



# CONSTITUTION

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CHURCH COVENANT  
STATEMENT OF BELIEFS  
BY-LAWS

October 13, 2022

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# CONSTITUTION OF FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH HOLTON, KANSAS

This Constitution shall be composed of these parts:

Church Covenant – as common among Baptists

Statement of Beliefs

By-Laws/Articles of Incorporation

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## CHURCH COVENANT

First Baptist Church of Holton, KS solemnly covenants and resolves to be a congregation, which provides for the mutual edification of believers. Its Elders/Pastors do hereby covenant and affirm that they will teach sound doctrine (in accordance with the FBC of Holton Statement of Beliefs) leading to a healthy and growing body of believers, and its Officers and committees do hereby affirm that they will diligently serve the body in practical matters. God has given each local congregation all that it needs to individually and corporately mature and carry out the commands and commissions of our Lord (Col. 4:15). First Baptist Church of Holton will equip the saints for ministry, edifying the body of Christ. As each member of First Baptist Church of Holton has covenanted, so I join them in covenanting and affirming the following:

1. I have repented of my sin and believe and trust in Jesus Christ as Lord (God) & Savior.
2. I have been baptized.
3. I affirm the Statement of Beliefs of First Baptist Church of Holton, KS.
4. I desire to be a member of the First Baptist Church of Holton, KS
5. I affirm and accept the following responsibilities and will fulfill them by the Lord's grace:
  - a. Seek to grow in the grace and knowledge of Christ, especially through prayer and God's Word.
  - b. Support the church with my regular attendance in worship.
  - c. Seek to use my spiritual gift(s) in our church in service to Christ, to the glory of God.
  - d. Joyfully support the church financially, as the Lord leads.
  - e. Be accountable to the church in doctrine and conduct.
  - f. Submit to the loving rule, oversight, and authority of the Elders regarding reproof, instruction, correction, and loving discipline.

Printed Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## STATEMENT OF BELIEFS OF FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH of HOLTON, KANSAS

This statement must be affirmed in order to become a member of First Baptist Church.

Adopted September 2007

### ***1. Scripture***

We believe that every word in the original manuscripts of the Bible (66 books) is the only inspired written revelation given by God himself. It is without error or falsehood, the final source of truth, and the supreme authority on all matters it addresses. The Scripture is to be obeyed in all it requires, and it will be the final standard by which all people will be judged by God. (Prov. 30:5; 2 Tim. 3:16; 2 Peter 1:20,21; Mark 13:31; 1Cor. 2:13; John 8:31,32; John 12:48-49; Acts 20:32; Heb. 6:18)

### ***2. God (the Tri-Unity)***

We believe there is one true God who is almighty and all-knowing, the creator and sustainer of all things, and an infinitely perfect spirit-being eternally existing in three distinct persons: the Father, Son and Holy Spirit. These three are equal in every divine perfection and execute distinct but harmonious roles in the work of creation, providence and redemption. (Gen. 1:1,26; Deut. 6:4; John 1:1,3; 4:24; Matt. 28:19; Acts 20:32; Rom. 1:19,20; Eph. 4:5-6)

### ***3. God the Father***

We believe in God the Father, an infinite personal spirit, perfect in holiness, wisdom, power and love. He infallibly ordains and controls all that shall come to pass. He concerns himself mercifully in the affairs of men, hears and answers prayer, and saves from sin and eternal death all who come to Him through Jesus Christ. (Luke 10:21-22; Matt. 23:9; John 3:16; 6:27; Rom. 1:7; 1 Tim. 1:1-2; 2:5-6; 1 Peter 1:3; Rev. 1:6)

### ***4. Jesus Christ***

We believe that from all eternity Jesus Christ is God's only begotten Son and has precisely the same nature, attributes, and perfections as God the Father and God the Holy Spirit. He is not only true God, but also true man, conceived by the Holy Spirit and born of the Virgin Mary. We believe in His sinless life, substitutionary atoning death, bodily resurrection, and ascension into Heaven. We also believe in His priestly intercession for His people, and His personal, visible return from Heaven to Earth. (Matt. 1:18-25; Luke 1:26-38; John 1:1-14; 20:28; Rom. 9:5; 8:46; 2 Cor. 5:21; 1 Peter 2:21-23; John 20:30-31; Matt. 20:28; Eph. 1:4; Acts 1:11; Rom. 5:6-8; 6:9-10; Heb. 7:25; 9:28; 1 Tim. 3:16)

### ***5. The Holy Spirit***

We believe that the Holy Spirit is true God with all the same nature, attributes and perfections of God. The Holy Spirit's ministry is to glorify the Lord Jesus Christ and to convict the world regarding sin, righteousness and judgment. The Spirit regenerates, indwells, spiritually gifts, guides, instructs, empowers and sanctifies all believers in Christ. We believe that every believer is baptized in the Holy Spirit, which places every believer into the body of Christ, conferring all the benefits and power of being part of Christ. (John 14:16,17,26; 15:26-27; 16:8-14; Rom. 8:9; 1 Cor. 3:16; 6:19; 12:13; Gal. 5:22-26)

## ***6. Humanity***

We believe that God created humanity, male and female, in the image of God and free from sin. God ordained and designed marriage to be a covenantal, procreative, sexual, lifelong union of love between one man and one woman (as determined by genetics at birth) as husband and wife. God's will for all people is chastity outside of marriage and fidelity within marriage. But man sinned, resulting in physical and spiritual death, which is separation from God. As a result, all humans are born with a sinful nature and are also sinners by choice, and so, are under condemnation. Man is not capable of obtaining or working toward salvation, apart from God's grace and forgiveness in Jesus Christ. (Gen. 1:26; 2:17; 3:19; 5:2; Eccl. 2:11; Rom. 3:10-11,23; 5:12-21; 6:23; 1 Cor. 15:21-22; Eph. 2:1).

