



First Baptist Taylor

*building bridges to see the broken
made whole in Christ*

First Baptist Church of Taylor

**FBC Taylor
Constitution
and Bylaws**

Approved at business meeting January 29, 2017

Table of Contents

PREAMBLE.....	4
ARTICLE ONE.....	4
NAME.....	4
ARTICLE TWO.....	4
STATEMENT OF FAITH	4
ARTICLE THREE.....	4
PURPOSE OF THE CHURCH	4
ARTICLE FOUR.....	4
GOVERNMENT OF THE CHURCH	4
ARTICLE FIVE.....	5
RELATIONSHIPS.....	5
ARTICLE SIX	5
BY-LAWS	5
ARTICLE SEVEN	5
AMENDMENTS	5
ARTICLE SEVEN	5
DISSOLUTION	5
Appendix A	6
THE 2000 BAPTIST FAITH & MESSAGE.....	6
I. The Scriptures	6
II. God.....	6
A. God the Father.....	6
B. God the Son.....	6
C. God the Holy Spirit.....	7
III. Man	7
IV. Salvation.....	8
V. God's Purpose of Grace.....	8
VI. The Church	9
VII. Baptism and the Lord's Supper	9
VIII. The Lord's Day.....	9
IX. The Kingdom	10
X. Last Things	10
XI. Evangelism and Missions	10
XII. Education.....	11
XIII. Stewardship	11
XIV. Cooperation.....	11
XV. The Christian and the Social Order	12
XVI. Peace and War	12
XVII. Religious Liberty.....	12
XVIII. The Family	13
CHURCH BYLAWS	14
Article One	14
Church Membership.....	14
Section 1: General.....	14
Section 2: Candidacy	14
Section 3: Rights of Members.....	14
Section 4: Termination of Membership.....	15

Section 5: Discipline	15
Article Two	15
Church Officers.....	15
Section 1: Pastor	15
Section 2: Ministerial Staff.....	16
Section 3: Deacons	16
Section 4: Moderator	16
Section 5: Trustees	16
Article Three	17
Non-Ministerial Staff.....	17
Article Four	17
Church Records	17
Article Five	17
Church Teams.....	17
Section 1: Administrative Teams.....	17
A. Engagement Team	17
B. Personnel Team	17
C. Finance Team	18
Section 2: Ministry Teams.....	18
Section 3: Operational Teams	18
Article Six.....	18
Church Ordinances	18
Section 1: Baptism	18
Section 2: The Lord's Supper	18
Article Seven	19
Church Meetings	19
Section 1: Worship Services.....	19
Section 2: Regular Business Meetings	19
Section 3: Special Business Meetings	19
Section 4: Quorum.....	19
Section 5: Parliamentary Rules.....	19
Article Eight	19
Amendments	19

CONSTITUTION FOR THE FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH OF TAYLOR, TEXAS

PREAMBLE

The First Baptist Church of Taylor, Texas (hereafter referred to as the Church), a nonprofit Texas Corporation, exists to proclaim and demonstrate the gospel of Jesus Christ and to promote the Christian maturity of her members. This constitution will preserve the liberties of each individual church member and the freedom of action of this body in relation to others.

ARTICLE ONE NAME

This body shall be known as THE FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH OF TAYLOR, TEXAS, INCORPORATE, located in Williamson County, Texas, a non-profit corporation, organized under the laws of the state of Texas, with articles of incorporation.

ARTICLE TWO STATEMENT OF FAITH

We believe in Jesus Christ as God's only Son who died on the cross for our sins and rose again to give life. We believe in the Bible as the only word of God and use it as our foundation. We believe in the church as the body of Christ and seek to worship, serve, minister, and grow as followers of Jesus Christ, being led by the Holy Spirit.

The Baptist Faith and Message of 2000 of the Southern Baptist Convention is the statement of faith and message for the First Baptist Church of Taylor. (See Appendix 1)

ARTICLE THREE PURPOSE OF THE CHURCH

We confirm that our primary purpose is the worship of God as we communicate the Good News of salvation through faith in Jesus Christ to all persons. We endeavor to equip and enable each individual for this purpose through the provisions of opportunities of worship, education, service and fellowship.

ARTICLE FOUR GOVERNMENT OF THE CHURCH

The government of the church is vested in the body of believers who comprise it, owing allegiance only to its founder and head, the Lord Jesus Christ. This body of believers are those who have made a profession of faith in Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior and who have been baptized by immersion. All internal groups created and empowered by the church shall report to and be accountable only to the church. The church is not subject to the control by any other ecclesiastical body.

ARTICLE FIVE RELATIONSHIPS

We recognize the benefits and sustain the obligations of mutual cooperation, which are common among Baptist churches, associations, and conventions. Insofar as practical, this body agrees to cooperate with and support the Williamson County Baptist Association, Baptist General Convention of Texas and Southern Baptist Convention.

ARTICLE SIX BY-LAWS

This constitution shall be supplemented by a set of bylaws and a book of governing policies and procedures.

