

**THE CONSTITUTION  
OF THE  
FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH  
MIDDLETOWN, OHIO**



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*“And they entered into a covenant to seek the Lord God of their fathers with all their heart and with all their soul”*

II Chronicles 15:12

## **CHURCH COVENANT**

Having been led, as we believe, by the Holy Spirit, to accept Jesus Christ as our Savior and Lord, and, upon profession of our faith, having been baptized in the name of the Father, and the Son, and of the Holy Spirit, we now enter into covenant engagements with one another, relying upon divine grace to enable us to fulfill our vows.

We promise, as the Lord shall enable us, to strive daily to live after the spirit and teachings of Christ, and to do all in our power to create a spiritual atmosphere within the church which will make it both easy and natural for others whether old or young, to come into fellowship with God and into saving relationship with Jesus Christ.

As a fellowship of Christians, we promise by the help of God to walk together in love, to remember each other in prayer, to advance each other's temporal and spiritual welfare, to stand for the sanctity and observance of law, and to rear our children under a Christian discipline. We further promise to strive for the advancement of our church in knowledge, in service and spirituality, to observe its ordinances, to attend its services as faithfully as possible, to contribute regularly to its local and missionary enterprises, to strive for such adherence to the ideals and principles of Christ in all our life contacts, as will commend the Christian way of life to our friends and give to the community at large an example of group living on a genuinely Christian level.

Moreover, we covenant that when we remove from this community we will, with the least possible delay, unite with some other church where we can carry out the spirit of this covenant, and the teachings of God's Word.

And may the blessing of God, our Father, Jesus Christ, Our Savior and Lord and the Holy Spirit, our Helper and Guide, ever rest upon us.

# CONSTITUTION

## PREAMBLE

We believe that God gave his son, Jesus Christ, all power and authority in heaven and earth. We cheerfully accept his authority, the direction of the Holy Scriptures and the guidance of the Holy Spirit.

We believe that Christ has given authority to his Church, including the members of the congregation of this Church. In order to act collectively for Christ, we, by use of this constitution, vest the authority in our leaders to make certain decisions for us all. We trust and pray that this authority and responsibility inherent with it shall be used in accordance with the will of God.

We, therefore, establish this Constitution to outline, guide and define the authority, responsibility and duties of our Church's leadership.

## ARTICLE I – NAME

The name of this Church shall be The First Baptist Church of Middletown, Ohio, Inc. of Middletown, Ohio. This Church is affiliated with the American Baptist Churches, USA, and the American Baptist Churches of Ohio and the Miami Baptist Association of this Convention.

## ARTICLE II – MISSION STATEMENT

### MISSION STATEMENT

**The Mission of the First Baptist Church is founded upon  
the words of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ:**

**“Love God and love each other”**

*Glorify, worship and praise God;*

*Bond in Christian Fellowship*

**“Be and Make Disciples”**

*Grow, teach and learn together.*

**“Proclaim and Witness”**

*Go, seek and serve others.*

## **ARTICLE III – MEMBERSHIP**

**Section 1** – Membership in this Church may be acquired in any of the following ways:

1. By believer’s baptism, upon profession of faith and belief in Jesus Christ
2. By letter from another Christian congregation
3. By Christian experience such as previous baptism and/or proclamation of belief in Jesus Christ as personal Savior

**Section 2** - Upon approval of the Board of Deacons, letters of transfer requested by other churches will be granted and addressed by the Church Clerk. The Clerk will write for a letter of transfer from other churches.

**Section 3** - There shall be two classifications of membership:

1. Active -- all members who show interest in the welfare of the church through attendance, dedication to the covenant and financial support shall be classified as active members.
2. Inactive – all members who fail to show interest in the welfare of the church through attendance, dedication to the covenant and/or financial support for one year shall be classified as inactive members by action of the Deacons.
  - a. Members shall be consulted and encouraged to reactive before being placed on inactive status. This status means loss of voting privileges.
  - b. Upon resumption of active participation and at the discretion of the Board of Deacons, a person may be considered an active member.

## **ARTICLE IV – PASTORS**

**Section 1** – QUALIFICATIONS: The pastor of this Church shall be a college and seminary graduate, ordained minister or eligible for ordination and recognized by the American Baptist Churches, USA. Assistant and associate pastors shall be college and seminary graduates, ordained minister or eligible for ordination and recognized by the American Baptist Churches, USA.

**Section 2** – DUTIES: The pastor(s) shall carefully watch over and guide the spiritual interests of the Church and perform all other duties as presented in the job description. They shall provide daily administrative guidance to the Church’s staff. The pastor(s) may serve as ex-officio member of all Boards and Committees of the Church.