## ***7. Salvation***

We believe that the shed blood of Jesus Christ and His resurrection provide the only basis for justification and salvation ---for all who believe and trust in Him. Salvation is received by grace alone through faith in Christ, apart from any human merit, good works, or ritual. Those who are regenerated (born again) by God's Spirit, also repent, forsake sin, and trust in and surrender to Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior, so they are new creatures, delivered from condemnation. Through obeying God's Word by the Holy Spirit's power, the believer is able to live a life of increasing holiness and good works, in conformity to Christ and the will and Word of God (sanctification). If a person is truly born again, they have eternal life and cannot then ultimately be lost and condemned. (John 1:12; Acts 2:38,39; 3:19; 4:12; Rom. 3:28; 4:5; 6:1-22; 8:1; 1 Cor. 15:1-4; 12:13; 2 Cor. 5:17; Eph. 2:8-10; 1 Peter 3:18; 1 Thess. 4:3-4; John 5:24; 6:37-40; 10:27-30; Rom. 8:29-33)

## ***8. The Church***

We believe in the universal Church, which is the spiritual body of which Christ is the head. It is composed of persons from all places and times, who through saving faith in Jesus Christ have been regenerated by the Holy Spirit. This body expresses itself in local church assemblies whose members have been baptized --immersed in water-- upon a credible confession of faith, and have associated for worship, instruction, fellowship, giving, service and evangelism. There are two scriptural offices in the church of today: Elders/Pastors and Deacons. (Eph. 2:19-22; 5:19-21; Acts 1:8; 2:42-47; Heb. 10:23-25; Matt. 28:19-20; 1 Tim. 3:1-13; 5:17; Titus 1:5-9; 1 Peter 5:1-4)

## ***9. Christian Conduct***

We believe that the supreme task of every Christian is to live for the glory of God in life and conduct and to be blameless before the world. He should be a faithful steward of all his possessions, which are a gift from God, and he should seek to realize in every area of life the full stature of maturity in Christ. (1 Cor. 4:2; 10:31; 2 Cor. 9:6-9; Rom. 12:1-3; Heb. 12:1-2; John 14:15,23-24; 1 John 2:3-6; Col. 1:9-10)

## ***10. The Ordinances***

We believe that the Lord has committed two ordinances to the local church to be observed during the present age (until Christ returns): baptism and the Lord's Supper. Christian baptism is properly the immersion of the confessing believer (not babies) in water, in the name of the triune God, as a symbol of the believer's identification with Christ's death, burial and resurrection. Christ instituted the Lord's Supper for commemoration of His death. We believe these two

ordinances, however, are not to be regarded as means of salvation. (Matt. 28:19-20; Rom. 6:3-5; 1 Cor. 11:23-26)

### ***11. Religious Liberty***

We believe that every human being is directly responsible to God alone in all matters of faith and life and should be free to worship God according to the dictates of their consciences. Each local church is self-governing in function and must be free from interference by any ecclesiastical or political authority. Therefore, Church and State must be kept separate as having different functions, each fulfilling its duties free from dictation or patronage of the other. However, we believe it is the right and responsibility of believers to influence and participate in civil government in accord with their religious convictions. (1Tim. 2:5; Rom. 14:7-9,12)

### ***12. Church Cooperation***

We believe that local churches can best promote the cause of Jesus Christ by cooperating with one another. (Acts 15:36,41; 16:5; 1 Cor. 16:1; Gal. 1:1-3; Rev. 1:4,10-11). -- The Church may cooperate with interdenominational fellowships on a voluntary independent basis.

### ***13. The Last Things***

We believe in the personal, bodily, visible return of the Lord Jesus Christ from Heaven to Earth to initiate and rule over an earthly kingdom. We believe in the bodily resurrection of the just and the unjust, the final judgment, the believer's everlasting blessedness and joy with the Lord, and the everlasting conscious punishment and suffering of non-believers in hell. (Matt. 16:27; Mark 14:62; John 14:3; Acts 1:11; Phil. 3:20; 1 Thess. 4:15; 2 Tim. 4:1; Titus 2:13; 1 Cor. 4:5; 15; 2 Thess. 1:7-10; Rev. 20:4-6,11-15)

# BY-LAWS OF FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH, HOLTON, KANSAS

## ***ARTICLE I: NAME AND PURPOSE***

### **Section 1: Name**

The name of this church shall be First Baptist Church of Holton, Kansas.

