

**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 Leadership Team, 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 Leadership Team.
 - a. Members shall be consulted and encouraged to become active 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 Leadership Team, 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 the Leadership Team and all 'Areas of Passion'/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 XV and XVI. In the event of the need for a Senior Pastor, a Pastoral Search Committee shall be formed as prescribed in Article XIII.
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 Leadership Team. The Leadership Team shall take action on the recommendation.

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 Leadership Team (See Article VI, Section 9, sub-section b).

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 the Leadership Team. The evaluator may request any assistance from the Leadership Team, any Ministry Focus Area and/or Committee/'Area of Passion' or may perform these evaluations independently. All evaluations shall be submitted to the coordinator of the Administration Focus Area.

Section 6 – EVALUATION RECORDS: The coordinator of the Administration Ministry Focus Area shall be responsible for the maintenance, preservation, security, and confidentiality of all records of evaluations of employees of our Church. The Church Secretary shall be the custodian of the safe storage of the evaluation records.

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 Leadership Team. All officers shall be active church members.

Section 2 – All officers shall be elected by ballot at an annual or special business meeting. All officers excluding the Moderator shall hold office until their successors are chosen. The Moderator shall be elected for a three (3) year term; with no more than two terms in succession. Any person who has served two terms in succession as Moderator will be ineligible for re-election for a period of one (1) year following the expiration of his/her term as Moderator.

Section 3 – Moderator and Vice Moderator Duties:

1. Moderator will preside as the Facilitator of the Leadership Team
2. Moderator will facilitate the monthly Leadership Team meetings.
3. The Moderator will be an ex-officio member of the Leadership Team.
4. The Moderator or Vice-Moderator shall preside at all business meetings of the Church. In the absence of both Moderators, the coordinator of the Administration Ministry Focus Area shall preside.
5. The Moderator and Vice-Moderator shall be familiar with “Roberts Rules of Order”, so as to effectively conduct the business meetings of the Church.
6. 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 Leadership Team, 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 – LEADERSHIP TEAM

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

The Leadership Team shall consist of fifteen (15) members that will be elected by the congregation to serve on one of the three Ministry Focus Areas. Each Ministry Focus Area will have five (5) members elected by the congregation. The Ministry Focus Areas are as follows:

- a. Administration – focuses on the Finances and Facilities of the church
- b. Community - focuses on the worship ministries and congregational care of the church
- c. Discipleship – focuses on the Christian Education and mission outreach of the church

Section 2 – MEETINGS: The Leadership Team shall meet a minimum of eight (8) times a year. Special meetings may be called by the Moderator at any time or when requested by 1/3 of the membership of the Leadership Team, provided one week’s written notice has been given to all members of the Leadership Team.

Section 3 – QUORUM: Eleven (11) members of the Leadership Team shall constitute a quorum for conducting all business.

Section 4 – COORDINATORS: Each Ministry Focus Area shall elect their own officers. No member of the Church staff or their immediate family shall serve as coordinator or vice-coordinator of a Ministry Focus Area or chairperson or vice-chairperson of any Committee.

Section 5 – RESPONSIBILITIES: It is expected that each Leadership Team 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 Leadership Team is empowered to declare the office vacant.

Section 6 – VACANCIES: A Ministry Focus Area 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 Ministry Focus Area 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 Ministry Focus Areas will perform a review of the policies of every committee responsible to it, at least once every two years. Each Ministry Focus Area shall provide the Church Clerk with copies of all changes/amendments to committee policies as soon as they are authorized.

Section 9 – AD-HOC COMMITTEES AND ‘AREAS OF PASSION’

- a. The Leadership Team shall appoint such ad hoc committees or ‘Areas of Passion’ as it deems necessary to support the spiritual interests of the Church. (See Article XIV – ‘Areas of Passion’).
- b. The Leadership Team shall select an ad hoc committee of three (3) of its members (one (1) from each Ministry Focus Area) 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 Ministry Focus Areas, and committees and/or ‘Areas of Passion’ to obtain input on the pastor to insure he/she is fulfilling his/her concerns/duties. The Leadership

Team's recommendation will then be submitted to the congregation at the Annual Business Meeting in January for their action.