ARTICLE SEVEN AMENDMENTS

Changes to the constitution and bylaws may be made at any regular business meeting of the church, provided that each amendment has been presented in writing at a previous business meeting and a copy of the proposed amendment has been furnished to members through appropriate means of communication. Amendments to the constitution shall be adopted by a two-thirds vote of those church members present. Amendments to the bylaws shall be adopted by a majority vote of those church members present.

ARTICLE SEVEN DISSOLUTION

Upon dissolution of the Corporation, after all liabilities and obligations of the Corporation in the process of winding up are paid, satisfied, and discharged, all remaining assets and property of every nature and description whatsoever shall be distributed only for tax exempt purposes to one or more organizations exempt under Section 501(c)(3) of the IRC, or corresponding section of any future federal tax code as specified by the IRS.

Appendix A

Southern Baptist Convention THE 2000 BAPTIST FAITH & MESSAGE

I. The Scriptures

The Holy Bible was written by men divinely inspired and is God's revelation of Himself to man. It is a perfect treasure of divine instruction. It has God for its author, salvation for its end, and truth, without any mixture of error, for its matter. Therefore, all Scripture is totally true and trustworthy. It reveals the principles by which God judges us, and therefore is, and will remain to the end of the world, the true center of Christian union, and the supreme standard by which all human conduct, creeds, and religious opinions should be tried. All Scripture is a testimony to Christ, who is Himself the focus of divine revelation.

Exodus 24:4; Deuteronomy 4:1-2; 17:19; Joshua 8:34; Psalms 19:7-10; 119:11,89,105,140; Isaiah 34:16; 40:8; Jeremiah 15:16; 36:1-32; Matthew 5:17-18; 22:29; Luke 21:33; 24:44-46; John 5:39; 16:13-15; 17:17; Acts 2:16ff.; 17:11; Romans 15:4; 16:25-26; 2 Timothy 3:15-17; Hebrews 1:1-2; 4:12; 1 Peter 1:25; 2 Peter 1:19-21.

II. God

There is one and only one living and true God. He is an intelligent, spiritual, and personal Being, the Creator, Redeemer, Preserver, and Ruler of the universe. God is infinite in holiness and all other perfections. God is all powerful and all knowing; and His perfect knowledge extends to all things, past, present, and future, including the future decisions of His free creatures. To Him we owe the highest love, reverence, and obedience. The eternal triune God reveals Himself to us as Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, with distinct personal attributes, but without division of nature, essence, or being.

A. God the Father

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

Genesis 1:1; 2:7; Exodus 3:14; 6:2-3; 15:11ff.; 20:1ff.; Leviticus 22:2; Deuteronomy 6:4; 32:6; 1 Chronicles 29:10; Psalm 19:1-3; Isaiah 43:3,15; 64:8; Jeremiah 10:10; 17:13; Matthew 6:9ff.; 7:11; 23:9; 28:19; Mark 1:9-11; John 4:24; 5:26; 14:6-13; 17:1-8; Acts 1:7; Romans 8:14-15; 1 Corinthians 8:6; Galatians 4:6; Ephesians 4:6; Colossians 1:15; 1 Timothy 1:17; Hebrews 11:6; 12:9; 1 Peter 1:17; 1 John 5:7.

B. God the Son

Christ is the eternal Son of God. In His incarnation as Jesus Christ He was conceived of the Holy Spirit and born of the virgin Mary. Jesus perfectly revealed and did the will of God, taking upon Himself human nature with its demands and necessities and identifying Himself completely with mankind yet without sin. He honored the divine law by His personal obedience, and in His substitutionary death on the cross He made provision for the

redemption of men from sin. He was raised from the dead with a glorified body and appeared to His disciples as the person who was with them before His crucifixion. He ascended into heaven and is now exalted at the right hand of God where He is the One Mediator, fully God, fully man, in whose Person is effected the reconciliation between God and man. He will return in power and glory to judge the world and to consummate His redemptive mission. He now dwells in all believers as the living and ever present Lord.

Genesis 18:1ff.; Psalms 2:7ff.; 110:1ff.; Isaiah 7:14; 53; Matthew 1:18-23; 3:17; 8:29; 11:27; 14:33; 16:16,27; 17:5; 27; 28:1-6,19; Mark 1:1; 3:11; Luke 1:35; 4:41; 22:70; 24:46; John 1:1-18,29; 10:30,38; 11:25-27; 12:44-50; 14:7-11; 16:15-16,28; 17:1-5, 21-22; 20:1-20,28; Acts 1:9; 2:22-24; 7:55-56; 9:4-5,20; Romans 1:3-4; 3:23-26; 5:6-21; 8:1-3,34; 10:4; 1 Corinthians 1:30; 2:2; 8:6; 15:1-8,24-28; 2 Corinthians 5:19-21; 8:9; Galatians 4:4-5; Ephesians 1:20; 3:11; 4:7-10; Philippians 2:5-11; Colossians 1:13-22; 2:9; 1 Thessalonians 4:14-18; 1 Timothy 2:5-6; 3:16; Titus 2:13-14; Hebrews 1:1-3; 4:14-15; 7:14-28; 9:12-15,24-28; 12:2; 13:8; 1 Peter 2:21-25; 3:22; 1 John 1:7-9; 3:2; 4:14-15; 5:9; 2 John 7-9; Revelation 1:13-16; 5:9-14; 12:10-11; 13:8; 19:16.

