

**The By-Laws of  
First Baptist Church of Perry, Inc.  
1105 Main Street  
Perry, GA 31069  
478-987-2002**

**Effective March 1, 2009**

**BYLAWS OF FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH OF PERRY, INC.**

**TABLE OF CONTENTS**

**INTRODUCTION AND PURPOSE**.....7

Article I      **NAME**.....7

Article II     **DEFINED TERMS**.....7

Article III    **CHURCH AUTHORITY**.....10

Article IV    **CHURCH POLITY AND RELATIONSHIPS**.....10

                  Section 1.    A Georgia Nonprofit Corporation.....10

                  Section 2.    Registered Office and Registered Agent.....10

                  Section 3.    Cooperative Relationships.....10

Article V      **CHURCH MEMBERSHIP**.....11

                  Section 1.    Candidacy for Church Membership.....11

                  Section 2.    Acceptance of New Church Members.....11

                  Section 3.    Rights, Duties and Responsibilities of Members.....12

                  Section 4.    Conditions of Membership.....13

                  Section 5.    Termination of Membership.....13

                  Section 6.    Separation of Membership.....13

Article VI     **CHURCH ORDINANCES**.....14

                  Section 1.    Baptism.....14

                  Section 2.    The Lord’s Supper.....14

Article VII    **CHURCH MEETINGS AND ASSEMBLIES** .....14

                  Section 1.    Worship Services.....15

                  Section 2.    Business Meetings.....15

                  Section 3.    Notice and Posting for Business Meetings.....16

	Section 4. Regular Business Meetings.....	16
	Section 5. Special Business Meetings.....	16
	Section 6. Business Meeting Procedures.....	17
	Section 7. Major Issue Meetings.....	17
	Section 8. Parliamentary Rules.....	17
	Section 9. Voting at Business Meetings.....	18
	Section 10. Business Meeting Minutes.....	18
Article VIII	<b>DEACONS AND THE DIACONATE</b> .....	18
	Section 1. Roles.....	18
	Section 2. Qualifications.....	19
	Section 3. Number.....	19
	Section 4. Terms.....	20
	Section 5. Nomination.....	20
	Section 6. Election.....	21
	Section 7. Ordination.....	21
	Section 8. Discipline.....	21
	Section 9. Vacancies.....	21
	Section 10. Meetings and Officers.....	22
Article IX	<b>THE PASTOR</b> .....	22
	Section 1. Role.....	22
	Section 2. Qualifications.....	22
	Section 3. Duties.....	22
	Section 4. Discipline.....	23

	Section 5. Breach or Impairment of Office.....	23
	Section 6. Vacancy in Office.....	23
	Section 7. Procedure upon Vacancy.....	24
	Section 8. Duties of the Pastoral Transition Team.....	25
	Section 9. Interim Pastor.....	25
	Section 10. Pastor Search Team.....	26
	Section 11. Selection of Pastoral Candidates.....	26
	Section 12. Presentation of a Pastoral Candidate to the Church.....	26
Article X	<b>MINISTERS AND DIRECTORS</b> .....	27
	Section 1. Qualifications and Duties.....	27
	Section 2. Selection of Ministers.....	27
	Section 3. Selection of Directors.....	27
	Section 4. Church Support Staff.....	28
Article XI	<b>INTERIM PASTORAL STAFF</b> .....	28
	Section 1. Qualifications, Duties and Selection.....	28
Article XII	<b>LAITY LEADERSHIP ROLES</b> .....	29
	Section 1. Organizational Coordinators, Dept. Directors, Teachers.....	29
	Section 2. Church Officers.....	29
	Section 3. Nominations, Elections, Vacancies of Church Officers.....	29
	Section 4. The Board of Trustees.....	30
	Section 5. Moderator.....	30
	Section 6. Treasurer and Assistant Treasurers.....	30

