



**GUNTERSVILLE, AL**

**CONSTITUTION**

**AND**

**BYLAWS**

**Amended by church vote December 11, 2019**

# First Baptist Church of Guntersville – Constitution and Bylaws

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## CONSTITUTION

### Preamble

This Constitution and these Bylaws are established to preserve and secure the principles of our faith, and to govern the body of believers in an orderly manner. They will also preserve the liberties of each individual church member and the freedom of action of this body in its relation to other church(s) and denominational organizations.

This Constitution and these Bylaws are not Scripture, however they are man's best effort of interpretation of Scripture as to whom we are, what we are about, our basic beliefs, and how the affairs of God's Church should be conducted decently and in an orderly manner.

### ARTICLE I. NAME AND LOCATION

This body shall be known as the **First Baptist Church of Guntersville, Incorporated**, located at 1000 Gunter Avenue, Guntersville, Alabama 35976.

### ARTICLE II. OBJECTIVES AND MISSION STATEMENT

#### Section 1. Objectives

- To be a dynamic spiritual organization empowered by the Holy Spirit to share Christ with as many people as possible in our Church, community and throughout the world.
- To be a worshipping fellowship experiencing an awareness of God, recognizing His person, and responding in obedience to His leadership.
- To experience an increasingly meaningful fellowship with God and fellow believers.
- To help people experience a growing knowledge of God.
- To be a church which ministers unselfishly to persons in the community and the world in Jesus' name.
- To evangelize the lost, equip the saved for a more fruitful ministry, and to exalt the Savior through worship and service.
- To be a church whose purpose is to be Christ-like in our daily living by emphasizing total commitment of life, personality, and possessions to the lordship of Christ.

#### Section 2. Mission Statement

**“To know Christ and to make Him known”**

#### Section 3. Vision Statement

**“To celebrate life in Jesus Christ through worship, praise, fellowship, and to equip the saints so that in His name, we offer the assurance of salvation to our community, nation, and world.”**

## **ARTICLE III. STATEMENT OF FAITH and BIBLICAL AUTHORITY**

- We believe the Holy Bible is the inspired Word of God, without error, the all-sufficient authority in matters of faith, doctrine, and Christian living.
- We believe in one God, eternally existing in three persons: the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit.
- We believe in the virgin birth of Jesus Christ, and during His time on Earth, He was fully God and fully man. He died on the cross for our sins. He rose from the dead, ascended into heaven where He assumed His original glory and sits at the right hand of the Father and is now our High Priest and Advocate.
- We believe that man was created in the image of God but fell into sin and is therefore separated from God. Only through regeneration by the work of the Holy Spirit can man's salvation and spiritual life be obtained.
- We believe that eternal salvation is the free gift of God, entirely apart from man's works, and is possessed by any and all who have faith in and receive Jesus Christ as their personal Lord and Savior.
- We believe that baptism is by immersion and the Lord's Supper is a memorial to His suffering and death on the cross. These are ordinances to be observed by the church in its present age. They are, however, not to be regarded as means for man's salvation.
- We believe in the personal, bodily, imminent, and glorious return of the Lord Jesus Christ and that His Second Coming inspires believers for dynamic and zealous life and service for Him while waiting for His return.
- We believe in the bodily resurrection of the dead, the everlasting blessedness of the saved in heaven, and the everlasting punishment and separation from God of the unsaved in hell.
- We believe in the autonomy of the local Church. The Church shall manage its own affairs and shall not be subject to any other religious body or organization.
- We subscribe to the "Baptist Faith and Message" adopted by the Southern Baptist Convention in 2000 as our larger statement of faith and scriptural reference.

## **ARTICLE IV. CHURCH AUTHORITY**

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 Southern Baptist Churches. Insofar as practical, this Church will cooperate with and support the Marshall Baptist Association, Alabama Baptist State Convention, and the Southern Baptist Convention.

The congregation, through its Voting Members, is the final authority for all matters of self-government of the Church. Each Voting Member will seek through earnest prayer and reasoned discussion to ensure the Church governs itself according to the principles found in Holy Scripture.

## **ARTICLE V. CHURCH COVENANT**

Having been led as we believe by the Spirit of God to receive the Lord Jesus Christ as our Lord and Savior, and on the profession of our faith, having been baptized in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit, we do now in the presence of God and this assembly most solemnly and joyfully enter into covenant with one another as one body in Christ.

We engage, therefore, by the aid of the Holy Spirit:

- To walk together in Christian love.
- To strive for the advancement of the Church in knowledge, holiness and comfort.
- To promote its prosperity and spirituality.
- To sustain its worship, ordinances, doctrines, and disciplines.
- To contribute cheerfully and regularly to the support of the ministry, the expenses of the Church, relief of the poor, and the spread of the gospel through all nations.
- To maintain family and private devotions.
- To religiously educate our children.
- To seek the salvation of our kindred and acquaintances.
- To walk circumspectly in the world.
- To be just in our dealings, faithful in our engagements, and exemplary in our deportments.
- To avoid all tattling, backbiting and excessive anger.
- To avoid those things which fulfill the lust of the flesh and are contrary to our walk in the Spirit with Christ as written in Holy Scripture.
- To be zealous in our efforts to advance the kingdom of the Savior.
- To watch over one another in brotherly love.
- To remember one another in prayer.
- To aid one another in sickness and distress.
- To cultivate Christian sympathy in feeling and Christian courtesy in speech.
- To be slow to take offense, but always ready for reconciliation and mindful of the rules of our Savior to secure it without delay.