C. God the Holy Spirit

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

Genesis 1:2; Judges 14:6; Job 26:13; Psalms 51:11; 139:7ff.; Isaiah 61:1-3; Joel 2:28-32; Matthew 1:18; 3:16; 4:1; 12:28-32; 28:19; Mark 1:10,12; Luke 1:35; 4:1,18-19; 11:13; 12:12; 24:49; John 4:24; 14:16-17,26; 15:26; 16:7-14; Acts 1:8; 2:1-4,38; 4:31; 5:3; 6:3; 7:55; 8:17,39; 10:44; 13:2; 15:28; 16:6; 19:1-6; Romans 8:9-11,14-16,26-27; 1 Corinthians 2:10-14; 3:16; 12:3-11,13; Galatians 4:6; Ephesians 1:13-14; 4:30; 5:18; 1 Thessalonians 5:19; 1 Timothy 3:16; 4:1; 2 Timothy 1:14; 3:16; Hebrews 9:8,14; 2 Peter 1:21; 1 John 4:13; 5:6-7; Revelation 1:10; 22:17.

III. Man

Man is the special creation of God, made in His own image. He created them male and female as the crowning work of His creation. The gift of gender is thus part of the goodness of God's creation. In the beginning man was innocent of sin and was endowed by his Creator with freedom of choice. By his free choice man sinned against God and brought sin into the human race. Through the temptation of Satan man transgressed the command of God, and fell from his original innocence whereby his posterity inherit a nature and an environment inclined toward sin. Therefore, as soon as they are capable of moral action, they become transgressors and are under condemnation. Only the grace of God can bring man into His holy fellowship and enable man to fulfill the creative purpose of God. The sacredness of human personality is evident in that God created man in His own image, and in that Christ died for man; therefore, every person of every race possesses full dignity and is worthy of respect and Christian love.

Genesis 1:26-30; 2:5,7,18-22; 3; 9:6; Psalms 1; 8:3-6; 32:1-5; 51:5; Isaiah 6:5; Jeremiah 17:5; Matthew 16:26; Acts 17:26-31; Romans 1:19-32; 3:10-18,23; 5:6,12,19; 6:6; 7:14-25; 8:14-18,29; 1 Corinthians 1:21-31; 15:19,21-22; Ephesians 2:1-22; Colossians 1:21-22; 3:9-11.

IV. Salvation

Salvation involves the redemption of the whole man, and is offered freely to all who accept Jesus Christ as Lord and Saviour, who by His own blood obtained eternal redemption for the believer. In its broadest sense salvation includes regeneration, justification, sanctification, and glorification. There is no salvation apart from personal faith in Jesus Christ as Lord.

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

Repentance is a genuine turning from sin toward God. Faith is the acceptance of Jesus Christ and commitment of the entire personality to Him as Lord and Saviour.

B. Justification is God's gracious and full acquittal upon principles of His righteousness of all sinners who repent and believe in Christ. Justification brings the believer unto a relationship of peace and favor with God.

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

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

Genesis 3:15; Exodus 3:14-17; 6:2-8; Matthew 1:21; 4:17; 16:21-26; 27:22-28:6; Luke 1:68-69; 2:28-32; John 1:11-14,29; 3:3-21,36; 5:24; 10:9,28-29; 15:1-16; 17:17; Acts 2:21; 4:12; 15:11; 16:30-31; 17:30-31; 20:32; Romans 1:16-18; 2:4; 3:23-25; 4:3ff.; 5:8-10; 6:1-23; 8:1-18,29-39; 10:9-10,13; 13:11-14; 1 Corinthians 1:18,30; 6:19-20; 15:10; 2 Corinthians 5:17-20; Galatians 2:20; 3:13; 5:22-25; 6:15; Ephesians 1:7; 2:8-22; 4:11-16; Philippians 2:12-13; Colossians 1:9-22; 3:1ff.; 1 Thessalonians 5:23-24; 2 Timothy 1:12; Titus 2:11-14; Hebrews 2:1-3; 5:8-9; 9:24-28; 11:1-12:8,14; James 2:14-26; 1 Peter 1:2-23; 1 John 1:6-2:11; Revelation 3:20; 21:1-22:5.

V. God's Purpose of Grace

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

All true believers endure to the end. Those whom God has accepted in Christ, and sanctified by His Spirit, will never fall away from the state of grace, but shall persevere to the end.

Believers may fall into sin through neglect and temptation, whereby they grieve the Spirit, impair their graces and comforts, and bring reproach on the cause of Christ and temporal judgments on themselves; yet they shall be kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation.

Genesis 12:1-3; Exodus 19:5-8; 1 Samuel 8:4-7,19-22; Isaiah 5:1-7; Jeremiah 31:31ff.; Matthew 16:18-19; 21:28-45; 24:22,31; 25:34; Luke 1:68-79; 2:29-32; 19:41-44; 24:44-48; John 1:12-14; 3:16; 5:24; 6:44-45,65; 10:27-29; 15:16; 17:6,12,17-18; Acts 20:32; Romans 5:9-10; 8:28-39; 10:12-15; 11:5-7,26-36; 1 Corinthians 1:1-2; 15:24-28; Ephesians 1:4-23; 2:1-10; 3:1-11; Colossians 1:12-14; 2 Thessalonians 2:13-14; 2 Timothy 1:12; 2:10,19; Hebrews 11:39-12:2; James 1:12; 1 Peter 1:2-5,13; 2:4-10; 1 John 1:7-9; 2:19; 3:2.