### **Section 2: Purpose**

This church shall maintain services for worshipping God, provide suitable meeting places, and instruct its members in Christian living and the defense and spread of Biblical principles. It adopts the teaching of the Holy Scriptures as all sufficient rules of faith and practice and desires to spread the Gospel of Jesus Christ to the entire world, to the glory of God the Father.

## ***ARTICLE II: RELATIONSHIPS***

This Church is self-governing so far as relates to its internal organization and the regulation of its own affairs.

## ***ARTICLE III: MEMBERSHIP***

### **Section 1: Additions**

Persons may be received as members by vote of the church, on recommendation of the Council of Elders/Pastors at any regularly scheduled meeting of the church. There shall be orientation offered to any new member. All action regarding the addition of members may be done in one of the following ways:

1. Upon confession of faith in Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord and after Believers' Baptism (immersion). In the event that one is not physically able to proceed in Believers' Baptism (immersion), then it is left to the discretion of the Council of Elders/Pastors as to what to do.
2. Upon receipt of a letter from another church of like faith and order and upon Believers' Baptism (immersion).
3. Upon statement of Christian experience: Conversion, Believers' Baptism (immersion) and evidence of change life.
4. Restoration

### **Section 2: Removal**

1. By transfer of letter to another church (mailed to the pastor or clerk of that church).

2. Any member who shall unite with another church without a letter of dismissal shall be dropped from the roll.
3. Any member who is guilty of consistent breach of church covenant vows shall be counseled in love by a member of the Council of Elders/Pastors. If faithful efforts do not bring about repentance, the Elders/Pastors shall consider suspension or removal from church membership. In all cases such persons shall be notified in writing of their right to be fully heard if they so desire. All such dismissals shall be upon the decision of the Council of Elders/Pastors and presented to the church in regular or special business meetings.

### **Section 3: Inactivity**

1. It shall be the responsibility of the Council of Elders/Pastors to reach out toward all who become inactive so they may be restored to active fellowship.
2. Determination of the active vs. inactive status of any member shall be a responsibility of the Elders/Pastor(s), who shall consider any member inactive, who has not attended services or been active in the church in any way for approximately six months.
3. Only active members shall have the right to vote in church business meetings.

## ***ARTICLE IV: OFFICERS, ADMINISTRATORS, AND COMMITTEES***

### **Section 1: Officers and Administrators**

1. The Officers of this church shall be the Council of Elders/Pastors, and Deacon Body.
2. The Administrators shall be: The Clerk, Treasurer, and Financial Secretary.
3. All must be members of the church.

### **Section 2: Election of Officers, Administrators, and Membership on Standing Committees**

1. The church membership upon nomination by the Council of Elders/Pastors, and proper consideration period, and a vote at a duly called class A church meeting, shall call Elders/Pastors for an indefinite period, and shall call Deacons for a normal period of three (3) years.
2. Administrators who shall serve as Clerk, Treasurer, and Financial Secretary will be elected annually with no term limit.
3. The Standing Committees are: Children's Ministry, Missions, and Trustees. Each Standing Committee member shall be elected for a term of three (3) years, not subject to re-election to the same committee for a full three (3) year term until one (1) year shall



have elapsed. If elected to fill out a vacancy, one may be re-elected to a full term. For the re-elected second term after filling a vacancy, that second term for any standing Committee member is subject to the Elder's nominating process and cannot exceed five (5) consecutive years. Standing Committee members will be elected by a church vote at a duly called meeting, and should be presented to the church as nominees four Sundays prior to the vote. The chairman of the Council of Elders/Pastors shall normally be held by the Lead Teaching Pastor/Elder.

- A. The Council of Elders/Pastors shall consist of at least two (2) members, with the number of lay (unpaid) Elders/Pastors ideally being at least equal to the number of professional (paid) Elders/Pastors.
- B. The Standing Committee of Trustees shall consist of at least four members plus the treasurer.
- C. The Standing Committee of Children's Ministry shall consist of at least three members including the Sunday School Superintendent.
- D. The Mission Standing Committee shall consist of at least three members.
- E. Committees or Deacons may suggest to the Elders the establishment of other committees they feel are needed to do the work of the Lord in our church --which the Elders/Pastors may approve and establish as they see fit. The Elders/Pastors may also ask and appoint people to serve on all non-standing committees as they see fit.
- F. All committees are open to both men and women; with ideally one third of the members of each standing committee being elected each year, plus persons to fill such vacancies as may occur --as nominated by the Council of Elders and then duly elected by the church.
- G. No person shall be elected to serve on more than one committee at a time. Husbands and wives should not be elected to the same committee; however, it is good for husband-wife teams to serve as team teachers or on committee responsibilities.
- H. The Business Agenda Committee shall be made up of the Lead Teaching Elder/Pastor, the Moderator, Clerk, Treasurer, and the Chairperson of each standing committee. It shall be the responsibility of each member, in the event of his/her absence from a meeting, to appoint, a suitable representative, and an appointed Assistant Treasurer may attend in the place of the Treasurer if the Treasurer is unable to attend.
- I. Special Committees
  - 1. The Council of Elders/Pastors shall --as they see fit-- appoint various special committees to serve until a special task is finished or as decided at the time of their appointment. Special committees may include the following, but the Elders

may create others from time to time as needed: Building, By-Law, and Capital Funds.

