) receiving the next highest number of votes shall be designated as alternates.
- D. Nominations from the floor may be presented at the time of election, provided that the consent of the nominee has been obtained.
- E. The Senior Pastor shall be encouraged to serve as messenger.

Section 3. Financial Assistance.

Financial assistance for messengers to conventions shall be included in the church budget. For each meeting, the Budget Committee shall consider recommending an amount to be allocated for each messenger and shall recommend this to the church through the church budget.

Article VII. Policies

Section 1. Constitution.

The original copy of this constitution shall be kept in a permanent constitution file in the church office. The deacon chair shall be furnished an identical and up-to-date copy which he shall bring to the deacons' meetings.

Section 2. Policies

Any standing committee or board as outlined in Article V, Section 1, which develops and publishes policies governing the functions of those committees, shall furnish a copy of those policies to the church clerk who will maintain them in the permanent constitution file. Any changes to policies will be furnished to the church clerk if and when they are made by the committee.

Article VIII. Amendments

Section 1. Amending Procedure.

This constitution and bylaws may be amended at any regular or called church conference by a two thirds (2/3) vote of all members present provided, however, that such proposed amendments have been published and made available to the church body not less than one (1) week before they are voted upon.

Section 2. Proposed Amendments.

All proposed amendments shall be drafted and/or edited by the Constitution and Bylaws Committee, reviewed by the deacons and appropriate committees, and presented to the church with its recommendation by the Constitution and Bylaws Committee.

Section 3. Permanent File.

Any amendment made to this constitution shall be numbered, dated, and filed in the permanent constitution file. It shall be the duty of the church secretary and the vice chair/chair elect of the deacon body to see that each amendment is numbered, dated, and attached to the original constitution. In December of each year, the deacon vice chair/chair elect, the church secretary, and the chair of the Constitution and Bylaws Committee shall review the constitution file to be sure all amendments have been attached and that the constitution has been updated.

Article IX. Parliamentary Authority

Section 1. Authority.

The rules contained in the current edition of *Sturgis Standard Code of Parliamentary Procedure* (latest edition) shall govern the church in cases to which they are applicable and in which they are not inconsistent with these constitution and bylaws and any special rules of order the church may adopt.

Section 2. Parliamentarian.

The chair of the Constitution and Bylaws Committee shall serve as parliamentarian for the church or be responsible for securing a qualified parliamentarian.

Article X. Dissolution

Upon dissolution of the corporation, the Board of Trustees shall, after paying or making provisions for the payment of all the liabilities of the corporation, dispose of all the assets of the corporation to such other organization or organizations organized and operated exclusively for charitable, educational, religious, or other specific purposes as shall at the time qualify as an exempt organization or organizations under Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1954 (or the corresponding provision of any future United States Internal Revenue law) as the Board of Trustees shall determine upon the advice and consent of the deacons and the majority vote of the congregation assembled in a regular or special church conference duly called for the purpose of disposing of the assets of the corporation. Any such assets not so disposed of shall be disposed of by a district court, of the county in which the principal office of the corporation is then located, to such organization or organizations as said court shall determine, which are organized or operated exclusively for charitable, educational, and religious purposes.

**Proposed Changes by the
Constitution and Bylaws Committee**

Linda Carleton

Grant Miller

Phil Christopher, ex officio

Linda Chisholm

Stephanie Shelton

Dick Dansby, advisory

Ken Leggett, Chair

Suzanne Shaw, advisory

Presented for Discussion on November 11, 2020