VI. The Church

A New Testament church of the Lord Jesus Christ is an autonomous local congregation of baptized believers, associated by covenant in the faith and fellowship of the gospel; observing the two ordinances of Christ, governed by His laws, exercising the gifts, rights, and privileges invested in them by His Word, and seeking to extend the gospel to the ends of the earth. Each congregation operates under the Lordship of Christ through democratic processes. In such a congregation each member is responsible and accountable to Christ as Lord. Its scriptural officers are pastors and deacons. While both men and women are gifted for service in the church, the office of pastor is limited to men as qualified by Scripture.

The New Testament speaks also of the church as the Body of Christ which includes all of the redeemed of all the ages, believers from every tribe, and tongue, and people, and nation.

Matthew 16:15-19; 18:15-20; Acts 2:41-42,47; 5:11-14; 6:3-6; 13:1-3; 14:23,27; 15:1-30; 16:5; 20:28; Romans 1:7; 1 Corinthians 1:2; 3:16; 5:4-5; 7:17; 9:13-14; 12; Ephesians 1:22-23; 2:19-22; 3:8-11,21; 5:22-32; Philippians 1:1; Colossians 1:18; 1 Timothy 2:9-14; 3:1-15; 4:14; Hebrews 11:39-40; 1 Peter 5:1-4; Revelation 2-3; 21:2-3.

VII. Baptism and the Lord's Supper

Christian baptism is the immersion of a believer in water in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. It is an act of obedience symbolizing the believer's faith in a crucified, buried, and risen Saviour, the believer's death to sin, the burial of the old life, and the resurrection to walk in newness of life in Christ Jesus. It is a testimony to his faith in the final resurrection of the dead. Being a church ordinance, it is prerequisite to the privileges of church membership and to the Lord's Supper.

The Lord's Supper is a symbolic act of obedience whereby members of the church, through partaking of the bread and the fruit of the vine, memorialize the death of the Redeemer and anticipate His second coming.

Matthew 3:13-17; 26:26-30; 28:19-20; Mark 1:9-11; 14:22-26; Luke 3:21-22; 22:19-20; John 3:23; Acts 2:41-42; 8:35-39; 16:30-33; 20:7; Romans 6:3-5; 1 Corinthians 10:16,21; 11:23-29; Colossians 2:12.

VIII. The Lord's Day

The first day of the week is the Lord's Day. It is a Christian institution for regular observance. It commemorates the resurrection of Christ from the dead and should include exercises of worship and spiritual devotion, both public and private. Activities on the Lord's Day should be commensurate with the Christian's conscience under the Lordship of Jesus Christ.

Exodus 20:8-11; Matthew 12:1-12; 28:1ff.; Mark 2:27-28; 16:1-7; Luke 24:1-3,33-36; John 4:21-24; 20:1,19-28; Acts 20:7; Romans 14:5-10; I Corinthians 16:1-2; Colossians 2:16; 3:16; Revelation 1:10.

IX. The Kingdom

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

Genesis 1:1; Isaiah 9:6-7; Jeremiah 23:5-6; Matthew 3:2; 4:8-10,23; 12:25-28; 13:1-52; 25:31-46; 26:29; Mark 1:14-15; 9:1; Luke 4:43; 8:1; 9:2; 12:31-32; 17:20-21; 23:42; John 3:3; 18:36; Acts 1:6-7; 17:22-31; Romans 5:17; 8:19; 1 Corinthians 15:24-28; Colossians 1:13; Hebrews 11:10,16; 12:28; 1 Peter 2:4-10; 4:13; Revelation 1:6,9; 5:10; 11:15; 21-22.

X. Last Things

God, in His own time and in His own way, will bring the world to its appropriate end. According to His promise, Jesus Christ will return personally and visibly in glory to the earth; the dead will be raised; and Christ will judge all men in righteousness. The unrighteous will be consigned to Hell, the place of everlasting punishment. The righteous in their resurrected and glorified bodies will receive their reward and will dwell forever in Heaven with the Lord.

Isaiah 2:4; 11:9; Matthew 16:27; 18:8-9; 19:28; 24:27,30,36,44; 25:31-46; 26:64; Mark 8:38; 9:43-48; Luke 12:40,48; 16:19-26; 17:22-37; 21:27-28; John 14:1-3; Acts 1:11; 17:31; Romans 14:10; 1 Corinthians 4:5; 15:24-28,35-58; 2 Corinthians 5:10; Philippians 3:20-21; Colossians 1:5; 3:4; 1 Thessalonians 4:14-18; 5:1ff.; 2 Thessalonians 1:7ff.; 2; 1 Timothy 6:14; 2 Timothy 4:1,8; Titus 2:13; Hebrews 9:27-28; James 5:8; 2 Peter 3:7ff.; 1 John 2:28; 3:2; Jude 14; Revelation 1:18; 3:11; 20:1-22:13.