We moreover engage that when we remove from this place we will as soon as possible unite with some other church where we can carry out the spirit of this covenant and the principles of God's Word.

## **ARTICLE VI. STATEMENT OF MARRIAGE AND SEXUALITY**

We believe the term "marriage" has only one meaning and that is marriage sanctioned by God which joins one man and one woman in a single, exclusive union, as delineated in Scripture. We believe that God intended sexual intimacy to only occur between a man and a woman who are married to each other. We believe that God has commanded that no intimate sexual activity should occur outside of a marriage between a man and a woman.

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We believe that any form of sexual immorality, such as adultery, fornication, homosexuality, bisexual conduct, bestiality, incest, pornography or any attempt to change one's sex, or disagreement with one's biological sex, is sinful and offensive to God.

We believe that in order to preserve the function and integrity of the church as the local body of Christ, and to provide a biblical role model to the Church members and the community, it is imperative that all persons employed by the church in any capacity, or who serve as volunteers, should abide by and agree to this statement on Marriage and Sexuality and conduct themselves accordingly. Likewise First Baptist Church of Guntersville's facilities may **NOT** be used by anyone for activities that are contrary to these beliefs.

Because we believe in the biblical teaching that marriage is between one man and one woman, marriages outside these parameters will not be performed by church ministers on or off church property.

We believe that God offers redemption and restoration to all who confess and forsake their sin, seeking His mercy and forgiveness through Jesus Christ.

We believe that every person must be afforded compassion, love, kindness, respect, and dignity. Hateful and harassing behavior or attitudes directed towards any individual are to be repudiated and are not in accord with Scripture nor the doctrine of this church.

## **BYLAWS**

### **ARTICLE I. CHURCH MEMBERSHIP**

#### **Section 1. General**

This is a sovereign and democratic Southern Baptist Church under the Lordship of Jesus Christ. The membership retains unto itself the exclusive right of self-government in all phases of the spiritual and temporal life of this Church. The membership reserves the right to determine who shall be members of this Church and conditions of such membership.

The membership of this Church shall be composed of individuals who are believers in the Lord Jesus Christ and affirm the tenets of the Constitution and Bylaws of First Baptist Church of Guntersville, and who offer evidence by their confession and their conduct, that they are living in accord with their affirmation of this Constitution and Bylaws, and are actively pursuing and continuing in a vital fellowship with the Lord, Jesus Christ. The membership of this Church shall have final authority in all matters of church governance, as set forth and described in the Bylaws.

#### **Section 2. Candidacy**

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

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- 1) By profession of faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, accepting the promises and commands of the Holy Scripture, being baptized by immersion and accepting the principles of faith and practices of this Church.
- 2) By promise of a letter of recommendation from another Southern Baptist Church.
- 3) By statement of prior conversion experience and baptism by immersion.

Should there be any dissent as to any candidate(s), such dissent shall be referred to the Senior Pastor and the Deacon Council for investigation and the making of a recommendation to the Church within thirty (30) days. A majority vote of those church members present and voting shall be required to elect such candidate(s) to membership.

## **Section 3. Rights of Members**

- Every member of the Church is entitled to vote at all elections and on all questions submitted to the Church in conference, provided the member is present.
- Every member of the Church is eligible for consideration by the membership as a candidate for elective offices and/or committee membership in the church, except for the office(s) of Deacon or Trustee.
- Every member of the Church may participate in the ordinances of the Church as administered by the Church.
- No person, who is **NOT** a member, shall lead any ministry or hold any office of the Church.

## **Section 4. Duties of Members**

- New members are expected to participate in the Church's new member orientation.
- All members of the Church are encouraged through the love of Christ to worship, including attending church services, praying, praising God, and tithing (giving one tenth of one's income to the Lord's work through the Church.)
- Members are encouraged to use their spiritual gift(s) by serving in one or more of the church ministries. Members are also encouraged to study the Word of God, witness, invite and encourage friends, relatives and neighbors to come to Church for the purpose of introducing them to Christ.

## **Section 5. Termination of Members**

Members shall be terminated in the following ways:

- Death of the member
- Dismissal to another Baptist church
- Exclusion by action of this Church
- Erasure upon request or proof of membership in a church of another denomination
- Request by member

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## Section 6. Discipline and Restoration

- It shall be the basic purpose of this Church to emphasize to its members that every reasonable measure will be taken to assist any troubled member. The Senior Pastor, Ministry Staff and Deacon Council are available for counsel and guidance. Redemption, rather than punishment should be the guideline that governs the attitude of one member towards another.
- Should some serious condition exist which would cause a member to become a liability to the general welfare of the Church, every reasonable measure will be taken by the Senior Pastor, Ministry Staff and Deacon Council to resolve the problem. All such proceedings shall be pervaded by a spirit of Christian kindness and forbearance. Upon finding that the welfare of the Church will best be served by the exclusion of the member, the Church by a two-thirds (2/3) vote of the members present and voting, voting in the affirmative, shall declare the person to be no longer a member.
- Any person whose membership has been terminated for any condition may, on his/her request, be restored to membership by a two-thirds (2/3) affirmative vote of the members present and voting. There should be evidence of the member's repentance and reformation.

## ARTICLE II. CHURCH OFFICERS AND STAFF

All who serve as officers and staff members shall be active and resident members of this Church.

The officers of this Church shall be the Senior Pastor, Ministry Staff, Chairman of Deacons, Clerk, Treasurer, and Trustees.