2. The Nominating Committee shall consist of the Council of Elders/Pastors, plus any other church members as the Elders may request and appoint.
  3. The Pulpit Committee - for the selection of vocational pastors - shall consist of the Council of Elders/Pastors, plus any other church members as the Elders / Pastors may request and appoint.
4. Qualifications and Selection of Elders and/or Pastors
- A. Gifted by God – An Elder/Pastor must be a man who has been gifted by God to serve in the gospel ministry. (1 Tim. 3:1) The following are evidences of such gifting:
    1. Confirmation of the gifting to the ministry by other believers (2 Tim 2:1-2; 3 John 1:12)
    2. Possession of the abilities necessary to serve
    3. A deep desire to serve (1 Tim 3:1).
    4. A lifestyle characterized by moral integrity (Titus 1:6-9; 1 Peter 5:1-3)
  - B. Active Membership & Confessional Agreement — An Elder/Pastor must be an active member of the church who affirms and adheres to the membership covenant of this church (Hebrews 10:25). Additionally, he must affirm with very minor or no exceptions to this Church’s Statement of Beliefs. If exceptions are taken, they must be deemed biblically defensible and acceptable to the Elder body. If exceptions develop at a later date they too must be acceptable to the Elder body.
  - C. Biblical Qualifications — An Elder/Pastor must possess the qualifications described in 1 Tim. 3:1-7 and Titus 1:6-9; 1 Peter 5:1-4. He shall be:
    1. Blameless as a steward of God; above reproach.
    2. A “one-woman man,” has a considerable history of purity and faithfulness to his wife.
    3. Temperate, sober, vigilant.
    4. Able to be serious and sensible, having sound judgment.
    5. Given to hospitality.
    6. Apt to teach; able to teach; has a track-record of teaching the Bible.
    7. He can exhort believers and refute false teaching.
    8. Not given to wine or other intoxicants.
    9. Not violent; nor combative attitude.
    10. Patient, forbearing, gentle.
    11. Not contentious; not easily angered or quick-tempered.
    12. Not covetous; not a lover of money; not greedy.

13. Rules his own household well. His children are faithful; not accused of rebellion against God.
14. Not a new convert.
15. Has a good report or reputation with outsiders.
16. Not self-willed; is a team player.
17. Just, fair.
18. Holy; committed to Christ.
19. Self-controlled.
20. Heart of a shepherd.
21. A willing spirit to lead.
22. Not a domineering spirit or prideful attitude.
23. A good example to others.

#### D. Selection of Elders/Pastors

1. Some Elders may be called “Pastors,” but all Elders are equal in authority—including lay Elders. In Scripture, the Elder or Pastor is the same office.
2. Elder Selection Process —The process by which Elders are nominated and appointed to the body of Elders is as follows:
  - a. The Elders shall set aside men that they determine have met the qualifications and gifting of the office of Elder. The Elders may consult about these men under consideration and meet with them before an interview board comprised of present Elders and any other members they may request. In those cases where the Council of Elders concludes that a nominee is not qualified for office they shall so inform the nominee stating the reasons for this conclusion.
  - b. As they see fit, the Elders shall then make it known to the church that an individual has been “nominated,” and is being considered as a candidate for the office of Elder.
  - c. Upon this nomination, the Elders shall call a special class “A” meeting —with the required notice— for the purpose of a formal vote and affirmation of the congregation regarding the man under consideration. (A 2/3s majority vote is necessary for affirmation.)
  - d. For a period of time, not less than thirty days, the congregation will have the opportunity to prayerfully consider the nominee’s qualifications for the office of Elder. If members for any reason feel that the nominee may be unqualified (Titus 1:7), they should go to him in love and discretion and privately discuss their concerns (Matt. 18:15-18). If after a discussion with the nominee, the members feel that their concern is unresolved, then they should approach the Elders with their concern. During the time that a man is under consideration, there are several options:

- i. The man under consideration can withdraw himself from consideration and the process will cease.
- ii. The Elders may deem the man unqualified for whatever reason and the process will cease. The nominee must be given reasons for this conclusion.
- iii. The man and the Elders agree that the process should continue.
- e. After prayerful consideration of the congregation, the Elders shall vote and make known their decision regarding the confirmation of the man's nomination.
- f. Upon Elder and congregation confirmation, the man shall immediately assume his position as an Elder/Pastor.

E. The Number of Elders/Pastors - The number of Elders/Pastors shall be at least two, and there shall ideally be at least as many lay Elders/Pastors as vocational (paid) Elders/Pastors. Additional Elders/Pastors shall be as many as are qualified and needed to carry out the ministry of Elders in the church. The Council of Elders/Pastors shall determine that number.