**Section 3 – SELECTION:**

1. **THE SENIOR PASTOR:** The call or dismissal of the Senior Pastor shall come before the Church at a regular or specially called business meeting as prescribed in Articles XVII and XVIII. In the event of the need for a Senior Pastor, a Pastoral Search Committee shall be formed as prescribed in Article XVIII.
2. **AN ASSOCIATE OR ASSISTANT PASTOR:** The call or dismissal of an Associate or Assistant Pastor shall be initiated by the Senior Pastor and/or the Board of Deacons. After completing their evaluation (the Senior Pastor and the Board of Deacons), they shall submit their recommendation to the Board of Trustees for their action.

**Section 4 – EVALUATION OF SENIOR PASTOR:** The Senior Pastor shall be evaluated during the third quarter of every calendar year by an ad hoc committee from the Board of Deacons (See Article VII, Section 2, and E (2)).

**Section 5 – EVALUATIONS BY THE SENIOR PASTOR:** The church staff will be evaluated by the Pastor unless otherwise requested.

The Senior Pastor shall perform (or supervise the Associate/Assistant Pastor in performing) these evaluations during the third quarter of every calendar year or more often if requested by a Church Board. The evaluator may request any assistance from any board or committee or may perform these evaluations independently. All evaluations shall be submitted to the chairperson of the Board of Trustees and the chairperson of the Staff Support and Development Committee.

**Section 6 – EVALUATION RECORDS:** The Senior Pastor, the chairperson of the Board of Trustees and the chairperson of the Staff Support & Development Committee shall be jointly responsible for the maintenance, preservation, security and confidentiality of all records of evaluations of employees of our Church.

## **ARTICLE V – OFFICERS**

**Section 1 –** The officers of this Church shall consist of a Moderator, Vice-Moderator, Clerk, Church Historian and the members of the Boards. All officers shall be active church members.

**Section 2 –** All officers shall be elected by ballot at an annual or special business meeting and shall hold office until their successors are chosen. Not more than two (2) elective offices shall be held at one time by the same person.

**Section 3 –** The Moderator or Vice-Moderator shall preside at all business meetings of the Church. In the absence of both Moderators, the chairperson of the Board of Trustees will preside. The Moderator and Vice-Moderator shall be familiar with “Roberts Rules of Order” so as to effectively

conduct the business meetings of the Church. The Moderator and Vice-Moderator shall be proficient in their understanding of this Constitution in order that they and the congregation will be guided by its principles in the conduct of the business meetings of the Church and they shall be able to interpret it when/if questions arise.

**Section 4 – Clerk**

1. The Clerk shall keep a record of all business meetings of the Church
2. The Clerk shall maintain and preserve current copies of the Constitution and By-Laws and Personnel Policies of the Church. All changes and/or amendments to these documents shall be recorded immediately upon their adoption.
3. The Clerk shall maintain and preserve current copies of the policies/guidelines for all Committees. All changes and/or amendments to these documents shall be recorded immediately upon their adoption.
4. Upon receiving approval of the Board of Deacons, letters of transfer requested by other churches will be granted and addressed to the specified church by the Clerk, and the Clerk will write for letters of transfer from other churches.

**ARTICLE VI – BOARDS**

**Section 1 – MEMBERSHIP:** In order to serve as a member of a Board, one must be an active member of the church and may serve on only one Board at a time.

**Section 2 – MEETINGS:** Boards shall meet a minimum of eight (8) times a year. Special meetings may be called by the chairperson at anytime or when requested by 1/3 of the membership of any Board, provided one week's written notice has been given to all members of that Board.

**Section 3 – QUORUM:** A majority of the members of the Board shall constitute quorum for conducting all business.

**Section 4 – OFFICERS:** The Boards shall elect their own officers. No member of the Church staff or their immediate family shall serve as chairperson or vice-chairperson of any Board or Committee.

**Section 5 – RESPONSIBILITIES:** It is expected that each Board member will faithfully attend all meetings and perform all duties pertaining to the office. Should any member fail to perform the duties pertaining to his/her office for a period of three consecutive months, the Board is empowered to declare the office vacant.

**Section 6 – VACANCIES:** A Board shall, at its own action, fill vacancies until the next regular business meeting of the Church, at which time persons shall be elected to fill the unexpired terms.

**Section 7 – REPORTS:** Each Board shall prepare a written report of the year’s activities to be presented at the annual January business meeting of the Church.