Section 10 - PASTORS: The Leadership Team 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

Section 11 – LITERATURE: The Leadership Team, in concert with the Senior Pastor, shall rule on all requests for the distribution of literature on the church property.

ARTICLE VII – COMMUNITY MINISTRY FOCUS AREA

Section 1 – MEMBERSHIP: The Community Ministry Focus Area shall consist of five (5) members, to be elected per Addendum A 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 Leadership Team.

Section 2 – DUTIES:

1. **SPIRITUAL LEADERSHIP:** The Community Ministry Focus Area 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:** The Community Ministry Focus Area 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 Community Ministry Focus Area 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. **FELLOWSHIP FUND:** The Fellowship 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 Leadership Team 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. **ART:** The Community Ministry Focus Area shall appoint a member of the Leadership Team 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 Community Ministry Focus Area shall determine if any art that belongs to the church or donated to the church is appropriate to be displayed in the church.

ARTICLE VIII - ADMINISTRATION MINISTRY FOCUS AREA

Section 1 – MEMBERSHIP: The Administration Ministry Focus Area shall consist of five (5) members, to be elected per Addendum A 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 Leadership Team.

Section 2 – DUTIES:

1. The Administration Ministry Focus Area shall take all necessary measures for the protection, management and proper functioning of all property belonging to the Church. They shall have the 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 call 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 coordinator and the vice-coordinator of the Administration Ministry Focus Area.
3. FINANCIAL RESPONSIBILITIES:
 - a. The Administration Ministry Focus Area 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 Administration Ministry Focus Area, 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 Administration Ministry Focus Area; shall keep books as required by the Administration Ministry Focus Area and shall provide an accurate account of all receipts and expenditures on a monthly basis.
 - b. The Administration Ministry Focus Area 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 Administration Ministry Focus Area 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 Administration Ministry Focus Area may call a special business meeting of the congregation to authorize expenditures for items not included in the annual church budget.

- c. The Administration Ministry Focus Area shall oversee the fiscal operation of the First Baptist Church Day Care Center
 - d. The Administration Ministry Focus Area shall provide for the operational audits of the accounts of the Treasurer every five years and of the Day Care every two years. 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 Administration Ministry Focus Area and/or Leadership Team
 - e. The individual contribution records maintained by the Financial Secretary shall be privileged and confidential. Personal giving records will be submitted to individuals semi-annually.
 - f. The Administration Ministry Focus Area shall provide a full financial audit of the accounts of the Treasurer whenever there is a change of Treasurers.
4. The Leadership Team will be responsible for 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.
- a. **Job Descriptions:** Develop, maintain and propose changes to the job requirements of all Church employees. Review all descriptions at least once every two (2) years.
 - b. **Evaluations:** When requested by the Leadership Team, the Administration Ministry Focus Area 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.
 - c. **Compensation:** The Administration Ministry Focus Area shall provide an aggregate estimated amount which will be required in the succeeding year for staff compensation. Confidentiality concerning compensation shall be maintained.
 - d. **Staff Vacancies:** When a Church staff vacancy other than the Senior Pastor or Associate Pastor occurs, it shall be the responsibility of the Leadership Team to implement the process for filling the position, which is directly concerned with the staff vacancy, using the following guidelines:
 1. An Ad Hoc Committee shall be formed consisting of member(s) from the involved Ministry Focus Area, Leadership Team, Committee and/or 'Area of Passion'. The Senior Pastor may be asked to serve as an ex-officio member.