#### F. The Term of Elders/Pastors

- 1. The term of office for an Elder shall be as long as he is qualified, capable, and desirous of fulfilling the duties of an Elder. There may be periods of sabbatical for Elders to rest from regular Elder's meetings and certain amounts of ministry; e.g. one year off after six years of active service.
- 2. If an Elder has become unqualified biblically –e.g. because of doctrine or behavior issues- they will be approached by the other Elders to make reconciliation. If the Elder refuses to seek reconciliation or it is a sin that will affect his example to the body, it shall be by a vote of the Elders that he will be removed from the position of Elder in this church (Matthew 18:15-17), and the Elder in question will not have a vote in the matter. Furthermore, if a majority of the Elders feel the Lord is leading to find a new Lead Teaching Pastor, they may vote according to the Elders' decision-making process described herein to terminate the tenure of the current Lead Teaching Pastor in order to seek a new Lead Teaching Pastor.

#### G. Responsibilities and Authority of Elders/Pastors

- 1. To Spiritually Shepherd the Church
  - a. To preach and/or teach God's Word –especially pertaining to the Lead Teaching Pastor (Acts 6:2-4; 1 Tim.5:17; 2 Tim.4:2)

- b. To biblically administer the ordinances of the gospel
  - c. To oversee, manage and approve all aspects of worship services and other church meetings, including all speakers, programs, music and musicians.
  - d. To pray for the church, themselves and others (Acts 6:4).
  - e. To maintain doctrinal purity in the church (Gal.1:6-9; 1 Tim.1:3-7; Jude 3-4).
  - f. To equip and prepare the membership of the church in the Bible and for the work of the ministry (Eph.4:12), and to oversee all church teaching.
  - g. To reprove, rebuke, and exhort the church with great patience (2 Tim.4:2; Titus 9-11).
  - h. To be examples in the church (1 Pet.5:3).
2. To Govern and Oversee All the Affairs of the Church (1 Tim.5:17)
- a. To establish policies, practices, and doctrine for the church, and its properties, that are consistent with scripture and the purpose/vision of the church (1 Tim.3:4-5).
  - b. To interview all persons desiring to become members of the church and then recommend them to the church to accept into membership.
  - c. To administer church discipline in a scriptural fashion as necessary.
  - d. The Vice-Chairman of the Elders shall be the Moderator of the church. In his absence, any one of the Elders shall act as the moderator.
  - e. Authority to bind the church. - Both the Chairman and Vice-Chairman of the Elders are together normally the only officers who have the authority, in accordance with these by-laws, and any applicable laws, to execute (sign) legal documents binding on the church, or relating to church finances (such as loans) and to the purchase, sale, rental, transfer, etc. of real estate, church property – previously proposed by the Elders and then voted on, passed and confirmed by a church vote. If other signatures are required, then the other Elders may then also have authority to bind the church legally.
  - f. To nominate any Elders/Pastors to be voted on by the church body in accordance with the selection process established in these by-laws. This includes the nomination of the Lead Teaching Pastor/Elder or other paid Pastors (Titus 1:5).
  - g. To nominate all officers, administrators and committee members as described in these by-laws. All officers, administrators and committees are directly responsible to the Elders and shall work under their oversight.
  - h. To maintain open communication within the church body.
  - i. The Elders have the authority to create or dissolve any committees it deems helpful to the work of the church, and to delegate any committee responsibilities it deems appropriate. They have authority to ask and appoint any church members

to be members or chairpersons of such committees. Every committee shall have a chairperson. The Elders may approve active non-members to belong to non-standing committees.

H. Organization of Elders/Pastors - The Council of Elders/Pastors shall organize itself however it determines to be best to achieve the mission of the Church. The Elders /Pastors shall be equal in authority but may be specialized in function, such as preaching/teaching. The Elders/Pastors will meet at least monthly. Meetings of the Elders/Pastors may be held at any location and may be conducted by means of electronic communication through which the Elders may simultaneously hear each other. Unless the Council provides otherwise, meetings of the Council may be held immediately upon notice. A quorum for meetings of the Elders/Pastors is defined as at least one-half of the lay Elders plus at least one-half of the vocational elders, except for matters on which only lay Elders are entitled to vote in which case a majority of the lay Elders shall constitute a quorum. The Council shall have the Lead Teaching Pastor as its Chairman, and the Elders shall select their Vice-Chairman annually from among their number.

I. Elders' Decision-Making Process - Decisions shall be reached after prayerful consideration in a spirit of humility, with each Elder regarding one another before himself. Many matters may be decided by mutual prayer, discussion and agreement, without a formal vote. If a vote is deemed necessary, each matter will be voted on twice, unless the first vote is unanimously in favor, or  $\frac{1}{4}$  of the Elders vote "no," as described below. If there are less than 4 members on the Council of Elders, a simple majority is required to make a decision.

1. When a decision is made by the Elders, the decision-making process will be as follows:

a. Vote 1:

- i. If all the Elders vote "yes," the answer is "yes," and the matter is settled.
- ii. If  $\frac{1}{3}$  of the Elders vote "no," the answer is "no," and the matter is settled.
- iii. If any Elder votes "no," but there are not enough "no" votes to settle the matter, then a second vote will be taken at a later time.
- iv. Before the second vote is taken, additional prayer, information, discussion, godly counsel, and time as needed, will be allowed to go over the matter at hand.

b. Vote 2:

- i. If  $\frac{2}{3}$  of the Elders vote "yes," then the decision is "yes," and the matter is settled.
- ii. If less than  $\frac{2}{3}$  of the Elders vote "yes," then the decision is "no," and the matter is settled.
- iii. The Elders all agree that a final decision on any specific matter will be determined by the second vote.