### Section 1. Senior Pastor

The Senior Pastor shall be a duly ordained Southern Baptist minister who meets the scriptural qualifications found in the New Testament. He is the spiritual leader of the congregation and, as such, it becomes his responsibility to preach the message that God leads him to deliver. Other responsibilities include:

- To call upon those seeking spiritual help
- To visit the sick and distressed
- To minister to needs in the Church as he is aware of them
- To be the overseer and leader of pastoral ministries in the Church
  - In the achievement of its mission and objectives
  - In proclaiming the gospel to believers and unbelievers
  - In caring for the Church's members and others in the community

The Senior Pastor is to be considered an Ex-Officio member of all committees and his leadership is to be recognized by all concerned.

The Senior Pastor shall hold his office for an indefinite period of time with the understanding that he may offer his resignation at any church meeting or service if he feels led by the Holy Spirit. If he resigns, he shall give at least two weeks' notice before terminating his responsibilities.

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His service may be terminated by a seventy-five (75) percent affirmative vote of members present and voting at any business meeting provided seven (7) days notice of the meeting and its purpose has been given to the church body. Such a meeting may be called upon the recommendation of a majority of the Deacon Council or written participation of at least one hundred (100) resident church members.

The pulpit of the church shall be under the pastor's personal supervision and control during his tenure in office. He shall have the privilege of selecting the evangelists for special revival services and other ministers who may preach on stated occasions.

All paid staff members are under the leadership/supervision of the pastor unless otherwise stated.

## **SECTION 1A. Interim Senior Pastor**

During a vacancy in the position of Senior Pastor the Deacon Council will make a recommendation to the Church for an Interim Pastor to serve during the vacancy.

## **SECTION 2. SENIOR PASTOR SEARCH COMMITTEE**

When the need arises for the selection of a new Senior Pastor the following guidelines shall govern the process.

- A search committee of six (6) members of the Church, in good standing, shall be selected by the Committee on Committees.
- After the search committee has been approved by the Deacon Council and the Church, the search committee will begin by prayerfully looking to God for direction.
- The search committee will only bring one candidate at a time before the Church.
- When a candidate that meets the search committee's requirements is found, the committee will bring their recommendation to the Deacon Council and Personnel Committee.
- After reviewing the candidate's qualifications and approval by seventy-five (75) percent of the Deacons present and voting, the prospect shall be brought before the Church membership for a trial sermon.
- His trial sermon(s) shall take place at every Sunday morning service.
- At least a seven (7) days public notice of this trial sermon(s) will be given.
- His election to the position of Senior Pastor will be confirmed by at least a seventy-five (75) percent positive vote by Church members present and voting.
- His election will be by ballot.
- No absentee ballots shall be counted.

## **SECTION 3. MINISTERIAL STAFF**

The Ordained Ministerial Staff members shall be called by the Church as needed. On the recommendations from the Senior Pastor, Trustees, Deacon Council and Personnel Committee and with the approval of the Church at a business meeting set for that purpose, Ministerial Staff positions shall be filled or removed.

Potential Ministerial Staff positions are as follows: (This is not meant to be an all inclusive listing and over time the requirements for any Ministerial Staff positions may change)

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- **Senior Adult Pastor**
  - He shall serve as minister of senior adults.
  - He shall coordinate, develop, and implement various ministries to meet their needs.
  - He shall assist the Senior Pastor in providing spiritual leadership to the congregation, in areas of outreach and evangelism, visitation, prospecting, and filling the pulpit as required.
  - Other activities as requested by the Senior Pastor
- **Minister of Music**
  - He/She shall be in charge of providing worshipful music for all services of the Church.
  - He/She shall work with all departments and organizations of the Church to provide needed music or related activities.
  - He/She shall be responsible for all practices, performances, and selection of music.
  - He/She shall work closely with the Senior Pastor or Interim Pastor to select suitable music for all programs.
  - Any purchase of equipment relative to the music program must be coordinated with the Minister of Music.
  - He/She shall serve as an Ex-Officio member of any committee that directly or indirectly affects his/her area of responsibility.
  - Other activities as requested by the Senior Pastor
- **General Manager/ Operations Manager**
  - He/She will be over all aspects of the Church's operational business.
  - He/She will assume day to day oversight of all staff members, teachers and committee members.
  - He/She shall be responsible for making sure the budget is followed.
  - He/She shall work with all committees to make sure their area(s) of responsibility are working properly and adequately funded.
  - He/She shall work in conjunction with the Senior Pastor.
- **Minster of Education**
  - He/She is responsible for all Church education activities.
  - He/She shall develop and/or purchase all literature used in Church education.
  - He/She shall approve all courses of study within the Church.
  - He/She is responsible for coordination of the activity schedule on the Church calendar.
  - He/She shall serve as an Ex-Officio member of the Benevolence and Education Committees.
  - Other activities as requested by the Senior Pastor

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- **Minister of Youth**
  - He/She shall provide activities or programs for youth (6<sup>th</sup> – 12<sup>th</sup> grades).
  - He/She is to put special emphasis on encouraging the youth to participate and attend church services and church sponsored activities.
  - He/She is to plan and implement activities to foster mission involvement and personal growth for all youth.
  - He/She shall serve as an Ex-Officio member of the Youth Committee
  - Other activities as requested by the Senior Pastor
- **Minister of Children**
  - He/She is responsible for the planning, developing, promoting and coordinating a comprehensive children's ministry (Birth – 5<sup>th</sup> Grades)
  - He/She shall be responsible for all activities of this age group.
  - He/She shall be an Ex-Officio member of the Children's Committee.
  - Other activities as requested by the Senior Pastor.