- a. This Ad Hoc Committee shall prepare a list of qualifications for 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. This committee will also conduct the interviewing of the candidates for the open position and will make their hiring recommendation to the Leadership Team.
- e. EVALUATION RECORDS: The coordinator of the Administration Ministry Focus Area shall be responsible for the maintenance, preservation, security, and confidentiality of all records of evaluations of employees of our Church. The Church Secretary shall be the custodian of the safe storage of the evaluation records.
- f. **STAFF POSITION LISTINGS (titles may be changed/updated when deemed necessary)**

<u>Position:</u>	<u>Ministry Focus Area or Committee</u>
Director of Day Care	Administration MFA
Director of Worship and Community Ministries	Community MFA
Office Secretary	Administration MFA
Maintenance Technician	Administration MFA
Treasurer	Administration MFA
Youth Leader(s)	Discipleship MFA

Section 3 – OPERATIONAL GUIDELINES FOR MINISTRY GOALS

- 1. Within the constraints of the Congregational giving, the ministries of the Church shall be divided into four (4) areas:
 - Our Ministry through Discipleship
 - Our Ministry through Staff
 - Our Ministry through Administration
 - Our Ministry through Community
- 2. The Discipleship Budget (Mission Budget)
 - a. The Discipleship Budget shall not be less than fourteen percent (14%) of the undesignated giving to the Church as required 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 Discipleship Ministry Focus Area.
 - c. Exclusions:
 - i. All Special Fundraising Activities

- ii. The Operating Budget of the Day Care
- iii. Undesignated Wills, Memorials and Bequests

ARTICLE IX –DISCIPLESHIP MINISTRY FOCUS AREA

Section 1 – MEMBERSHIP: The Discipleship Ministry Focus Area shall consist of five (5) members, to be elected per Addendum A 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 Leadership Team.

Section 2 – DUTIES: The Discipleship Ministry Focus Area is responsible for the organization, administration and supervision of the entire educational ministry of the Church. Also, the Discipleship Ministry Focus Area 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. Typical duties of this ministry focus area (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 with outreach ministries of our Church and Day Care
8. Supervising other educational ministries such as youth, young adults and singles.
9. Educating and informing our congregation regarding our Mission endeavors
10. Preparing and administering the annual budget for the Discipleship Ministry Focus Area.
(see also Article VIII, section 3, sub-section 2).
- 11 Aid and Support such outreach ministries as Day Care and Scouting
- 12 **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 Discipleship Ministry Focus Area 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.
- 13 Shall supervise ministry outreach through social media and the website. Adequate policies will be maintained for these outreach ministries.

ARTICLE X – COMMITTEES

Section 1 – RESPONSIBILITY AND/OR ACCOUNTABILITY: Every committee at this Church will be responsible and accountable to the Leadership Team. See exclusions for the Nominating 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 Leadership Team 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 church's ministerial staff to attend its 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 coordinator or vice-coordinator of any Ministry Focus Area shall serve as a chairperson or a vice chairperson of any committee. No member of the Church staff or their immediate family 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 Ministry Focus Area 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 – LISTING OF COMMITTEES:

Constitution Review Committee

Nominating Committee

Pastoral Search Committee

ARTICLE XI – THE CONSTITUTION REVIEW COMMITTEE

Section 1 – ACCOUNTABILITY: The Constitution is commended to the Leadership Team for a review every five (5) years.

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 Leadership Team.

Section 3 – MEMBERSHIP: The Moderator shall appoint a chairperson only for this Constitution Review Committee. This committee will consist of five (5) members minimum: three (3) from the Leadership Team (one from each Ministry Focus area); one (1) from the American Baptist Women’s Ministries and one At-Large member from the congregation. The At-Large member shall be elected by the congregation at the Fall Business Meeting.

Section 4 – TERM: This committee shall serve for one year or the period of time it takes to complete the review of the Constitution.

Section 5 – MEETINGS: This committee shall call as many meetings as needed in the calendar year to complete a thorough review and/or revision of the Constitution.

Section 6 – DUTIES: A thorough review and revision (as necessary), of the constitution and by-laws shall be completed and submitted to the congregation for approval every five (5) years.

ARTICLE XII – THE NOMINATING COMMITTEE

Section 1 – ACCOUNTABILITY: The Nominating Committee is responsible and accountable to the Leadership Team only in matters of procedures and policies. 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 Leadership Team.