2. Statement of unity: Any decision made using the above decision-making process will be a unified “yes” or “no” decision. All Elders agree to be unified in the final decision, “yes” or “no,” in public and in private, even though it may not totally agree with their personal preference and vote(s) (Acts 15:6-22).

## 5. Deacons: Composition, Qualification and Selection of Deacons

- A. Composition, Term and Calling – The Deacons may be both men and/or women. The number of Deacons shall be determined as the Elders determine by the needs of the ministry and by the call and qualification of men and women in the church. Each Deacon shall be called to a normal term of three years by a vote of the membership of the church in a duly called business meeting, conducted as provided in these By-Laws.
- B. Qualifications of Deacons – Deacons and nominees for Deacon shall be qualified as specified in the Bible. Relevant texts include 1 Timothy 3:8-12 and Acts 6:3.
- C. Active Membership & Confessional Agreement — A Deacon must be an active member who affirms and adheres to the membership covenant of this church (Hebrews 10:25). Additionally, he/she must affirm with little or no exceptions to this church’s Statement of Beliefs. Any variance in this must be referred to the Elders.
- D. Deacon Selection Process
  1. When the Elders determine that there is a need for additional Deacons, it shall evaluate, ask and nominate men or women who are biblically qualified for service.
  2. Then the Elders will allow the congregation to consult and interact with those nominees for no less than four weeks before the vote, in view of installing them as Deacons.
  3. After this period of review, the Elders shall prayerfully consider each nominee, and as God leads, shall put the nominees up for a vote at a duly convened class “A” business meeting, in which Deacons must be confirmed as called to serve by a 2/3 majority vote.
- E. Deacons’ Body – There shall be a Body of Deacons in order to best serve the church. The Deacons shall choose from among their number a Chairman and a Vice-Chairman, as approved by the council of Elders/Pastors. The Deacons should also have a secretary to keep records. The Body of Deacons should meet once a month if practicable. The Deacons’ meeting may be held at any location and may be conducted by means of electronic communication through which the Deacons may simultaneously hear each other. A quorum for meetings of the Deacons is defined as at least one-half of their number.

- F. Responsibilities – Deacons are to work and serve alongside and under the oversight of the Elders/Pastors, to serve the temporal needs of the church. Their various ministries to the church body may include:
1. Benevolence Fund – the Body of Deacons shall administer a “Deacons’ fund” to assist the needy (esp. of the church) and providing other aid in times of crisis or distress.
  2. Worship Assistance – The Deacons may divide into serving groups, and shall (under the oversight of the elders) manage the greeting, welcoming and ushering ministries, especially pertaining to worship services. They shall assist the Elders by preparing the ordinances of the Gospel, namely: the Lord’s Supper elements and water for baptisms.
- G. Other Deacon Services – The Elders may organize various groups of Deacons to serve the church body in such other ways as the Elders see fit.

### **Section 3: General Duties of Administrators and Committees**

All officers and standing committee members of the church are required to be members of the church, and expected to attend Sunday worship services, and to support the church program. Any committee member, who is absent from regularly scheduled meetings of that committee for three consecutive times without being excused for good cause, shall be dropped from such membership. Any person who is absent as much as half of the meetings of a committee during any year for any reason shall be replaced by due process. Each committee is encouraged to meet each month on a regular schedule. All committee members are encouraged to attend business meetings as an example to the church. If an Elder deems it necessary or expedient, he may direct that any committee matter –decided or undecided-- be deferred to the Council of Elders for a final decision.

1. Moderator

The Vice-Chairman of the Elders shall be the Moderator who shall preside over all church business meetings to preserve order, propose questions, regulate the proceedings, and declare the votes. In the absence of the Moderator, one of the other Elders shall be the acting Moderator. The Moderator shall preside at the meetings of the Business Agenda Committee and in cooperation with the Elders/Pastors, shall be responsible for introducing matters of business and interest that shall be presented to the Business Agenda Committee which shall prepare an agenda for each business meeting.

2. Clerk

The Clerk must be a member of the church and shall be responsible for recording accurate minutes of the business meetings of the church, with copies of agendas and any handouts provided to members during the meeting for their consideration and attached to said minutes. Minutes of previous meeting should be presented for church approval. The Clerk should notify members of time and location of meetings not on the schedule. The Clerk shall preserve at the church all church records and documents. The Clerk shall keep a correct



register of the membership with the dates and manner of the addition or subtraction, and at the Annual Business Meeting of the church shall submit a statistical report of the membership for the past year. The Clerk will also keep minutes of the Business Agenda Committee Meetings. The Clerk is also responsible for updating approved changes to the by-laws.