XI. Evangelism and Missions

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

Genesis 12:1-3; Exodus 19:5-6; Isaiah 6:1-8; Matthew 9:37-38; 10:5-15; 13:18-30, 37-43; 16:19; 22:9-10; 24:14; 28:18-20; Luke 10:1-18; 24:46-53; John 14:11-12; 15:7-8,16; 17:15; 20:21; Acts 1:8; 2; 8:26-40; 10:42-48;

13:2-3; Romans 10:13-15; Ephesians 3:1-11; 1 Thessalonians 1:8; 2 Timothy 4:5; Hebrews 2:1-3; 11:39-12:2; 1 Peter 2:4-10; Revelation 22:17.

XII. Education

Christianity is the faith of enlightenment and intelligence. In Jesus Christ abide all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge. All sound learning is, therefore, a part of our Christian heritage. The new birth opens all human faculties and creates a thirst for knowledge. Moreover, the cause of education in the Kingdom of Christ is co-ordinate with the causes of missions and general benevolence, and should receive along with these the liberal support of the churches. An adequate system of Christian education is necessary to a complete spiritual program for Christ's people.

In Christian education there should be a proper balance between academic freedom and academic responsibility. Freedom in any orderly relationship of human life is always limited and never absolute. The freedom of a teacher in a Christian school, college, or seminary is limited by the pre-eminence of Jesus Christ, by the authoritative nature of the Scriptures, and by the distinct purpose for which the school exists.

Deuteronomy 4:1,5,9,14; 6:1-10; 31:12-13; Nehemiah 8:1-8; Job 28:28; Psalms 19:7ff.; 119:11; Proverbs 3:13ff.; 4:1-10; 8:1-7,11; 15:14; Ecclesiastes 7:19; Matthew 5:2; 7:24ff.; 28:19-20; Luke 2:40; 1 Corinthians 1:18-31; Ephesians 4:11-16; Philippians 4:8; Colossians 2:3,8-9; 1 Timothy 1:3-7; 2 Timothy 2:15; 3:14-17; Hebrews 5:12-6:3; James 1:5; 3:17.

XIII. Stewardship

God is the source of all blessings, temporal and spiritual; all that we have and are we owe to Him. Christians have a spiritual debtorship to the whole world, a holy trusteeship in the gospel, and a binding stewardship in their possessions. They are therefore under obligation to serve Him with their time, talents, and material possessions; and should recognize all these as entrusted to them to use for the glory of God and for helping others. According to the Scriptures, Christians should contribute of their means cheerfully, regularly, systematically, proportionately, and liberally for the advancement of the Redeemer's cause on earth.

Genesis 14:20; Leviticus 27:30-32; Deuteronomy 8:18; Malachi 3:8-12; Matthew 6:1-4,19-21; 19:21; 23:23; 25:14-29; Luke 12:16-21,42; 16:1-13; Acts 2:44-47; 5:1-11; 17:24-25; 20:35; Romans 6:6-22; 12:1-2; 1 Corinthians 4:1-2; 6:19-20; 12; 16:1-4; 2 Corinthians 8-9; 12:15; Philippians 4:10-19; 1 Peter 1:18-19.

XIV. Cooperation

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

and when such cooperation involves no violation of conscience or compromise of loyalty to Christ and His Word as revealed in the New Testament.

Exodus 17:12; 18:17ff.; Judges 7:21; Ezra 1:3-4; 2:68-69; 5:14-15; Nehemiah 4; 8:1-5; Matthew 10:5-15; 20:1-16; 22:1-10; 28:19-20; Mark 2:3; Luke 10:1ff.; Acts 1:13-14; 2:1ff.; 4:31-37; 13:2-3; 15:1-35; 1 Corinthians 1:10-17; 3:5-15; 12; 2 Corinthians 8-9; Galatians 1:6-10; Ephesians 4:1-16; Philippians 1:15-18.

XV. The Christian and the Social Order

All Christians are under obligation to seek to make the will of Christ supreme in our own lives and in human society. Means and methods used for the improvement of society and the establishment of righteousness among men can be truly and permanently helpful only when they are rooted in the regeneration of the individual by the saving grace of God in Jesus Christ. In the spirit of Christ, Christians should oppose racism, every form of greed, selfishness, and vice, and all forms of sexual immorality, including adultery, homosexuality, and pornography. We should work to provide for the orphaned, the needy, the abused, the aged, the helpless, and the sick. We should speak on behalf of the unborn and contend for the sanctity of all human life from conception to natural death. Every Christian should seek to bring industry, government, and society as a whole under the sway of the principles of righteousness, truth, and brotherly love. In order to promote these ends Christians should be ready to work with all men of good will in any good cause, always being careful to act in the spirit of love without compromising their loyalty to Christ and His truth.

Exodus 20:3-17; Leviticus 6:2-5; Deuteronomy 10:12; 27:17; Psalm 101:5; Micah 6:8; Zechariah 8:16; Matthew 5:13-16,43-48; 22:36-40; 25:35; Mark 1:29-34; 2:3ff.; 10:21; Luke 4:18-21; 10:27-37; 20:25; John 15:12; 17:15; Romans 12-14; 1 Corinthians 5:9-10; 6:1-7; 7:20-24; 10:23-11:1; Galatians 3:26-28; Ephesians 6:5-9; Colossians 3:12-17; 1 Thessalonians 3:12; Philemon; James 1:27; 2:8.