Section 3 – MEMBERSHIP: This committee shall consist of seven (7) 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 three (3) members shall be selected by the Leadership Team, one (1) from each of the Ministry Focus Areas 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 shall be filled by appointment from the chairperson.

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

Section 5 – MEETINGS: This committee shall meet at least once by the end of April 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 PASTORAL SEARCH COMMITTEE

Section 1 – ACCOUNTABILITY: The Pastoral Search Committee shall be convened at the recommendation of the Leadership Team, after which its responsibility/accountability is to the congregation (See Duties).

Section 2 – GUIDELINES:

1. Contact Executive Minister of American Baptist Churches, USA. Contact the Leadership Team to provide a working budget for expenses for this committee.
2. Contact the Leadership Team for such items as job description, pay ranges, etc.
3. May contact the Community Ministry Focus Area, 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 serve 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 XIV – ‘AREAS OF PASSION’

Section 1 – ACCOUNTABILITY: ‘Areas of Passion’ shall replace committees not already outlined in the constitution. These ‘Areas of Passion’ shall report to the Ministry Focus Area which best represents the ministry the area is focused upon and/or was called by. They should provide updates on their work to their assigned Ministry Focus Area. ‘Areas of Passion’ shall complete a report at the end of the year to be included in the church’s Annual Report.

Section 2 – GUIDELINES: ‘Areas of Passion’ shall consist of volunteers from the congregation, who can devote their time and talents to their specific areas of interest and passion (For example: The Health Ministry Team would be considered an ‘Area of Passion’). These shall not be elected positions.

Monies or funds needed for any ‘Areas of Passion’ intended work shall be projected by the appropriate Ministry Focus Area included in the church’s yearly budget and shall be disbursed through the church treasurer, as needed.

ARTICLE XV – 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 Leadership Team 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 Leadership Team for the purpose of:
 - a. Receiving the annual reports of the Church staff, of individual officers, of Ministry Focus Areas, 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 Ministry Focus Area, the Moderator, 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 XVI - 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 membership (active) 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 Leadership Team 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 Community Ministry Focus Area 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 required to familiarize themselves with the precepts of our constitution. When or if questions arise, the coordinators of the Leadership Team of the Church should, in addition to the moderator, vice moderator and church clerk be able to interpret its intent.

ADDENDUM A

**First Baptist Church Leadership Team
Model for Election of Team Members**

Community Ministry Focus Area team members shall be elected by the congregation for the following terms starting in 2021:

- Two (2) members for a one-year term
- One (1) member for a two-year term
- Two (2) members for a three-year term

Discipleship Ministry Focus Area team members shall be elected by the congregation for the following terms starting in 2021:

- Two (2) members for a one-year term
- Two (2) members for a two-year term
- One (1) member for a three-year term

Administration Ministry Focus Area team members shall be elected by the congregation for the following terms starting in 2021:

- One (1) member for a one-year term
- Two (2) members for a two-year term
- Two (2) members for a three-year term

Starting in 2022 and years thereafter, five (5) members will be elected for three-year terms based on the number rolling off of each ministry focus area (See Example below):

Year	Community Ministry Focus Area	Discipleship Ministry Focus Area	Administration Ministry Focus Area
2021	Two (2) 1-year terms One (1) 2-year term Two (2) 3-year terms	Two (2) 1-year terms Two (2) 2-year terms One (1) 3-year term	One (1) 1-year term Two (2) 2-year terms Two (2) 3-year terms
2022	Two (2) 3-year terms	Two (2) 3-year terms	One (1) 3-year term
2023	One (1) 3-year term	Two (2) 3-year terms	Two (2) 3-year terms
2024	Two (2) 3-year terms	One (1) 3-year term	Two (2) 3-year terms

Note: For terms starting in 2021, current Board members will be eligible to be nominated and elected to the Leadership Team, for the purpose of serving on a Ministry Focus Area.

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

March 3, 2021 – Constitution revision with the new governance structure approved by the congregation. Will not go into effect until new Leadership Team is elected by the congregation.

April 19, 2021 – Revised Constitution – effective date of implementation