3. Trustees Committee

The Trustees Committee shall understand and administer the finances of the church under the oversight of the elders. The Trustees shall endeavor to maintain or improve the church building(s) and properties, and shall be the manager of its business interests. The Trustees shall along with the treasurer prepare and submit a recommended annual budget to the Council of Elders, who may adjust it (and send it back to the Trustees) and then propose it to the church for approval by a vote at the annual meeting. The Trustees may make a decision up to \$2000 without bringing it to the Elders and up for a vote at a church business meeting, but must report on such at the business meeting. Requests for use for church buildings for other than its own meetings must come first to the Trustees but may be taken on to the Elders who may decide on it. All special funds are to be established by presenting a proposal first to the Elders and then to the trustees, with final approval by vote of the church. The Trustees shall appoint or hire a yearly audit of the books. Authority to bind the church: Both the Chairman and Vice-Chairman of the Elders (and another Elder if another signature is required) are together the only officers who have the authority, in accordance with these by-laws, and any applicable laws, to execute (sign) legal documents relating to real estate, church property, and church finances. If other signatures are required, the other Elders are also authorized to bind the church.

4. Treasurer

The Treasurer must be a member of the church and shall pay such bills as shall be approved by the trustees, transfer all mission money as provided by the church budget, and keep careful records of all transactions. Regular reports are to be made to the Council of Elders and business meetings, with copies provided to those present and to be attached to the minutes. Disbursements made by check are to be signed by two approved signees, including the Treasurer. Disbursements made by automatic debit shall be approved by the Trustee Committee before taking effect. The Treasurer shall attend and be a voting member of the Trustees. If needed an Assistant Treasurer may be appointed to help the Treasurer, with the approval of the trustees and the Elders/Pastors.

5. Financial Secretary

The Financial Secretary must be a member of the church and shall receive all money and collections contributed toward church budget items and other approved special funds belonging to the corporation, and shall count along with a representative of the Trustees, record, and deposit them to the credit of the church in a bank selected by the Trustees, furnishing a duplicate of said deposit to the Treasurer. The Financial Secretary shall keep confidential records of all pledges made, the payments made thereon, and shall send out statements as deemed advisable or as directed by the Trustees, under whom he/she shall function in carrying out the duties of his/her office. The Financial Secretary shall make regular reports to the church on the amount received through pledges, loose offering, special offerings, special gifts or contributions and the number of givers of record. This report is to

be in conjunction with the Treasurer's report. The Financial Secretary may appoint an assistant, with the approval of the Trustees and the Elders/Pastors.

6. Children's Ministry Committee

The Children's Ministry Committee shall be responsible for the organization, administration, and supervision of the elementary-age and pre-school educational program of the church. It shall make decisions concerning time schedule, educational use of space and equipment, the elimination or addition of classes or related groups. This committee shall—subject to approval of the Elders/Pastors-- be responsible for discovering, enlisting, training, and appointing church educational workers and church school teachers for the children. (Teachers must be 18 years of age and members of the church. Helpers do not have to be members of the church.) The committee may suggest curriculum, and then the Elders/Pastors are responsible for evaluating and approving the curriculum of the educational programs of the children of the church. The committee shall be responsible for preparing and administering the educational budget of the elementary classes of the church. The committee shall also oversee all children's programs (such as Christmas, etc.).

7. Sunday School Superintendent

The Superintendent shall be one of the members of the Children's Ministry Committee. The role of the Sunday School Superintendent is to see that the elementary education program functions effectively in sharing the gospel with the use of curriculum material approved by the Elders/Pastors. The Superintendent shall keep track and record Sunday School attendance. He/she shall assist teachers on Sunday morning and be prepared to find a substitute if a teacher is missing on Sunday morning. The Superintendent orders Sunday School materials as approved by the Council of Elders/Pastors and oversees the Sunday School Promotion Sunday.

8. Business Agenda Committee

The Business Agenda Committee shall meet prior to each regularly scheduled business meeting or at the call of the Elders/Pastors or the Moderator prior to any special business meeting to create an agenda for that meeting. This committee shall see that an agenda of all regularly scheduled business meetings are available to the church the Sunday prior to the business meeting.

9. Missions Committee

The Missions Committee shall be responsible for promoting, educating, and mission money dispersal for the church. This shall be put toward gospel minded mission projects, setting up times for missionary phone calls and appearances, planning and participation in mission work trips, and expanding the mission involvement of the church locally and worldwide.

#### **Section 4: Resignation or Removal of Officers**

1. Resignation – An officer may resign his office at any time if he finds he is no longer able or willing to discharge the duties of the office, and such resignation should be submitted to the Elders/Pastors. The resignation of an Elder/Pastor or Minister shall be considered at any time by the church upon the presentation of the Elder's/Pastor's or Minister's

resignation.

2. Grievance – Where a grievance exists against an officer of the church, the offended person should deal with the grievance according to the process described in Mat. 18:15-20. If unresolved, the grievance may be brought in person before the Council of Elders/Pastors by at least two witnesses in good standing, following the procedure prescribed in 1Tim. 5:19. If the Elders, after thorough investigation and consideration, believe the grievance to be true and substantial, then the officer may be removed from office (and possibly disciplined) upon the decision of the Council of Elders/Pastors according to their decision-making process described in these by-laws.