XVI. Peace and War

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

The true remedy for the war spirit is the gospel of our Lord. The supreme need of the world is the acceptance of His teachings in all the affairs of men and nations, and the practical application of His law of love. Christian people throughout the world should pray for the reign of the Prince of Peace.

Isaiah 2:4; Matthew 5:9,38-48; 6:33; 26:52; Luke 22:36,38; Romans 12:18-19; 13:1-7; 14:19; Hebrews 12:14; James 4:1-2.

XVII. Religious Liberty

God alone is Lord of the conscience, and He has left it free from the doctrines and commandments of men which are contrary to His Word or not contained in it. Church and state should be separate. The state owes to every church protection and full freedom in the pursuit of its spiritual ends. In providing for such freedom no ecclesiastical group or denomination should be favored by the state more than others. Civil government being

ordained of God, it is the duty of Christians to render loyal obedience thereto in all things not contrary to the revealed will of God. The church should not resort to the civil power to carry on its work. The gospel of Christ contemplates spiritual means alone for the pursuit of its ends. The state has no right to impose penalties for religious opinions of any kind. The state has no right to impose taxes for the support of any form of religion. A free church in a free state is the Christian ideal, and this implies the right of free and unhindered access to God on the part of all men, and the right to form and propagate opinions in the sphere of religion without interference by the civil power.

Genesis 1:27; 2:7; Matthew 6:6-7,24; 16:26; 22:21; John 8:36; Acts 4:19-20; Romans 6:1-2; 13:1-7; Galatians 5:1,13; Philippians 3:20; 1 Timothy 2:1-2; James 4:12; 1 Peter 2:12-17; 3:11-17; 4:12-19.

XVIII. The Family

God has ordained the family as the foundational institution of human society. It is composed of persons related to one another by marriage, blood, or adoption.

Marriage is the uniting of one man and one woman in covenant commitment for a lifetime. It is God's unique gift to reveal the union between Christ and His church and to provide for the man and the woman in marriage the framework for intimate companionship, the channel of sexual expression according to biblical standards, and the means for procreation of the human race.

The husband and wife are of equal worth before God, since both are created in God's image. The marriage relationship models the way God relates to His people. A husband is to love his wife as Christ loved the church. He has the God-given responsibility to provide for, to protect, and to lead his family. A wife is to submit herself graciously to the servant leadership of her husband even as the church willingly submits to the headship of Christ. She, being in the image of God as is her husband and thus equal to him, has the God-given responsibility to respect her husband and to serve as his helper in managing the household and nurturing the next generation.

Children, from the moment of conception, are a blessing and heritage from the Lord. Parents are to demonstrate to their children God's pattern for marriage. Parents are to teach their children spiritual and moral values and to lead them, through consistent lifestyle example and loving discipline, to make choices based on biblical truth. Children are to honor and obey their parents.

Genesis 1:26-28; 2:15-25; 3:1-20; Exodus 20:12; Deuteronomy 6:4-9; Joshua 24:15; 1 Samuel 1:26-28; Psalms 51:5; 78:1-8; 127; 128; 139:13-16; Proverbs 1:8; 5:15-20; 6:20-22; 12:4; 13:24; 14:1; 17:6; 18:22; 22:6,15; 23:13-14; 24:3; 29:15,17; 31:10-31; Ecclesiastes 4:9-12; 9:9; Malachi 2:14-16; Matthew 5:31-32; 18:2-5; 19:3-9; Mark 10:6-12; Romans 1:18-32; 1 Corinthians 7:1-16; Ephesians 5:21-33; 6:1-4; Colossians 3:18-21; 1 Timothy 5:8,14; 2 Timothy 1:3-5; Titus 2:3-5; Hebrews 13:4; 1 Peter 3:1-7.

CHURCH BYLAWS

Article One Church Membership

Section 1: General

This is a sovereign and democratic Baptist church under the Lordship of Jesus Christ. The membership retains the exclusive right of self-government in all phases of the spiritual and temporal life of this church.

The membership reserves the exclusive right to determine who shall be members of this church and the conditions of membership.

Section 2: Candidacy

The membership of this church shall consist of such persons as have confessed Jesus Christ to be their Savior and Lord and who have been accepted by vote of the church. Members are received in the following ways:

- 1) By profession of faith in Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior and Scriptural baptism by immersion, or
- 2) By promise of letter of recommendation from another Baptist church of like faith and practice, or
- 3) By candidate's statement of prior conversion experience and baptism by immersion in another Baptist church or from another denomination of like faith and practice.