	Section 7. Church Clerk and Recording Secretary.....	31
	Section 8. Church Messengers.....	31
	Section 9. Sunday School.....	32
	Section 10. AWANA and AWANA Commander.....	32
Article XIII	<b>STANDING COMMITTEES</b> .....	32
	Section 1. Definitions, Responsibilities and Names.....	32
	Section 2. Qualifications of Standing Committee Members.....	33
	Section 3. Duties of the Nominating Committee.....	33
	Section 4. Nomination and Election of the Nominating Committee.....	33
	Section 5. Terms and Vacancies of the Nominating Committee.....	34
	Section 6. Duties of Other Standing Committees.....	34
	Section 7. Nomination and Election of Other Standing Committees.....	34
	Section 8. Terms and Vacancies of Other Standing Committees.....	34
	Section 9. Committee Officers and Duties.....	35
Article XIV	<b>SPECIAL COMMITTEES</b> .....	35
	Section 1. Definition, Responsibilities and Names.....	35
	Section 2. Qualifications of Special Committee Members.....	36
	Section 3. Nomination and Election of Special Committee Members.....	36
	Section 4. Terms and Vacancies.....	36
	Section 5. Special Committee Officers and Duties.....	36
Article XV	<b>MINISTRY TEAMS</b> .....	37
	Section 1. Definition, Responsibilities and Names.....	37
	Section 2. Ministry team Coordinators.....	37
Article XVI	<b>LEADERSHIP COUNCIL</b> .....	38

	Section 1. Function.....	38
	Section 2. Members.....	38
Article XVII	<b>CHURCH COUNCIL.....</b>	<b>38</b>
	Section 1. Function.....	38
	Section 2. Members.....	39
	Section 3. Chairperson.....	39
Article XVIII	<b>CHURCH OPERATIONS AND POLICY MANUALS.....</b>	<b>39</b>
	Section 1. Operations and Policies.....	39
Article XIX	<b>CHURCH FINANCE.....</b>	<b>39</b>
	Section 1. Fiscal Year.....	39
	Section 2. General Policy Relating to Budget.....	40
	Section 3. Budget.....	40
	Section 4. Financial Control and General Administration.....	40
	Section 5. Accounting Procedures.....	40
Article XX	<b>BYLAW CHANGES AND CONFLICTS.....</b>	<b>40</b>
	Section 1. Bylaw Changes.....	41
	Section 2. Conflicts with Bylaws.....	41
Article XXI	<b>AMENDMENT TO THE ARTICLES OF INCORPORATION.....</b>	<b>41</b>
Article XXII	<b>MISCELLANEOUS.....</b>	<b>42</b>
Article XXIII	<b>EFFECTIVE DATE.....</b>	<b>42</b>

**BYLAWS**

**OF  
FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH OF PERRY, INC.**

## INTRODUCTION AND PURPOSE

Our ultimate desire is to bring glory to God through this Church by leading people to know and experience Jesus Christ. The purpose of these *Bylaws* is to help us accomplish the tasks of this Church “decently and in order” (*1 Corinthians 14:40*), and in an effective and efficient manner that is good stewardship of our time, gifts and resources.

## ARTICLE I. NAME

Our congregation shall be known as First Baptist Church of Perry, Inc., a Southern Baptist Church, (hereinafter “the Church”). We are divinely created and led, unified and empowered by the Spirit of God Himself. God designs our relationship to one another like a “body” (*1 Corinthians 12:11-27, Ephesians 4:15, 16*), connected to one another and dependent on one another. We have each been placed by God into this Church, His Body, to accomplish a specific function. Thus, the life and health of His Body depends on each of us participating fully and cooperatively.

## ARTICLE II. DEFINED TERMS

For purposes of these *Bylaws*, the following words or phrases have the meanings set forth below and are inserted for explanation only:

**Annual Church Profile** — a yearly statistical report compiled by each cooperating Church in the Southern Baptist Convention listing the number of baptisms, membership additions and transfers, financial data, average attendance totals for various Church programs, etc. This report is sent to the Rehoboth Baptist Association, the Georgia Baptist Convention and the Southern Baptist Convention.

**Approval or Election by the Church** — approval by more than half (a simple majority) of the Church members present and voting at a business meeting after proper notice has been given. Unless stated otherwise in these *Bylaws*, all issues will be decided by a simple majority vote.

**Approval or Election by a 2/3 vote of the Church** — approval by 2/3 or more of the Church members present and voting at a business meeting after proper notice has been given.

**Approval or Election by a 3/4 vote of the Church** — approval by 3/4 or more of the Church members present and voting at a business meeting after proper notice has been given.

**Articles of Faith** — the stated beliefs of the First Baptist Church as contained in the *Constitution of First Baptist Church*.

**Articles of Incorporation** — a legal document that describes the Church’s non-profit corporation and its trustees (Board of Trustees) under the laws of the State of Georgia. *The Articles of Incorporation* supercedes all other rules including the *Bylaws*.