**Section 8 – COMMITTEES:** The Boards will perform a review of the policies of every committee responsible to it, at least once every two years. Each Board shall provide the Church Clerk with copies of all changes/amendments to committee policies as soon as they are authorized.

## **ARTICLE VII – DEACONS**

**Section 1 – MEMBERSHIP:** The Board of Deacons shall consist of twelve (12) members, four (4) to be elected annually to serve a term of three (3) years. No person who has served a full term shall be eligible for re-election for a period of one (1) year following the expiration of his/her term on the Board.

**Section 2 – DUTIES:**

1. **SPIRITUAL LEADERSHIP:** The board is responsible for the spiritual leadership of the Church. It shall consider and is empowered to rule on all cases related to spiritual discipline.
2. **MEMBERSHIP:** This board shall keep the record of all members of our Church. It shall determine and record the active and inactive lists of membership as prescribed in Article III – MEMBERSHIP.
3. **WORSHIP:** The board is responsible for the oversight of the worship services of the Church. In the absence of Pastors or a vacancy of the pulpit, it shall be responsible for securing leadership for the weekly church service.
4. **DEACON’S FUND:** The Deacon’s Fund shall be funded out of direct donations to this fund and 50% of the undesignated communion offerings. These funds are to be administered and disbursed by the Deacons at their sole discretion. These funds may be used for assisting individuals and groups within the church for such needs as (but not necessarily limited to) short-term/immediate assistance, shut-ins, memorials and other special needs.
5. **AD HOC COMMITTEES:**
  - a. The Board shall appoint such ad hoc committees as it deems necessary to support the spiritual interests of the Church, which may include a committee for promoting mutual understanding and open communication between the Senior Pastor and the congregation as well as support to the Senior Pastor
  - b. The Board shall select an ad hoc committee of three (3) of its members during the final quarter of the calendar year to evaluate the Senior Pastor during the

third quarter of the next calendar year. This committee shall consult with all other appropriate Boards and committees to obtain input on the pastor to insure he/she is fulfilling his/her concerns/duties. The Deacons' recommendation will then be submitted to the Board of Trustees for their action.

- c. The Constitution is commended to the Board of Deacons for a review every five (5) years. The Board of Deacons shall appoint a chairperson only for this Constitutional Review Committee. This committee will consist of five (5) members minimum: one (1) from each Board and one (1) from the American Baptist Women's Ministries. A thorough review and revision (as necessary), of the constitution shall be completed and submitted to the congregation for approval.
6. LITERATURE: The Board, together with the Senior Pastor, shall rule on all requests for the distribution of literature on the church property.
7. PASTORS: The board shall annually evaluate the Senior Pastor as prescribed in Article IV, Section 4. The call for or dismissal of the pastor(s) shall be as prescribed in Article IV, Section 3
8. ART: The Board of Deacons shall appoint a member of the Board or a member of the church to take all necessary measures for the protection, management, and maintenance of all art belonging to the church or donated to the church. The Board of Deacons shall determine if any art that belongs to the church or donated to the church is appropriate to be displayed in the church.

**Section 3 – COMMITTEES:** The Board of Deacons will preform a review of the policies of every committee responsible to it, at least once every two (2) years. This Board shall provide the Church Clerk with copies of all changes/amendments to committee policies as soon as they are authorized.

## **ARTICLE VIII – TRUSTEES**

**Section 1 – MEMBERSHIP:** The Board of Trustees shall consist of nine (9) members, three (3) to be elected annually to serve a term of three (3) years. No person who has served a full term shall be eligible for re-election for a period of one (1) year following the expiration of his /her term on the Board.

**Section 2 – DUTIES:**

1. The Trustees shall take all necessary measures for the protection, management and proper functioning of all property belonging to the Church. They shall have power to sell, mortgage, lease or transfer any real property of the Church and to acquire additional property and enter into contracts over and above those for which funds are included in the

annual budget, provided such sale, mortgage, lease, transfer acquisition or contract shall have been authorized by a two-thirds (2/3) vote of those present at a special meeting of the congregation called for that purpose, notice of which meeting must have been mailed to the membership at least four (4) weeks prior to the date of the meeting.