Section 3: Rights of Members

- 1) Every member of the church is entitled to vote at all church business meetings provided the member is present
- 2) Every member of the church is eligible for consideration by the membership as candidates for elective, appointed, or volunteer offices within the church. However, a relative of a staff member shall not serve as a member of the finance team or personnel team or as a member of any team in which there could be a perceived conflict of interest with the staff member's position. The church reserves the right to disqualify members for leadership positions who do not meet the standards as expressed in our Statement of Faith (Article Two of the Constitution).
- 3) Every member of the church may participate in the ordinances of the church as administered by the church.
- 4) Matters that require a vote by church members as a minimum are:
 - Approval of the annual Church operating budget
 - Approval of ministerial staff search teams
 - Calling of a ministerial staff member as nominated by the search team
 - Expenditures exceeding 5% of any parent category in the Church's annual budget, (with exception of emergencies that impact the welfare of the church)
 - Acquisition or disposition of real estate by the Church
 - Approval of changes to the Church Constitution
 - Approval of new members to join the church
 - Dismissal of members from church membership
 - Any new policies, or changes to existing policies, including but not limited to personnel policies, financial policies or deacon policies.

Section 4: Termination of Membership

Members can be removed from the church rolls for the following reasons:

- 1) Death of a member
- 2) Transfer by letter of recommendation to another Baptist church
- 3) Disciplinary action of this church
- 4) Erasure upon request or proof of membership in a church of another denomination.

Section 5: Discipline

It shall be the practice of this church to emphasize to its members that every reasonable measure will be taken to assist any troubled member. The pastor and deacons will be available for counsel and guidance. The attitude of members towards one another shall be guided by a concern for redemption and restoration rather than punishment. All such proceedings shall be bathed in prayer and exhibit a spirit of Christian kindness and patience. Should some serious condition exist which would cause a member to become a liability to the general welfare and harmony of the church, the pastor and deacons will take prayerful and reasonable measures to resolve the problem following the principles found in Matthew 18:15-17.

Should there be a conflict within the church that involves issues between pastor, staff, deacons and church membership that could destroy or hinder the work of the church, if not resolved then the church will call for an outside mediator to work with the parties involved to make every reasonable attempt to resolve the conflict. The church should request a mediator before the problem escalates to the point it causes a break in the unity, harmony and fellowship of the congregation. If it becomes necessary for the church to take action to exclude a member, a two-thirds vote of the members present is required; and the church may proceed to declare a person to no longer be in the membership of the church.

The church may restore membership to any person previously excluded upon request of the excluded person, and by vote of the church upon evidence of the excluded person's repentance.

Article Two Church Officers

All who serve as officers of this church shall be members of this church. The officers of the church shall be the pastor, ministerial staff, deacons, moderator and trustees. All who serve as ministerial staff of this church shall be subject to the Personnel Policies of First Baptist Church Taylor.

Section 1: Pastor

The pastor is responsible for leading the church to function as a New Testament church. He has the responsibility of leading the congregation, organizations, staff, and teams to perform their tasks. The pastor, assisted by the deacons, is leader of pastoral ministries in the church. The pastor is to proclaim the gospel to believers and non-believers, and he is to lead the church in fulfilling its mission and purpose.

When a vacancy occurs in the position of pastor, a pastor selection team is formed to recommend a suitable pastor to the church. The recommendation of the search team must be

unanimous. This team is elected by the church. It will be a group of five adult church members of both men and women of different age groups with no two being from the same family. Prior to the beginning of the nomination process the personnel team will develop a list of additional qualifications and guidelines for consideration that pertain to the specific search team. The team members will be nominated by church members over a two week period. The nominees must be in agreement to serve before their name can be submitted to the office. These nominees will be voted on at a business meeting by secret ballot by members present. A second committee will be formed in the same manner to search for an interim pastor.

Only one man at a time will be brought before the church to be considered. A two-thirds' majority vote of the church members present and voting shall constitute a call as a pastor. The pastor, when elected, shall serve for an indefinite period of time, until he resigns or the church votes to dispense with his services by a two-thirds' majority vote of those church members present and voting.

The vote to dismiss a pastor must be at a business meeting called for this purpose, with all active resident members notified by mail or publication. When dismissed, the personnel team shall be authorized to negotiate a severance package.

Section 2: Ministerial Staff

Ministerial staff shall be called as the church determines the need for the position. The same procedure used in calling a pastor will be used for calling a ministerial staff member. A job description will be written by the personnel team and approved by the church. At the time of resignation, a ministerial staff member shall give a two-week written notice. In the case of a dismissal, the church can dispense with his or her services by a majority vote of the church members present and voting in any business meeting. The personnel team shall be authorized to negotiate a severance package. When a vacancy occurs for a ministerial staff position, an interim will be recommended by the pastor and the personnel team.

Section 3: Deacons

Deacon qualifications are based on guidelines found in: 1 Timothy 3:8-13. Potential deacons may be nominated by any church member. Nominees will be screened by deacons, and those found to be eligible will be presented to the church for a vote. The church membership will vote their final approval at a business meeting. After approval an ordination service will be scheduled. A deacon previously ordained at another Baptist church who becomes a member of First Baptist Church Taylor may serve as a deacon following the process outlined in the Deacon Policy and Procedures.

Section 4: Moderator

The pastor shall serve as moderator of the church. In the absence of the pastor, the deacon chairman shall serve as moderator. In the absence of both, the vice chairman of the deacons shall serve as moderator.