**Baptist Church of like faith and practice** — a sister Baptist Church whose beliefs and practices are similar to this Church’s.

**Board of Trustees (Board of Directors)**— the persons designated by the Church to be the officers and directors of the First Baptist Church, Incorporated. Their duties are described in the Articles of Incorporation and the *Bylaws*.

**Biblical Orthodoxy** — agreement with Holy Scripture and the Church’s Articles of Faith.

**Business Meeting** — a meeting (regular or special) in which the business of the Church is conducted after proper notice has been posted to the Church membership.

**Bylaws** — the document that contains the Church’s basic rules for self-government.

**Church** — the membership of the First Baptist Church.

**Church Covenant** — a scriptural-based covenant that describes the commitment of each Church member to the Lord, fellow Church members and the world.

**Church Members** — any person who has met all the qualifications for membership and has been approved for membership by the affirmation of the Church.

**Church Officers** — Moderator, Clerk, Treasurer, Assistant Treasurers, Board of Trustees.

**Church Staff** — employees (part time or full time) of the First Baptist Church.

**Church Support Staff** — All church staff other than Pastor and Pastoral Staff

**Fiscal Year-** beginning January 1 and ending December 31

**Church Year-** beginning September 1 and ending August 31

**Concurrence** — agreement with a recommendation for approval by a three-fourths vote of a quorum of a Church body (e.g. Diaconate).

**Congregation** — the assembled membership of First Baptist Church.

**Constitution** — the document that contains the Church’s Mission Statement, Articles of Faith and the Church Covenant.

**Deacons** — those members of the Church who have been ordained as a deacon by this Church or a Baptist Church of like faith and order.

**Deacon/Active Deacon-** a deacon currently serving on the Diaconate.

**Diaconate** — the body of active deacons, affirmed by the Church to be servants of the Church, who have been ordained as deacons in this Church or a Baptist Church of like faith and order and who are Church members.

**Directors** — Pastoral staff members who lead major Church programs. Directors are not required to be licensed or ordained.

**Ex-Officio** — a member of a committee who has the right, but not the obligation, to participate in committee or Diaconate proceedings, is not counted in the quorum and is not eligible to vote.

**Issue a Call** — an invitation to serve God as an employed member of the Pastoral staff.

**Laity-** Members of the church who serve the church in an unpaid status as an exercise of their spiritual gifts and their ministry before the Lord.

**Ministers** — Pastoral staff members who lead major Church programs. Ministers are either licensed or ordained.

**Mission Statement** — the purpose of First Baptist Church.

**Notice** — the oral or written publication of the date and time of each business meeting.

**Posting** — the process whereby notice is given to the Church (e.g. newsletter, announcement in a regularly-scheduled worship service, etc.).

**Pastoral Staff** — employed ministers and directors of the Church (other than the Pastor).

**Personal Faithfulness** — personal adherence to the ethical and spiritual qualifications of a New Testament Church leader.

**Plan of Merger, Consolidation or Dissolution** — the written, regulatory plan developed by the trustees to ensure the orderly merger, consolidation or dissolution of the Church.

**Quorum** — those Church members in attendance at a business meeting after proper notice has been issued.

**Recently Served Deacon**— served this Church within the last two(2) years.

**Sunday School Council-** consists of the directors of all Sunday School departments.

**Troubled Deacon** — a deacon who engages in divisive or factious behavior, or a deacon who is unrepentant and flaunting a lifestyle of known sin or a deacon who no longer meets the qualifications of a deacon as described in Scripture (*I Corinthians 5:9-13; I Timothy 3:8-13; Titus 3:10*).

**Troubled Member** — a member who engages in divisive or factious behavior, or a member who is unrepentant and flaunting a lifestyle of known sin (*I Corinthians 5:9-13; Titus 3:10*).

### ARTICLE III. CHURCH AUTHORITY

The Bible, God's inerrant and infallible Word, is the final authority for all matters of faith and practice in the Church. The governance of The First Baptist Church of Perry is vested in the body of believers who compose it, and its Constitution and By-Laws preserve the liberties of each individual Church member. The final authority and power to manage its functions, activities, programs, and all the facets of the Church's operations rest with its members. Each member shall seek through earnest prayer and reasoned discussion to ensure that the Church governs itself in accordance with the *Bible* and the Core Values espoused in our *Constitution* and that the Church remains free from the control or supervision of any other ecclesiastical or denominational body or from any governmental control or influence. The members of the Church, through these *Bylaws*, shall have the exclusive right to determine the requirements of Church membership.