2. All legal documents of the corporation shall be executed by the chairperson and the vice-chairperson of the Board of Trustees.
3. FINANCIAL RESPONSIBILITIES:
  - a. The Board of Trustees shall appoint annually a Financial Secretary and their assistant(s) as necessary.
    1. The Financial Secretary and/or the Assistant Financial Secretary, with the assistance of persons designated by the Board of Trustees, shall maintain the financial records of the Church.
    2. The Treasurer and/or the Assistant Treasurer (with the assistance of an accounting firm) shall disburse funds as prescribed by the Board of Trustees; shall keep books as required by the Trustees and shall provide an accurate account of all receipts and expenditures on a monthly basis.
  - b. The Trustees shall devise means to meet the financial obligations of the Church and prescribe rules for the collection, custody and disbursement of all current funds. The Board is authorized in the event of an emergency or catastrophe to spend up to 5% of the annual budget excluding the Day Care Budget in order to preserve the church property. The Trustees may call a special business meeting of the congregation to authorize expenditures for items not included in the annual church budget.
  - c. The Trustees shall oversee the fiscal operation of the First Baptist Church Day Care Center.
  - d. The Trustees shall provide for the annual operational audits of the accounts of the Treasure and Day Care. A detailed financial report shall be made at the annual January Business meeting of the church and a copy of the report shall be made available upon request. The Treasurer's records shall be open for inspection at any regular meeting of the Board of Trustees.
  - e. The individual contribution records maintained by the Financial Secretary shall be privileged and confidential. Personal giving records will be submitted to individuals quarterly.
  - f. The Board of Trustees shall provide a full financial audit of the accounts of the Treasurer whenever there is a change of Treasurers.
4. The Trustees will be responsible for interviewing, employing, evaluating and terminating the employment of all employees not otherwise provided for in the constitution. They also set all salaries, wages and/or rates of pay for all employees of the Church.
5. EVALUATION RECORDS: The Senior Pastor, the chairperson of the Board of Trustees and the chairperson of the Staff Support & Development Committee shall jointly be

responsible for the maintenance, preservation, security and confidentiality of all records of evaluations of employees of our Church.

**Section 3 – COMMITTEES:** The Board of Trustees will perform a review of the personnel policies of the Church as well as a review of the policies of every committee responsible to it, at least once every two (2) years. This Board shall provide the Church Clerk with copies of all changes/amendments to policies as soon as they are authorized.

**Section 4 – OPERATIONAL GUIDELINES FOR MINISTRY GOALS**

1. Within the constraints of the Congregational giving, the ministries of the Church shall be divided into 5 areas:
  - a. Our Ministry through Missions
  - b. Our Ministry through Staff
  - c. Our Ministry through Church Home
  - d. Our Ministry through Worship
  - e. Our Ministry through Christian Education
2. **BUDGET AND STEWARDSHIP COMMITTEES:** The Board of Trustees shall appoint two committees annually: A Budget Committee and a Stewardship committee by April 1.
  - a. The Budget Committee shall meet with the staff, the boards and the day care to prepare a proposed budget related to the Ministry goals of the Church. They shall coordinate with and provide assistance to the Stewardship Committee during the stewardship campaign. At the end of the Stewardship Campaign, the Budget Committee will reconcile the proposed budget with the anticipated income and make recommendations to the Board of Trustees.
  - b. The Stewardship Committee shall be responsible for the stewardship program of the Church.
    - i. The Stewardship Committee will present the proposed budget to the congregation. They shall lead the Stewardship Campaign and arrange for the pledge cards to be distributed and returned. The returned pledge cards will be compiled by the Financial Secretary and the total given to the Budget and Stewardship Committees for their final action.
    - ii. In addition to leading the fall stewardship campaign, the Stewardship Committee shall, throughout the remainder of the year, encourage our congregation to give a portion of their time, talents and knowledge to God's work. They shall seek out and publicize various ways in which we may use our considerable blessings in God's service.
3. **MISSION BUDGET**
  - a. The Mission Budget shall not be less than fourteen percent (14%) of the undesignated giving to the Church as recorded in the church records.

Undesignated giving is defined as those gifts not ear-marked by the donor and includes, but is not limited to offerings received in envelopes, plate and Sunday School.

- b. The administration of these funds shall be at the recommendation of the Board of Missions.
- c. Exclusions:
  - i. All Special Fundraising Activities
  - ii. The Operating Budget of the Day Care
  - iii. Undesignated Wills, Memorials and Bequests

## **ARTICLE IX – CHRISTIAN EDUCATION**

**Section 1 – MEMBERSHIP:** The Board of Christian Education shall consist of nine (9) members, three (3) to be elected annually to serve a term of three (3) years. No person who has served a full-term shall be eligible for re-election for a period of one (1) year following the expiration of his/her term on the Board.