Section 5: Trustees

The church shall elect three trustees yearly for a rotating term of three years. Trustee nominees will be recommended by the deacons and approved by the church. The trustees shall hold in trust the property of the church. They have no power to buy, sell, mortgage, transfer or lease any property without a specific vote of the church. They will sign all legal documents for the church. At least one trustee must be a deacon.

Article Three Non-Ministerial Staff

All who serve as non-ministerial staff of this church shall be subject to the Personnel Policies of First Baptist Church Taylor. The Personnel Team, in consultation with the pastor and/or supervisor of considered position and in accordance with First Baptist Church personnel policies, procedures and budget guidelines, will have the authority to employ and terminate non-ministerial staff. The non-ministerial staff may request their dismissal be brought before the church for a majority vote by one wishing to appeal the personnel team's dismissal.

Article Four Church Records

All church records are the property of the church and must be kept at the church. All records are open to all members with the exception of individual confidential personnel records and contribution records. The Office Manager shall oversee the keeping of the membership records, all the financial transactions of the church, and shall oversee the payment of all invoices. The financial secretary will be an office staff member, who will be in charge of accounting for all incoming tithes and offerings.

Article Five Church Teams

Church teams comprised of church members will be responsible for performing the tasks and duties necessary to carry out the mission, vision, and core values of the church. Ministerial staff will be ex-officio members of each team as appropriate. The three primary categories of teams are: administrative, ministry, and operational.

Section 1: Administrative Teams

The administrative teams' duties and responsibilities focus on matters that deal with personnel, church finances, and support and guidance for all other church teams. All administrative team members will be elected annually by the church to serve three-year rotating terms.

A. Engagement Team

The Engagement Team responsibilities include: creating qualifications and/or requirements for team leaders and members wishing to serve on First Baptist Church teams; serving as a means of conflict resolution within the First Baptist Church teams; holding annual surveys/interviews with team leaders and team members; providing ongoing team support, and nominating members of Administrative Teams of First Baptist Church teams as needed.

B. Personnel Team

The Personnel Team, in mutual cooperation with the Pastor, shall recommend additional staff positions; prepare and update job descriptions; recruit, interview and

recommend various staff positions; develop and recommend a salary program and associated benefits; and develop, recommend and revise personnel policies and procedures.

C. Finance Team

The Finance Team responsibilities include: reviewing monthly spending/budget reports; approving expenditures outside of budgeted amounts; submitting an annual budget for church approval; and requesting budget input from all teams and assisting those teams as necessary. An itemized account of all receipts and disbursements shall be kept at all times. The team shall provide to the church at each business meeting an itemized report of the receipts and disbursements that occurred during the period between business meetings. The financial records of the church shall be audited annually by a certified public accountant, who is not a church member. The person actually receiving funds and writing checks or paying bills will be bonded. The church will pay the bond.

Section 2: Ministry Teams

Ministry teams support the mission, vision, and core values by performing duties that pertain to educational and outreach programs for adults, youth, and children. Ministry team leaders and members serve for unspecified terms and must meet the qualifications and requirements approved by the church as described in the First Baptist Church Team Manual.

Section 3: Operational Teams

Operational Teams support the mission, vision, and core values of the church by performing duties that pertain to maintaining and regulating the physical properties of the church as well as organizing the church members to provide necessary services during worship services and special programs/events. Operational team leaders and members serve for unspecified terms and must meet the qualifications and requirements approved by the church as described in the First Baptist Church Team Manual.

Article Six Church Ordinances

Section 1: Baptism

This church shall receive for baptism any person who has publicly professed faith in Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior during any worship service, and who indicates a commitment to follow Christ as Lord.

- 1) Baptism shall be by immersion in water
- 2) The pastor, or anyone so designated by the church shall administer baptism
- 3) Baptism shall be administered as an act of worship during any worship service of the church

Section 2: The Lord's Supper

Any individual, who has professed Jesus Christ as Lord may participate. The church shall observe the Lord's Supper at least quarterly, preferably on the first Sunday of the quarter, or as otherwise scheduled. The pastor and deacons shall be responsible for the administration of the Lord's Supper. The deacons shall be responsible for the physical preparations.

Article Seven Church Meetings

Section 1: Worship Services

The church shall meet regularly each Sunday for worship. The pastor shall direct the services.

Section 2: Regular Business Meetings

The church shall hold regular business meetings quarterly.

Section 3: Special Business Meetings

The church may conduct called business meetings to consider matters of special nature and significance. Notice of Special Called Business Meetings must be published and announced at least two weeks before the meeting is to take place, unless extreme urgency makes such notice impractical. The notice shall include the subject, date, time and place; and it must be given in a way that all active resident members have the opportunity to be made aware of the meeting.

Section 4: Quorum

A quorum is no fewer than 25 church members who attend a business meeting that is a stated meeting or one that has been properly called.

Section 5: Parliamentary Rules

Roberts Rules of Order Revised is the authority for parliamentary rules of procedure for all business meetings.

Article Eight Amendments

Changes in the bylaws may be made at any regular business meeting of the church provided each amendment shall have been presented in writing at a previous business meeting and copies of the proposed amendment are made available to all active resident members present. Amendments to the Bylaws shall be by a concurrence of a majority of church members present and voting.