## **Hiring of any Ministerial Staff member(s) will be as follows:**

- A search committee of six (6) members of the Church, in good standing, shall be selected by the Committee overseeing the area for which the minister is responsible or by selection of the Deacon Council if there is not a committee involved.
- After the search committee has been approved by the Deacon Council and the Church, the search committee will begin by prayerfully looking to God for direction.
- The search committee will only bring one candidate at a time before the Church.
- When a candidate that meets the search committee's requirements is found, the committee will bring their recommendation to the Deacon Council and Personnel Committee.
- After reviewing the candidate's qualifications and approval by seventy-five (75) percent of the Deacons present and voting, the prospect shall be brought before the Church membership.
- For the positions of Senior Adult Pastor or Minister of Music a trial service(s) shall take place on a Sunday morning.
- All other positions will be responsible for meeting with the committee in charge or Deacon Council and that committee or Deacon Council will make a recommendation to the Church.
- At least a seven (7) days public notice will be given.
- His/Her election to a position on the Ministerial Staff will be confirmed by at least a seventy-five (75) percent positive vote by Church members present and voting.
- His/Her election will be by ballot.
- No absentee ballots shall be counted.

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## **Any member of the Ministerial Staff shall be terminated by:**

- Recommendation of the Personnel Committee, Trustees, and Deacon Council with the majority of the membership present and voting, voting affirmatively.
- With the majority of members present and voting, at the meeting called for the purpose of termination, voting affirmative.
- At least a seven (7) days public notice of the proposed meeting will be given.
- A vote for termination will be by ballot
- NO absentee ballots shall be counted.

## **SECTION 4. OTHER PAID STAFF POSITIONS**

- **Church Administrative Support**
  - He/She shall supervise the Church office, assist the clerk with Church rolls and records, and assist the treasurer with banking and bookkeeping of financial records.
  - Order and maintain Church administrative supplies.
  - He/She shall assist the Senior Pastor and Ministerial Staff.
  - He/She shall help promote the organization of the Church in so far as practical.
  - Other activities as requested by the Senior Pastor.
- **Other Staff as Needed**
  - Employment of all other paid staff positions shall be the responsibility of the Personnel Committee in consultation with the appropriate committee(s) or Ministerial Staff member(s).

Church approval of salary, benefits, etc. is required with the majority of members present and voting, voting affirmative.

Dismissal of any other paid staff position is by recommendation of the Personnel Committee with Deacon Council concurrence and a majority of the members present and voting, voting affirmatively at any business meeting.

## **SECTION 5. NON-PAID STAFF POSITIONS**

### **DEACONS**

The qualifications for Deacon are set forth in Acts 6:3-5 and 1 Timothy 3:8-13.

The Church shall have a Deacon Council made up of eighteen (18) elected Deacons or any number as requested by the Deacons Council and approved by the Church in a business meeting.

Men shall serve on the Active Deacon council for a three (3) year term, starting January first, with one-third (1/3) of the members rotating off the Council every year.

A man shall not be considered for reelection at the conclusion of an active term until one year has elapsed. The exception is when a man is fulfilling the remaining term of another Deacon.

In addition, this Church establishes the following standards for Deacons:

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- A male member of the First Baptist Church of Guntersville, Alabama at least twenty-one (21) years old by January first.
- He must have been a member of First Baptist Church for one year by January first.
- He shall demonstrate love for and a commitment to the total ministry and programs of the Church.
- He shall have a spirit of full cooperation with the Senior Pastor and other Church leaders in presenting and executing the spiritual programs of the Church.
- He must be sure of his salvation.

## NOMINATING AND SELECTING

- The Senior Pastor and Chairman of the Deacons will make it known in **August** of every year that it is time to elect Deacons.
- Each Church member may nominate no more than two men to serve as a Deacon.
- All nominations shall be turned into the Church office **no later than September fifteenth (15<sup>th</sup>)**.
- The Senior Pastor and the Chairman of the Deacons will review each nomination for qualifications and contact each nominee to determine their willingness to serve if elected, prior to the **October** Deacon's meeting.
- The Deacon Council will review the list and make sure there is at least ~~three~~ two times the number of nominees on the ballot to the number of Deacons to be elected.
- The Deacon Council may add as many additional nominees to the list as they feel the Holy Spirit leading them.
- During the last week of **October** a ballot will be provided to each Church member, listing those nominated, instructions on voting and a place to vote for the specific number of Deacons.
- Ballots will be turned in at the Sunday morning services on the **first Sunday in November**.
- Absentee ballots are not permitted.
- A ballot marked for more than the appropriate number of men will be voided.
- Ballots shall be collected and counted by the Chairman of the Deacons and the Deacons rotating off the active Deacon Council.
- These ballots and tabulations shall be kept on file for one year.
- The Senior Pastor and/or the Chairman of the Deacons shall contact the nominees receiving the most votes.
- If there is a tie, a name will be drawn by either the Senior Pastor or Chairman of the Deacons to determine the nominee who will serve.
- The names of those elected shall be published in the church bulletin the week following the election.
- Ordination shall be scheduled for those elected, who have not been ordained, before **January first**.

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- Any vacancies occurring will be filled by the Chairman of the Deacons contacting the next highest vote receiving man from the current year's ballot. This process will continue in filling any additional vacancies.
- If a man has been ordained in another Southern Baptist Church prior to selection as a Deacon at First Baptist Guntersville, his previous ordination shall suffice.
- Any person who has served on the Deacon Counsel may request to serve as Deacon Emeritus subject to approval by the Church. A Deacon Emeritus is an honorary position, with all the rights and privileges of an active Deacon except that of voting.