## ***ARTICLE V: CHURCH EMPLOYEES***

In addition to Vocational Elders/Pastors and Ministers, the church may employ additional personnel. The moneys for such personnel must be proposed by the Trustees and Elders, and approved by the congregation at a properly called business meeting. The Council of Elders shall be responsible for determining the duties of and hiring/firing and overseeing such personnel. Such personnel may include a church office secretary, a church custodian, grounds keeper, etc. All resignations must be submitted to the Elders.

## ***ARTICLE VI: MEETINGS***

### **Section 1: Meetings**

Meetings for worship, study and prayer shall be held regularly on Sundays and such other times as may be decided from time to time. The tithes and offerings of the members are to meet the financial obligations of the church. All members are expected to live up to their covenant obligations as part of their worship.

### **Section 2: Business Meeting**

1. The Annual Business Meeting has the chief purpose of presenting the budget and slate of nominees for the following year. It shall be held on the first Wednesday after the first Thursday of December. Annual reports will be presented at this meeting.
2. Regular Business Meetings shall be planned for the months of April, July, and October. When possible, the meeting will be scheduled for a Sunday afternoon in conjunction with a church-wide meal. If the proposed agenda does not have sufficient business matters that would necessitate the church to meet, the Elders and Trustees will have the option to forego the planned meeting, resuming agenda business matters at the next scheduled business meeting.
3. Special Business Meetings shall be called by the Elders/Pastor(s) or Moderator. Written notice shall be provided to active members and said notice shall indicate the purpose of the meeting. In addition, at least one announcement of such meeting shall be made from

the pulpit at a Sunday morning service.

4. Business meetings shall be of two classes, “A” or “B”, in which active members 16 years of age or older may vote. Class “A” meetings require a quorum of twenty-five members. A class “A” meeting –with prior notice of four Sundays- must be called when voting on a Pastor/Elder or Deacon, voting on indebtedness, acquisition or sale of real estate, purchase or sale of church property worth more than \$2,000, establishing or amending the Budget, and by-law changes. The Annual Business Meeting is always a class “A” meeting. Class “B” meetings require a quorum of fifteen members and may consider whatever is appropriate.
5. If ever a quorum is not present, the meeting may be rescheduled for the following Wednesday night where a quorum of twenty members for class “A” and ten members for class “B” is required.
6. Votes at class “A” meetings, requiring a 2/3 majority vote, shall be by counted ballot and recorded in the minutes.
7. Any meeting may be changed to a class “A” meeting if notification is given to the church four Sundays prior to the meeting.
8. These by-laws do not provide for absentee ballots.

## ***ARTICLE VII: RESIGNATION OF A PASTOR (LEAD TEACHING ELDER)***

### **Section 1: Resignation**

In case of the resignation of the Lead Teaching Pastor/Elder, he shall, if at all possible, give thirty days’ notice to the Council of Elders/Pastors.

### **Section 2: Dismissal**

In the event a member or members of the church desire the resignation of the Lead Teaching Pastor/Elder, this becomes the business of the Council of Elders/Pastors, who shall deal with the issue prayerfully, as God leads.

## ***ARTICLE VIII: INTERIM PASTOR***

In the absence of a regular Lead Teaching Pastor/Elder, it shall be the responsibility of the Council of Elders/Pastors to teach/preach themselves or find a suitable pastor/teacher to serve in an interim capacity. It shall be the responsibility of the Trustees to recommend the salary and other considerations concerning an Interim Pastor.

## ***ARTICLE IX: AMENDMENTS***

### **Section 1: Requirements**

These rules of order may be revised by a two-thirds vote of the members present at any class “A” business meeting, provided the revision has been first approved by the Elders, who would then submit it to the church in writing four Sundays prior to such meeting.

### **Section 2: Individual Recommendations**

Any individual active member may recommend changes by submitting a proposal in writing to the Council of Elders who may speak to the member and others in the church about the recommendation and consider the change. Then they may submit it to the church 4 Sundays prior to a class “A” business meeting where a vote may occur.

## ***ARTICLE X: PROPERTY RIGHTS AND DISSOLUTION OF THE CHURCH***

The members and attendees of this church (including any officers) individually have no property rights in the assets of this church. This church may vote to dissolve itself, which shall require the approval of two-thirds of the members present at a class “A” business meeting legally called by the Council of Elders/Pastors for this purpose. Upon the dissolution of First Baptist Church of Holton, Kansas, the Trustees shall, after paying or making provision for payment of all liabilities and missionary commitments of the church, distribute the remaining assets and property of the church according to the vote of the majority of the church’s members present at said class “A” business meeting, to Christian church(es) and/or missionary organization(s) which qualify as tax-exempt organizations. The same voting majority may likewise direct that mementos and items with historical significance may be donated to a person(s) or organization(s) for preservation.

### Revisions

October 13, 2022

October 9, 2019

December 12, 2018

October 10, 2018

July 20, 2016

February 20, 2014 (approved by IRS)

October 10, 2012

January 11, 2012

July 19, 2011

July 7, 2010

June 3, 2010

March 2010

1998