**Section 2 – DUTIES:** This Board is responsible for the organization, administration and supervision of the entire educational ministry of the Church. Typical duties of this Board (but not solely limited there to) include:

1. Establishing educational objectives and goals
2. Creating schedules and assigning class space and equipment
3. Discerning the need for or elimination of classes within Church School
4. Enlisting and training all Church school workers
5. Security screening of all Church school workers in the children and youth programs
6. Evaluating, implementing and supervising the educational Ministry of our Church.  
Provide guidance and assistance to the day care and insuring moral and spiritual influences in its curriculum
7. Coordinate and assist the Board of Missions with such outreach ministries of our Church as Day Care
8. Supervising other educational ministries such as youth, young adults and singles.
9. Preparing and administering the annual budget for Christian Education

**Section 3 – COMMITTEES:** The Board of Christian Education will perform a review of the policies of every committee responsible to it, at least once every two (2) years. This Board shall provide the Church Clerk with copies of all changes/amendments to committee policies as soon as they are authorized.

## **ARTICLE X – MISSIONS**

**Section 1 – MEMBERSHIP:** The Board of Missions shall consist of nine (9) members, three (3) to be elected annually to serve a term of three (3) years. No person who has served a full-term shall be eligible for re-election for a period of one (1) year following the expiration of his/her term on the Board.

**Section 2 – DUTIES:**

1. This Board shall supervise, broaden and enhance the overall Ministry of the missions of our Church as it relates to the American Baptist Churches, USA; the American Baptist Churches of Ohio and our local community.
2. This Board shall educate and inform our congregation regarding our Mission endeavors.
3. Aid and support such outreach ministries as Day Care and Scouting
4. **MISSION FUND:** The Mission Fund shall be funded out of direct donations to this fund and 50% of the undesignated Communion offerings. The funds are to be administered and dispersed by the Missions Board and the Senior Pastor in concert at their sole discretion. These funds may be used for community, state, national and world needs such as (but not necessarily limited to) food pantry, community projects, disaster relief and other special needs.
5. This Board shall prepare and administer the annual budget for missions (see also Article VIII, Section 4, sub-section3).
6. The Board shall supervise ministry outreach through social media and the website. Adequate policies will be maintained for these outreach ministries.

**Section 3 – COMMITTEES:** The Board of Missions shall perform a review of the policies of every committee responsible to it, at least once every two (2) years. This Board shall provide the Church Clear with copies of all changes/amendments to committee policies as soon as they are authorized.

## **ARTICLE XI – COMMITTEES**

**Section 1 – RESPONSIBILITY AND/OR ACCOUNTABILITY:** Every committee at this Church will be responsible and accountable to one of the Boards of this Church. See exclusions for the Nominating Committee and the Pastoral Search Committee.

**Section 2 – POLICIES:** The policies which provide the guidelines for action for each committee will be reviewed (and corrected and updated as required) at least once every two (2) years by the board to which that committee is responsible. Copies of all current policies will be available to all members of our congregation to ensure that authority and limitations of the actions of each committee is known (See Church Clerk).

**Section 3 – MEMBERSHIP:** Refer to each individual committee. No person shall serve on any committee unless they shall have been notified and have agreed in advance of their election or appointment. A committee may ask any member of the churches ministerial staff to attend it's meeting as an ex officio member.

**Section 4 – MEETINGS:** Refer to each individual committee.

**Section 5 – TERMS:** Refer to each individual committee. No individual shall serve on more than three (3) committees at the same time. Also, no individual shall serve for more than two (2) consecutive terms on any committee.

**Section 6 – QUORUM:** A majority of the members of the committee shall constitute a quorum for conducting business.

**Section 7 – OFFICERS:** Unless otherwise specified, each committee will elect its own officers. No chairperson or vice chairperson of any Board shall serve as a chairperson or a vice chairperson of any committee. No member of the Church staff shall serve as chairperson or vice chairperson of any committee.

**Section 8 – VACANCIES:** It is expected that each committee member will faithfully attend all meetings and perform all duties pertaining to the position. Should any member fail to perform his/her duties, that committee shall have the authority to declare the position vacant. Replacement shall be from the appropriate Board or in the case of an elected member; the committee may solicit replacement from any person participating in the life of the Church until the next regular business meeting of the Church, at which time persons shall be elected to fill the unexpired terms.

**Section 9 – REPORTS:** All committees shall provide a written report to the congregation annually, unless deemed unnecessary by the entity to which they are responsible.