## SERVICE AND ORGANIZATION

In accordance with the meaning of the Word and practice of the New Testament, Deacons are to be servants of the Church. They are to be zealous to guard the unity of the spirit within the Church. They shall serve as a council of advisors for the Senior Pastor, Ministerial Staff and others in matters pertaining to the welfare and fulfillment of the Church programs.

- The Deacon Council shall meet at least once per month (time and place to be determined by the Deacon Council) and more often if necessary.
- A Deacon Family list shall be given to each Deacon at the **January** meeting.
- For a regular meeting of the Deacon Council one-half (1/2) of all members represent a quorum.
- For the calling of a Senior Pastor, personnel changes, etc. two-thirds (2/3) of all members are needed to transact such business.
- No meeting shall be held unless all Deacons are notified by some form of electronic communication, a phone call or the meeting is announced at the Sunday morning services or in the bulletin, prior to such meeting.

The Deacon Council shall determine the qualification and method of electing its own officers, committees, etc. However the selection of a Chairman, Vice Chairman and Secretary shall be as follows:

- The Chairman of the Deacons shall appoint a committee of three (3), one from each election cycle.
- The committee will report back to the Council in the **December** meeting their recommendations for each of the three positions for the coming year.
- If the Chairman is no longer able to fulfill his responsibilities the Vice Chairman shall serve the remainder of the term.
- A two thirds (2/3) vote of a majority of Deacons present and voting is required to elect officers of the Deacon Council.

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## TRUSTEES

Trustees of First Baptist Church of Guntersville will serve as senior advisors to the Senior Pastor, the Deacon Council and the Church as a whole.

- There shall always be three (3) Trustees serving staggered terms.
- Each Trustee will serve a three (3) year term and may be nominated for an additional three (3) year term. Trustees must sit out a year after serving six (6) consecutive years.
- A Trustee will be nominated by the Deacon Council in the **December** Deacon's meeting and approved by the Church in the **December** Business meeting with seventy-five (75) percent of the members present and voting, voting in the affirmative.

The Trustees shall be responsible for the following:

- To review the current and future needs of the Church and bring their recommendations to the appropriate committee(s) or organization(s).
- Execute deeds, deeds of trust, mortgages, promissory notes, or other pecuniary actions.
- Administer trusts and gifts (other than cash) coming to the Church by bequest or donation.
- Insure that all legal documents are stored in a safety deposit box and make periodic inventories and reports of these contents to the appropriate committee(s), organization(s) or individual(s).
- Shall meet at least every quarter.

## MODERATOR

- The Moderator shall oversee all business meetings of the Church.
- The Moderator shall be appointed by the active Deacon Council at the **January** meeting.
- The Moderator shall serve a one year term and may be reappointed.
- In the absence of the moderator the following order shall apply:
  - Chairman of the Deacons (if absent)
  - Senior Pastor (if absent)
  - The clerk will call the Church to order and a moderator shall be elected.

## CLERK

The Church shall elect a Clerk as required.

- He/She shall keep records of all official Church actions except as otherwise provided.
- He/She shall keep a register of the Church membership with dates of acceptance, dismissal, transfers, or death, together with records of baptism and date thereof.
- He/She shall issue letters of request of membership, transfers from churches of faith, and letters of dismissal as requested are received.
- He/She shall give legal notice of all meetings where such notice is necessary.

# First Baptist Church of Guntersville – Constitution and Bylaws

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## TREASURER/ASSOCIATE TREASURER

The Church shall elect a Treasurer and Associate Treasurer every three (3) years.

- The Deacon Council shall submit persons for consideration for both positions.
- He/She shall be voted on in the **December** business meeting with a majority of members present and voting, voting affirmatively.
- He/She shall have the duty to receive, preserve and supervise the disbursement of all money from the Church treasury.
- He/She shall keep, at all times, an itemized account of receipts and disbursements.
- He/She shall render to the Church at each regularly scheduled business meeting an itemized report of the preceding month's transactions and at every Deacon Council's meeting.
- He/She shall provide the Church with a year ending report showing the total amount of receipts, and an itemized statement of expenditures by budget line.
- All books, records and accounts kept by the Treasurer are considered property of First Baptist Church of Guntersville.
- Inspection of books or records may be requested, by any member of the Church, by contacting the Chairman of the Deacons.
- All records of giving are not to be disclosed.
- The Treasurer shall be an Ex-Officio member of the Budget and Finance Committee.
- An Associate Treasurer shall be nominated for the purpose of assisting the Treasurer.
- The Treasurer and Associate Treasurer shall be appointed to serve from **January** first.

## ARTICLE III. CHURCH COMMITTEES

The Church will select committees as it feels needs arise. The Committee on Committees will have the responsibility of proposing all committees and their structure. Each member of a committee shall serve a three (3) year term. Where possible one-third (1/3) of the members of a committee will rotate off yearly. A member can serve two (2) consecutive terms but after the second term must wait one year before going back on the same committee. Each committee's term will start on **January first**.

**No person, serving on a committee, shall benefit financially from serving on that committee.**

The following is a list of current committees and their membership size. This listing can be modified at any business meeting by the Committee on Committees with consent from the Deacon Council and a majority of the members present and voting, in the affirmative.

### SECTION 1. COMMITTEE ON COMMITTEES

- Shall consist of six (6) members with two (2) rotating off every year.
- Election of two (2) new members shall take place annually concurrent with the Deacon election.
- Church members may nominate two people for election **no later than September fifteenth of each year**.