#### **ARTICLE IV. CHURCH POLITY AND RELATIONSHIPS**

##### **Section 1. A Georgia Nonprofit Corporation**

For legal purposes, the Church is organized under the Georgia Nonprofit Corporation Code.

##### **Section 2. Registered Office and Registered Agent**

The registered office of the Church shall be the Church office. The registered agent of the Church is the Corporate President. As provided by Article XII, section 12.4 of these Bylaws, the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) shall be the Corporate President. The Chief Financial Officer (CFO) shall be the Corporate Treasurer. The Secretary (SEC) shall be the Corporate Secretary. The registered agent of the Church may be changed by a majority vote of the Board of Directors.

##### **Section 3. Cooperative Relationships**

This Church shall be affiliated with the Rehoboth Baptist Association, the Georgia Baptist Convention, and the Southern Baptist Convention. It shall not establish or maintain affiliation with any body whose faith and practice violate the principles of faith and practice found in the *Bible* or our *Constitution*.

#### **ARTICLE V. CHURCH MEMBERSHIP**

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

##### **Section 1. Candidacy for Church Membership**

5.1 Any person may offer himself/herself as a candidate for membership at any worship

service. The names of all such candidates shall be presented to the Church at the next regular business meeting for granting of membership in any of the following ways:

- (a) Professing a personal belief and faith in Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord, accepting the promises and commands of Scripture, being baptized by immersion, subsequent to, and as a non-essential to, salvation.
- (b) Transfer of membership from a Baptist Church of like faith and practice.
- (c) By statement, affirming membership in another Baptist Church of like faith and practice, even though the person is unable to provide a record of membership in such Baptist Church.
- (d) With respect to a person coming from another denomination, upon statement, professing a personal belief and faith in Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord, accepting the promises and commands of Scripture, being baptized by immersion, subsequent to and as a non-essential to salvation, if they have not done so previously.
- (e) With respect to a person who, for reasons of health or other circumstances, cannot physically attend the Church or be baptized, may be accepted by proxy after professing a personal belief and faith in Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord, accepting the promises and commands of Scriptures.

## **Section 2. Acceptance of New Church Members**

- 5.2(1) Following counseling to confirm that the candidate is qualified for membership, the candidate becomes a Church member by approval of the Church. Upon approval by the Church the candidate's membership shall be considered retroactive to the date the member first offered themselves as a candidate pursuant to section 5.1 above.
- 5.2(2) Questions about a candidate's qualifications for membership in the Church shall be referred to the Pastor or in his absence the chairman of deacons within thirty (30) days for investigation and the making of a recommendation to the Church. A three-fourths vote of those Church members present and voting shall be required to elect such candidates to membership.
- 5.2(3) Candidates for membership and new members should attend the Church Membership Class to learn and understand the privileges and responsibilities of members to God and the Church.

## **Section 3. Rights, Duties and Responsibilities of Members**

- 5.3(1) All Church members are exhorted to attend services of the Church on a regular basis, to

freely and systematically give their tithes and offerings for the support of the Church and its ministries, to share in the work of the Church as it seeks to fulfill the Great Commission, and by their testimony in word and deed, to reflect the Lordship of Jesus Christ.

- 5.3(2) Every member of the Church may participate in the Lord's Supper.
- 5.3(3) Every member is entitled to vote at all elections and on all questions submitted to the Church in business meeting, provided the member is present.
- 5.3(4) Every member of the Church may be considered by the membership as a candidate for elective offices and positions of ministry in the Church according to the eligibility identified in the *Bylaws* and/or policies of this Church.
- 5.3(5) Each Church member should seek to resolve all conflicts with other members in accordance with Scripture. (*Galatians 6:1, 1 Corinthians 5:1-5, Mathew 18:15-17*)
- 5.3(6) God has used His people throughout all recorded time to accomplish His work. Some have been called to lead others under His guidance and authority. Apart from God's grace, forgiveness, and restoration, no one would qualify for redemption, much less for their roles of leadership in His Church. Church leaders have the opportunity and responsibility to model a maturing relationship with Christ and a quality of ministry that God expects of every Christian. Therefore, the Church seeks and asks those "who are known to be full of the Spirit and wisdom" and "full of faith" (*Acts 6:3,5*) to serve. This work of service requires leaders such as officers, trustees, coordinators, deacons, directors, teachers, committee members and ministry team members. Each of these positions gives members of this Church the opportunity to serve God with their spiritual gifts and talents in their God-designed place for the building up of the body of Christ (*1 Corinthians 12:11-27*).