**Section 10 – LISTINGS:**

<b>COMMITTEES/FUNCTIONS</b>	<b>RESPONSIBLE TO:</b>
Any Mission Field Team	Board of Missions
Budget	Board of Trustees
Constitution	Board of Deacons
Day Care	Board of Trustees
Food Pantry	Board of Missions
Memorial	Board of Trustees

Nominating	Board of Deacons
Scouting	Board of Missions
Staff Support and Development	Board of Trustees
Stewardship	Board of Trustees
Health Ministries	Board of Deacons

## **ARTICLE XII – THE NOMINATING COMMITTEE**

**Section 1 – ACCOUNTABILITY:** The Nominating Committee is responsible and accountable to the Board of Deacons only in matters of procedure and policy. Its primary responsibility is to report directly to the congregation (See Duties).

**Section 2 – POLICIES:** The policies/guidelines under which this committee acts (if any) shall be submitted to and reviewed once every two (2) years by the Board of Deacons.

**Section 3 – MEMBERSHIP:** This committee shall consist of eight (8) members. Four (4) members-at-large shall be nominated by the committee and elected by the congregational members present at the annual fall business meeting. The remaining four (4) members should be selected by the respective boards, one (1) from each board of the Church. The chairperson of the nominating committee shall be elected by the congregation from the four (4) members-at-large. Any vacancy of the four members-at-large group shall be filled by appointment from the Chair.

**Section 4 – TERM:** This committee will serve for one (1) full calendar year.

**Section 5 – MEETINGS:** This committee shall meet at least once during the months of January or February to plan its expected work for the year. Thereafter, the chairperson shall call meetings as he/she deems necessary but shall begin work no later than July.

**Section 6 – DUTIES:** The primary duty of this committee shall be to prepare a slate of qualified nominees for election at the annual fall business meeting. No nominee’s name shall be placed on a ballot or submitted for election without his/her prior notification and consent.

## **ARTICLE XIII – THE MEMORIAL COMMITTEE**

**Section 1 – ACCOUNTABILITY:** The Memorial Committee is responsible and accountable to the Board of Trustees.

**Section 2 – POLICIES:** The policies/guidelines under which this committee acts (if any) shall be submitted to and reviewed once every two (2) years by the Board of Trustees. In addition, the

policies covering each of the funds administered by this committee will be reviewed by this committee and submitted to the Board of Trustees once every two (2) years.

**Section 3 – MEMBERSHIP:** This committee shall have a minimum of four (4) members, one (1) to be appointed from the Board of Trustees and three (3) to be members-at-large servings staggered three (3) year terms, one (1) to be elected annually for the next three (3) year term by the congregational members present at the annual fall business meeting. The chairperson shall be that person appointed from the Board of Trustees.

**Section 4 - MEETINGS:** This committee shall have a minimum of six (6) meetings annually.

**Section 5 – DUTIES:**

1. The committee will administer and recommend to the Board of Trustees expenditures from the following funds:
  - a. Memorial Fund
  - b. Wills and Trust
  - c. Endowment Fund
  - d. Educational Fund
  - e. As well as any other funds so assigned to it by the Board of Trustees
2. Establish, support, maintain and provide for the ongoing/future development of our Memorials. Confer with other knowledgeable bodies to determine types of Memorials.

## **ARTICLE XIV – THE DAY CARE COMMITTEE**

**Section 1 - ACCOUNTABILITY:** The Day Care Committee is responsible and accountable to the Board of Trustees

**Section 2 - POLICIES:** The policies/guidelines under which this committee acts shall be submitted to and reviewed once every two (2) years by the Board of Trustees

**Section 3 – MEMBERSHIP:** This committee shall have a minimum of eight (8) members. Four (4) members shall be selected by the Boards, one (1) from each Board of the Church; one(1) a parent representative who shall be selected by the Day Care Director and three (3) members-at-large, serving staggered three (3) year terms, one (1) elected annually for the next three (3) year term by the congregational members present at the annual fall business meeting. The Day Care Director shall serve as an ex officio member of this committee. The chairperson shall be elected annually from amongst its church members, except that no person who is serving as chairperson of a Board of the Church shall be eligible to serve as chairperson of this committee.

**Section 4 – MEETINGS:** This committee shall meet a minimum of six (6) times per year.

**Section 5 – DUTIES:**

1. This committee shall assist, promote and enhance the overall Day Care Ministry of the Church.
2. This committee and the Director of the Day Care shall communicate the status of the Day Care Mission/Ministry to the Board of Trustees at least quarterly.

## **ARTICLE XV – THE STAFF SUPPORT & DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE**

**Section 1 - ACCOUNTABILITY:** The Staff Support & Development Committee is responsible and accountable to the Board of Trustees

**Section 2 - POLICIES:** The Personnel Policies of the Church and any other guidelines and policies under which this committee acts shall be submitted to and reviewed once every two (2) years by the Board of Trustees.