# First Baptist Church of Guntersville – Constitution and Bylaws

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- The Deacon Council will review the list to make sure that a total of at least four (4) people have been nominated.
- The Senior Pastor and/or Chairman of Deacons will contact all persons nominated to make sure they are willing to serve.
- The list of Committee on Committees nominees shall be published in the Church bulletin at least one week before the election which shall be on the **first Sunday in November**.
- In the event that one of the members of the committee can not finish their term the next highest vote receiver will serve out the term of the vacated position.
- The responsibility of the Committee on Committees is to recommend, for Church approval, the members of all Church committees, the number of persons on each committee and the Chairperson of each committee.
- The Senior Pastor and Chairman of the Deacons will recommend the Chairperson of the Committee on Committees.

## **SECTION 2. BUDGET AND FINANCE**

- Shall consist of six (6) members with two (2) rotating off every year.
- After input, consultation, and resolution with all department directors and committee chairpersons, the committee shall prepare an inclusive annual budget.
- The proposed budget shall be presented to the Deacon Council for review and then to the Church, no later than the December business meeting, for approval.
- The committee shall keep the Church apprised of any changes to the budget during the Church year. The same process shall be followed to amend the budget as was used in approving the original.

## **SECTION 3. PERSONNEL**

- Shall consist of three (3) members with one (1) rotating off every year.
- This committee assists the Church in matters related to employment and personnel administration.
- All salary, benefits and personnel services shall be handled by this committee.
- Develop and/or amend job descriptions, personnel policies, and procedures.
- Recruitment and recommendation of additional or new employee(s) where appropriate.

## **SECTION 4. EDUCATION**

- Shall consist of six (6) members with two (2) rotating off every year.
- To recommend personnel for the staffing of all church leadership positions filled by volunteers from the membership of the Church.
- Names of nominees will be presented to the Church in the December business meeting, but only after consent of the nominee is given.
- Responsible for filling vacancies or nominating additional officers, teachers, etc as needed.
- Shall be an advisory and support group to the education ministry of the church and the Minister of Education.

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## **SECTION 5. HOUSE AND GROUNDS**

- Shall consist of six (6) members with two (2) rotating off every year.
- Shall be responsible for all permanent Church properties including but not limited to: wall colors, carpets, doorways, hallways, furnishings, grounds, plants, trees, etc.
- Shall be responsible for working with the Church maintenance personnel for the general appearance and upkeep of all Church property and grounds
- Shall supervise the cleaning company.
- Shall every two years bid the work of the cleaning company, evaluate the bids and make a recommendation to the Church of which cleaning company to use.
- Shall have the authority to purchase equipment and supplies and authorize normal and/or emergency maintenance and repairs as provided in the budget.
- Any abnormal or one time expenditure of \$1,000 or more shall be submitted to the Deacon Council for approval and then to the Church with a majority of members present and voting, voting in the affirmative.

## **SECTION 6. MUSIC**

- Shall consist of six (6) members with two (2) rotating off every year.
- Shall be an advisory and support group for the music ministry of the Church and the Minister of Music.

## **SECTION 7. YOUTH**

- Shall consist of six (6) members with two (2) rotating off every year.
- Shall be an advisory and support group for the youth programs of the Church and the Minister of Youth.

## **SECTION 8. CHILDRENS**

- Shall consist of six (6) members with two (2) rotating off every year.
- Shall be an advisory and support group for the children's programs of the Church and the Minister of Children.

## **SECTION 9. LIBRARY**

- Shall consist of three (3) members with one (1) rotating off every year.
- Provide oversight of the library, its materials and equipment.
- Shall develop an annual budget and plan that will promote and encourage library use.

## **SECTION 10. INSURANCE**

- Shall consist of three (3) members with one (1) rotating off every year.
- Shall obtain adequate insurance for all buildings, health, life, vehicles, liability and workers' compensation and any other coverage(s) as deemed necessary.
- Shall budget adequate funding to obtain such insurance.
- Shall review all policies at least annually.

# First Baptist Church of Guntersville – Constitution and Bylaws

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- Shall obtain bids for all coverage's at least every two (2) years to assure the Church is getting the coverage and the value needed.
- Shall review all claims and payments for insurance.
- Shall report to the Church about coverage, cost, claims, etc. when needed.

## **SECTION 11. VEHICLE**

- Shall consist of three (3) members with one (1) rotating off every year.
- Shall supervise the operation and maintenance of all Church vehicles.
- Shall make sure vehicles meet all local, state and federal safety standards.
- Shall formulate policies on use of Church vehicles.
- Shall insure that only authorized and qualified operators drive the vehicles.

## **SECTION 12. AUDIO-VISUAL**

- Shall consist of three (3) members with one (1) rotating off every year.
- Shall make recommendations to the Church for purchase of new or replacement equipment.
- Responsible for maintenance and repair to all equipment
- Shall assist the Minister of Music with technical aspects of church service(s).

## **SECTION 13. OFFICE AUTOMATION**

- Shall consist of three (3) members with one (1) rotating off every year.
- Shall make recommendations to the Church for the purchase or lease of any computer(s), internet, phone, or office automation equipment.
- Shall make sure all equipment is working and functioning properly.

## **SECTION 14. BAPTISMAL**

- Shall consist of six (6) members for each Worship Service with two (2) from each service rotating off each every year.
- Shall assist the Senior Pastor in preparation for the ordinance of baptism.
- Shall assure that the baptistery is full, temperature is good, clean gowns and towels are available.
- Shall help candidates into and out of the baptistery.