#### **Section 4. Conditions of Membership**

- 5.4(1) As a condition of membership, each Church member covenants to waive his/her right to require a partition of any or all of the Church property.
- 5.4(2) As a condition of membership, and upon approval by the Church, each Church member covenants to abide by the terms of a Church-approved plan of merger, consolidation or dissolution if invoked.

#### **Section 5. Termination of Membership**

- 5.5(1) Membership in this Church may be terminated as follows:
  - (a) Death of a member.

- (b) Transfer of membership letter to another Church of like faith and order. (Such letter shall not be given directly to the individual.).
- (c) Written evidence by the member confirming membership in another Church.
- (d) By erasure, when a written, personal request to withdraw from membership is presented.
- (e) Exclusion by Church separation as provided in Section 6 of this Article.

**Section 6. Separation of Membership**

If through biblical discernment, (*1 Corinthians 5:9-13; Titus 3:10*) the Pastor and the officers of the Diaconate determine that the conduct of a troubled member brings reproach to the name of Christ or division within the Church, the Pastor and the officers of the Diaconate shall recommend separation of the troubled member from the Church in accordance with Scriptural principles as follows:

- (a) An attempt shall be made to counsel or minister to the troubled member in a spirit of love and compassion, so that the troubled member may repent and remain in the fellowship of the Church (*Matthew 18:15-17; Galatians 6:1*). The privacy of the troubled member shall be respected as much as may be reasonably possible.
- (b) If the troubled member remains unrepentant, the matter may be brought to the Church. (*Matthew 18:17*)
- (c) No troubled member may be separated from membership in the Church without the Church member's consent, except by a vote of the Church (*2 Corinthians 2:6*).
- (d) Upon satisfactory evidence to the Pastor and officers of the Diaconate of the excluded person's repentance and reformation, the Church may restore to membership any person previously excluded, upon request of the excluded person by a vote of the Church (*2 Corinthians 2:5-8*).

**ARTICLE VI. CHURCH ORDINANCES**

**Section 1. Baptism**

This Church shall receive for baptism any person who has received Jesus Christ as Savior by personal faith, who has professed Him publicly at any worship service, and who indicates a commitment to follow Christ as Lord..

- (a) Baptism shall be by immersion in water.
- (b) The Pastor, or whomever the Church shall authorize, shall administer baptism. The Baptismal Ministry Team shall assist in the preparation for, and the observance of, baptism.

(c) Baptism shall be administered as an act of worship during any worship service of the Church.

(d) A person who has professed Christ and has not been baptized after a reasonable length of time shall be counseled by the Pastor and/or staff or deacons. If negative interest is ascertained on the part of the candidate, he or she shall be deleted from those awaiting baptism.

## **Section 2. The Lord's Supper**

The Lord's Supper is a symbolic act of obedience whereby believers, through partaking of the bread and fruit of the vine, commemorate the death of Jesus Christ and anticipate His coming.

(a) The Lord's Supper shall be observed quarterly, preferably the fifth Sunday of the quarter, or as otherwise scheduled.

(b) The Pastor and the deacons shall be responsible for the administration of the Lord's Supper.

(c) The Lord's Supper Ministry Team shall be responsible for the physical preparation of The Lord's Supper.

## **ARTICLE VII. CHURCH MEETINGS AND ASSEMBLIES**

The Church will assemble faithfully to accomplish its mission (Hebrews 10:25). These meetings will include worship, teaching, ministry, fellowship and business. We gather to honor God and accomplish His work. To do this requires our individual preparation in time with God, seeking to know Him, His will and His ways. We do this by being still before Him in prayer and reading His Word. Our assembling is our affirmation of God's authority in our lives individually and collectively and our desire to submit ourselves to the Father's will as Christ taught and demonstrated.

### **Section 1. Worship Services**

7.1(1) The Church shall meet regularly for worship each Sunday morning, Sunday evening and Wednesday evening. Any other activity or assembly of the Church that furthers Christ's Kingdom may be held at any reasonable time or place.

7.1(2) All worship services of the Church will be under the direction of the Pastor or his designee.

7.1(3) The Pastor or his designee, after consultation with the Deacon chairman or his designee, may cancel or postpone any service for reasonable cause or for special events.