**Section 3 - MEMBERSHIP:** This committee shall have six (6) members. Four (4) members shall be selected by the Boards, one (1) from each Board of the Church. Two (2) shall be members-at-large, one (1) to be elected annually for a two (2) year term by the congregational members present at the annual fall business meeting. The chairperson shall be elected annually from amongst its members, except that no person who is serving as a chairperson of a Board of the Church shall be eligible to serve as chairperson of this committee.

**Section 4 - MEETINGS:** This committee shall meet at least once during each quarter of the calendar year and at such other times as may be necessary.

**Section 5 – DUTIES:**

1. **Job Descriptions:** Develop, maintain and propose changes to the job requirements of all Church employees. Submit all descriptions to the Board of Trustees for authorization at least once every two (2) years.
2. **Evaluations:** When requested by the Board of Trustees, this committee may assist whoever is performing an evaluation by providing the job description, consulting with other knowledgeable and/or affected bodies and generally promoting understanding as to the function of the job in question.
3. **Evaluation Records:** The Senior Pastor, the chairperson of the Board of Trustees and the chairperson of the Staff Support & Development Committee shall jointly be

responsible for the maintenance, preservation, security and confidentiality of all records of evaluations of the employees of our Church.

4. **Compensation:** This committee shall provide the annual budget committee with an aggregate estimated amount which will be required in the succeeding year for staff compensation. After the annual stewardship campaign is completed, the committee shall recommend the compensation levels for each staff member to the Board of Trustees. Confidentiality concerning compensation shall be maintained.
5. **Staff Vacancies:** When a Church staff vacancy other than the Senior Pastor or Associate Pastor occurs, it shall be the responsibility of the Board of Trustees to implement the process for filling the position. It shall be done in cooperation with the Church Board which is directly concerned with the staff vacancy using the following guidelines:
  - a. An Ad Hoc Committee shall be formed consisting of member(s) of the Staff Support & Development Committee and member(s) from the involved board and/or committee. The Senior Pastor may be asked to serve as an ex-officio member.
  - b. This Ad Hoc Committee shall prepare a list of qualifications or prospective candidates. It shall then advertise the position in appropriate venues including the congregation, the public press and/or American Baptist Churches of Ohio and/or American Baptist Churches, USA.

6. **Listings:**

<u>Position:</u>	<u>Board or Committee</u>
Director of Day Care	Board of Trustees, Day Care Committee
Director of Music	Board of Deacons
Sanctuary Choir Director	Board of Deacons
Office Secretary	Board of Trustees
Maintenance Technician	Board of Trustees
Treasurer	Board of Trustees
Youth Leader(s)	Board of Christian Education

**ARTICLE XVI – THE PASTORAL SEARCH COMMITTEE (AD HOC)**

**Section 1 - ACCOUNTABILITY:** The Pastoral Search Committee shall be convened at the recommendation of the Board of Deacons, after which its responsibility/accountability is to the congregation (See Duties)

**Section 2 – GUIDELINES:**

1. Contact Area Minister of American Baptist Churches, USA. Contact the Board of Trustees to provide a working budget for expenses for this committee.

2. Contact the Board of Trustees and Board of Deacons for such items as job description, pay ranges, etc.
3. May contact the Board of Deacons if needed for any aspect of spiritual leadership.

**Section 3 – MEMBERSHIP:** This committee shall consist of seven (7) active Church members, who shall be elected by ballot by congregational members present from those nominated from the floor at a special business meeting called for that purpose. The congregation shall be notified of this meeting by letter at least three (3) weeks prior to the meeting and from the pulpit on the two (2) Sundays prior to the meeting. The chairperson of this committee shall be that member receiving the largest number of votes.

**Section 4 – DUTIES:**

1. This committee shall, after due investigation of various persons (using guidelines offered by ABC, Ohio), unanimously agree upon one (1) individual before that person is presented to the congregation for its votes. A full report of the committee to the congregation shall precede the appearance of the candidate and due notice shall be given of the meeting which this report is presented. The congregation shall be asked to vote on the call as quickly after the appearance of the candidate as possible. This committee shall not ask the congregation to choose between two (2) or more candidates but shall ask them to consider only one (1) candidate at a time.
2. This committee will service as a support and advisory group to the newly called Senior Pastor only, for at least two (2) years following his or her call. This support or advisory group shall be dissolved by the mutual agreement of the group and the Senior Pastor.