## **SECTION 15. BENEVOLENCE**

- Shall consist of three (3) members with one (1) rotating off every year.
- Shall perform acts of benevolence to persons in need in the name of Christ and this Church.
- Shall work closely with the Senior Pastor, Minister of Education and others to review requests for assistance.
- Shall keep records concerning needs met on file at the Church office.

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## **SECTION 16. WEDDING**

- Shall consist of three (3) members with one (1) rotating off every year.
- Shall establish and review Church rules concerning the use of Church facilities for weddings and receptions.
- Shall make sure that a Church person is present and responsible at each function held on church property.

## **SECTION 17. FELLOWSHIP-KITCHEN**

- Shall consist of twelve (12) members with four (4) rotating off every year.
- Shall serve as church hostesses for fellowship events.
- Shall formulate policies for use of the Church's kitchen and communicate those policies to the Church.
- Shall make sure its equipment is clean and operational, and meets all health standards.
- Shall make recommendations on the purchase or repair of kitchen equipment.
- Shall make sure all needed items are in stock.

## **SECTION 18. SCHOLARSHIP**

- Shall consist of three (3) members with one (1) rotating off every year.
- Shall administer the scholarship program according to the specific stipulations and bylaws upon which the scholarship fund was established.

## **SECTION 19. MISSION INVOLVEMENT**

- Shall consist of six (6) members with two (2) rotating off every year.
- Shall assist the Church staff in accomplishing mission efforts.
- Shall vigorously study and promote mission opportunities.
- Shall budget for all mission involvement activities through the Budget and Finance Committee.

## **SECTION 20. FLOWER**

- Shall consist of twelve (12) members with four (4) rotating off every year.
- Shall decorate the church during holidays, special events and provide flowers for the sanctuary.

## **SECTION 21. CHRISTIAN LIFE**

- Shall consist of three (3) members with one (1) rotating off every year.
- Shall promote awareness of issues relating to the sanctity of human life in accordance with God's word, provide leadership for the Church to develop and support pro-life activities.

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## **SECTION 22. FUNERAL**

- Shall consist of three (3) members with one (1) rotating off every year.
- Shall assist the bereaved family by coordinating a family meal at the Church either before or after the funeral or memorial service, at the family's discretion.
- Shall be the liaison between the family and members of the Church who will provide food for the family meal.
- Shall coordinate the set-up and clean-up of tables, chairs, serving lines and any other item needed.
- Shall coordinate with the Fellowship-Kitchen Committee with regard to using kitchen supplies.

## **SECTION 23. PRESCHOOL**

- Shall consist of three (3) members with one (1) rotating off every year.
- Shall be an advisory committee to the Anchored Adventures preschool.

## **SECTION 24. SAFETY**

- Shall consist of six (6) members with two (2) rotating off every year.
- Shall be responsible for developing and coordinating all aspects of safety for all Church facilities.
- Shall make recommendation to the Church for equipment, training and operation of all things related to safety.
- Shall provide trained personnel to watch over services and/or meetings of the Church.

## **SECTION 25. USHERS**

- Shall consist of chairman(s) for every Worship service and a sufficient number of ushers as required for each service.
- The chairman(s) shall serve a three (3) year term.
- The ushers shall serve as greeters, assist in sitting needs, collecting of the Church offerings, control of temperature and help provide an atmosphere of reverence within the auditorium.

## **SECTION 26. TELLERS**

- Shall consist of a Chairman and a sufficient number of tellers as required.
- The chairman(s) shall serve a three (3) year term.
- The tellers shall count the monetary receipts each Sunday morning and deposit all receipts at the appropriate bank.

## **SECTION 27. LORD'S SUPPER**

- Shall consist of a Chairperson and a sufficient number of helpers as required.
- The chairman(s) shall serve a three (3) year term.
- Shall prepare the elements for the service(s): Bread, Grape fruit juice, plates and drink holders.
- Shall make sure that all equipment is cleaned and returned to the storage area.

## **IV. CHURCH PROGRAM ORGANIZATIONS**

The Church may at any regularly scheduled or special called business meeting add, change or delete any program organization, with the majority of members present and voting, voting in the affirmative.

### **SECTION 1. SUNDAY SCHOOL**

- Shall be divided into departments and classes for all ages.
- The Senior Pastor shall determine who is responsible for supervising Sunday School.
- Sunday school shall be held every Sunday morning unless the Senior Pastor and Ministerial Staff determine otherwise.

## **ARTICLE V. CHURCH COUNCIL**

- Shall consist of the Senior Pastor, Ministerial Staff, Chairman of the Deacons, Trustees, Clerk and Treasurer
- Shall meet at least quarterly to discuss Church activities and future needs.
- The Church Council shall be lead by the Senior Pastor.

## **ARTICLE VI. CHURCH ORDINANCES**

### **SECTION 1. THE LORD’S SUPPER**

- Shall be observed at least once per quarter.
- The Senior Pastor and the Chairman of the Deacons shall choose the date.
- The Senior Pastor and the Deacon Council shall administer the Lord’s Supper.
- The Lord’s Supper Coordinator will be responsible for the physical preparations.

## **ARTICLE VII. CHURCH MEETINGS**

### **SECTION 1. WORSHIP SERVICES**

- Shall meet every Sunday morning for worship of almighty God.
- Other services throughout the week shall be scheduled as the Church desires.
- The Senior Pastor shall direct all Church services; in his absences he shall appoint a member of the Ministerial Staff or another ordained minister to fill his position.

### **SECTION 2. SPECIAL SERVICES**

From time to time the Senior Pastor may feel the need for a special service or series of services. The scheduling of such services will be at the direction of the Senior Pastor with the support of the Deacon Council.

# First Baptist Church of Guntersville – Constitution and Bylaws

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## **SECTION 3. BUSINESS MEETINGS**

- All business of the Church will be conducted at a quarterly meeting during the months of:
  - March, June, September, and December
- The approval of any business brought before the Church will require at least a majority of members present and voting, voting in the affirmative.
- Any member, in good standing, has the right to bring items before the Church for discussion and/or approval.
- The moderator can determine that an item presented needs further review and he/she may order the item tabled or referred to the appropriate committee(s) before any action is taken.

## **SECTION 4. SPECIAL CALLED BUSINESS MEETINGS**

The Church shall conduct special called business meetings to consider matters of a special nature and significance, if needed between quarterly business meetings.

- The Senior Pastor, Deacon Council or any committee shall request the meeting.
- A one week notice must be given for the special called business meeting.
- The special called business meeting shall be announced at the Sunday Morning service(s) preceding the meeting, along with written notice in the bulletin and electronic announcements.
- Each announcement will contain the subject, time and date of the meeting.

## **SECTION 5. EMERGENCY BUSINESS MEETINGS**

The Church shall call an emergency business meeting when the physical or spiritual well being of the Church is at stake.

- The meeting shall be called by the Senior Pastor, Chairman of the Deacons or fifty (50) church members including (6) members of the Deacon council.
- At least seventy five (75) percent of the members present and voting must vote in the affirmative that the business constitutes an emergency before the Church can enter into an emergency meeting.

## **SECTION 6. QUORUM**

A quorum consists of those members who attend the business meeting(s), provided it is a stated meeting or one that has been previously called.

## **SECTION 7. PARLIAMENTARY RULES**

- “Robert’s Rules of Order, Revised” shall be the authority for parliamentary rule.
- The Constitution and Bylaws shall take precedent if there is any conflict.

## **ARTICLE VIII. CHURCH FINANCES**

### **SECTION 1. BUDGET**

- The Budget and Finance Committee will provide the Church with a proposed budget yearly, in December of the current year for implementation January first of the next year.
- The Budget and Finance Committee will consult with every committee and organization of the Church and after considerable discussions shall recommend the appropriate amount to budget for each.

### **SECTION 2. ACCOUNTING PROCEDURES**

- An audit of the Church financial records shall be conducted every five (5) years.
- All acceptable designated and undesignated funds shall be properly recorded on the books of the Church.
- Designated gifts are acceptable if designated to Christian organizations, Christian institutions and Church approved objectives.
- If the designated gift does not meet these provisions as interpreted by the Budget and Finance Committee, they will bring their recommendation to the Trustees for resolution.
- No non-recurring expense of more than \$1,000 shall be expended without prior approval of the Deacon Council and Church, with a majority of members present and voting, voting in the affirmative.
- The records of the Church must comply with Internal Revenue Service regulations.

### **SECTION 3. FISCAL YEAR**

- The Church's fiscal year begins January 1<sup>st</sup> and ends December 31<sup>st</sup>.

## **ARTICLE IX. OPERATIONS MANUAL**

When it is unclear as to the meaning of any part of this Constitution and/or Bylaws, the Senior Pastor and the Chairman of the Deacon Council will make the interpretation. Their decision will stand until the Church changes the Constitution and/or Bylaws.

## **ARTICLE X. AMENDMENTS**

Changes to the Constitution and/or Bylaws shall be made at any business meeting of the Church provided each amendment has been presented in writing at a previous business meeting and copies of the proposed amendment furnished to each member present at the earlier meeting.

- Amendments to the Constitution and/or Bylaws shall be by two-thirds (2/3) of the members present and voting, voting in the affirmative.

# First Baptist Church of Guntersville – Constitution and Bylaws

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## ADOPTION

This Constitution and Bylaws shall be adopted if two-thirds (2/3) of the members present and voting at the business meeting to which they are proposed for adoption shall vote in favor of the motion to approve. The adoption of this Constitution and Bylaws shall affect the repeal of the current Constitution and Bylaws and any rule previously adopted by the Church in a business meeting that conflicts with this document.

This Constitution and Bylaws, having been adopted by the Church in conference upon due recommendation of the Deacon Council, shall become effective upon adoption by the Church. However, all committees, officers and teachers now at work under the old constitution and Bylaws shall continue until they have discharged their duties committed to them or until the end of the Church year.

Adopted in Conference on the 11<sup>th</sup> day of December 2019.

Mary Ellen Kelley Grissom

Church Clerk

## **AMENDMENT #1**

### **Extraordinary Circumstance**

In the event that the Church goes through an extraordinary circumstance that requires the church to not meet for at least three months, the Deacon body by a two-thirds (2/3) positive vote of the members present at an official meeting can recommend to the Church that all Deacons, Committee Members, Teachers, Trustees, and other people voted on by the Church, can remain in their present position an additional year, if they so choose. This motion will be made to the Church during a business meeting and with two-thirds (2/3) of the members present and voting, voting in the affirmative shall be made part of the Church Constitution.

Motion Introduced: September 2, 2020

Motion Approved: September 16, 2020

## **AMENDMENT #2**

Change from three (18) to two (12) times the number of Nominees needed for Deacon election.

Motion Introduced: September 15, 2021

Motion Approved: September 29, 2021