## **ARTICLE XVII – BUSINESS MEETINGS OF THE CHURCH**

**Section 1 – ANNUAL MEETINGS OF THE CHURCH:**

1. The Fall Business Meeting: The annual fall business meeting shall be called by the Board of Trustees for the purpose of:
  - a. Voting for all elected positions
  - b. Transaction of necessary business
  - c. Discussion of issues vital to the life and witness of the Church
  - d. Presentation of the proposed budget
2. The January Business Meeting: The January annual business meeting shall be called by the Board of Trustees for the purpose of:
  - a. Receiving the annual reports of the Church staff, of individual officers, of boards and committees of the Church and of its ancillary organizations
  - b. The transaction of necessary business
  - c. The discussion of issues vital to the life and witness of the Church
  - d. Approval of the yearly budget

**Section 2 – SPECIAL BUSINESS MEETINGS:** Special business meetings may be called by a Pastor, Any Board, the Moderator, and the Vice-Moderator or upon written requests of at least twenty-five (25) active members of the congregation.

**Section 3 – RULES FOR MEETINGS:**

1. Written notice of annual business meeting shall be made a minimum of three (3) weeks before the scheduled date of the meeting.
2. Written notice of special business meetings shall be made a minimum of ten (10) days before the scheduled date of the meeting and announced from the pulpit the Sunday prior to the meeting.
3. Twenty-five percent (25%) of the current active membership of the church shall constitute a quorum for the transaction of business.
4. Written notice of any business meeting at which a vote on changes or amendments to the constitution shall be made at least three (3) weeks before the scheduled date of that meeting. In addition, copies of the proposed amendments shall be available at the Church office and will be mailed to active members upon their request during the three (3) weeks prior to that meeting.

## **ARTICLE XVIII - VOTING**

**Section 1 –** Upon the request of any member of the congregation, voting shall be by written ballot excepting the reception of new members at the close of the worship celebration.

**Section 2 –** Each member of the Church shall be entitled to a single vote.

**Section 3 – Required Votes, Percentages**

1. A vote of the congregation shall be required for:
  - a. A 90% majority is required to call a Senior Pastor
  - b. A 67% majority is required to dismiss a Senior Pastor
  - c. A 67% majority vote is required to change any amendments to the constitution
  - d. A 67% majority is required for the purchase or sale of real estate/building properties
  - e. A simple majority is required for any expenditure outside the budget of more than 5% of the annual budget, excluding the Day Care Budget

## **BY-LAWS**

### **ACTIVITIES**

The regular stated services of this Church shall include, but not limited to; study, worship, missions, and service.

The boards of the Church and/or the pastoral staff shall have authority to make changes to the aforementioned activities.

Regular Communion services, including home communion, shall be held at the direction of the Board of Deacons and/or the pastoral staff.

The Ordinance of Baptism shall be held as the occasion demands.

The Church recognizes and affirms the existence of several related organizations including, but not limited to: The American Baptist Women's Ministries, The American Baptist Men's Group and the American Baptist Youth. The organizations are a part of the ongoing life of the congregation but are granted authority to govern their own ministries.

All organizations connected with the First Baptist Church shall coordinate their meetings so as not to conflict with the stated activities of the Church.

### **GENERAL**

Each new member of this Church shall be given a New Member's Packet which will include the Church Covenant, Constitution, By-laws, Church Directory and a written summary of the American Baptist History and Polity.

All questions of order shall be settled by the customary rules given in the latest version of "Robert's Rules of Order".

All members of this Church are requested to familiarize themselves with the precepts of our constitution. When or if questions arise the chairpersons of the boards of the Church should, in addition to the moderator, vice moderator and church clerk be able to interpret its intent.

## **Constitutional History**

**April 22, 1991 – revision completed by the Constitution Committee**

**September 22, 1991 – adopted by the congregation**

**January 1, 1992 – effective date of implementation**

**November 2, 1993 – reviewed and amendments proposed by Church Council**

**November 14, 1993 – amendments adopted by the congregation**

**August 20, 1995 – Mission budget amendments adopted by the congregation**

**July 11, 1999 – adopted by the congregation and effective date of implementation**

**December 19, 1999 – amendment (music & arts committee) adopted by congregation**

**May 20, 2001 – constitution amendment – Mission statement**

**November 30, 2003 – amendments (Clerk, Church Council and Christian Education) adopted by the congregation**

**January 30, 2005 – amendment (Church Council – delegates to state convention) adopted by the congregation**

**September 12, 2011 – Revision completed by the Constitution Committee**

**November 2011 – Constitution revision approved by the congregation**

**November 26, 2018 – Revision completed by the Constitution Review Committee**

**June 2, 2019 – Constitution revision approved by the congregation and effective date of implementation**