- 7.1(4) The Scriptural ordinance of the Lord's Supper, led by the Pastor or his designee, shall be regularly and faithfully observed by the Church, for the spiritual edification of its membership and other believers of like faith and order.
- 7.1(5) Anyone may attend the worship services of the Church so long as the person's behavior or actions are not disruptive or deceptive.

## **Section 2. Business Meetings**

- 7.2(1) Any business of the Church, which requires approval by and through its members, shall be conducted on the Church premises at business meetings called to order only after proper notice and posting have been issued as provided by sections 3, 4, 5 and 7 of this Article.
- 7.2(2) The Church clerk (or the clerk's designee) shall be responsible for determining and certifying to the Moderator that proper notice and posting have been issued before any business meeting is called to order.
- 7.2(3) The following items shall be presented to the Diaconate for concurrence and to the Church for approval in a business meeting.
- (a) The budget.
  - (b) Any matter which may significantly affect the Church, or its ministries.
  - (c) The purchase and/or lease of real and/or personal property or the purchase and/or lease of equipment, which is not included in the budget.
  - (d) The divestiture of real and/or personal property or the sale of any equipment whose appraised value exceeds \$1,000; any transfer of property shall have prior approval of the Board of Trustees.
  - (e) The creation of and/or assumption of any loan, lease or encumbrance.
  - (f) Amendments to the *Constitution, Bylaws* or *Articles of Incorporation* except as otherwise provided herein.
  - (g) The plan of merger, consolidation or dissolution and any amendments thereafter; any matter related to disassociation of the Church from the Southern Baptist Convention, the Georgia Baptist Convention or the Rehoboth Baptist Association, any merger or consolidation with any other Baptist convention, fellowship, or association.
  - (h) The recommendation to call a Pastor, interim Pastor, Pastoral staff member, an interim Pastoral staff member, or the recommendation to create a new Pastoral staff position.

## **Section 3. Notice and Posting for Business Meetings**

- 7.3(1) Notice is the oral and written publication of the date and time of each business meeting.
- 7.3(2) Posting is the process whereby notice is given to the Church. Posting may include, but is not limited to, publication of notice in the order of service, newsletter, announcements

from the pulpit, and by any means that reasonably provides the members with notice of the meeting.

**Section 4. Regular Business Meetings**

- 7.4(1) Regular business meetings shall normally be held the fourth (4) Sunday each month. The agenda shall be circulated and made known to the Church one (1) week prior to the business meeting.
- 7.4(2) The Church clerk (or the clerk's designee) shall post the notices at least ten (10) days prior to a regular business meeting.

**Section 5. Special Business Meetings**

- 7.5(1) Any two of the following: the Pastor, the Chairman or Vice-Chairman of the Diaconate or a member of the Board of Trustees may call a special business meeting to consider significant, emergency, or other business matters which reasonably cannot be delayed until a regular business meeting. Notwithstanding the above, a majority of the Diaconate may call a special business meeting.
- 7.5(2) Only those matters which have been reasonably described with sufficient detail to fairly inform Church members of the business to be conducted may be voted on at a special business meeting. Notice of a special business meeting shall be given in a regularly scheduled worship service and the business meeting shall be held no sooner than the next regularly scheduled worship service.

**Section 6. Business Meeting Procedures 1 Corinthians 14:40**

- 7.6(1) The Moderator shall preside over all business meetings, except as otherwise provided in the *Bylaws*.
- 7.6(2) If the Church is without a Moderator, the Chairman or Vice Chairman of the Diaconate shall serve as the Moderator of business meetings. If the Chairman or Vice Chairman of the Diaconate cannot serve, the Church clerk shall convene the business meeting and a Moderator shall be elected from the floor.
- 7.6(3) The Moderator shall ensure that the Diaconate has been informed, the appropriate Church committee(s) and church leadership council have properly reviewed any matter presented on the agenda.
- 7.6(4) The Moderator shall appoint a qualified person to serve as the parliamentarian for a business meeting, if necessary.
- 7.6(5) Prior to the members casting a vote on a matter, the recommendation of the appropriate

Church committee(s), and the Diaconate (if required), shall be presented orally and in writing to the Church for consideration.

- 7.6(6) No person or group of persons shall have the authority to enter into any legally binding agreement or contract for this Church without prior approval by the Church in a meeting lawfully assembled in accordance with either Section 4 or Section 5 above.

**Section 7. Major Issue Meetings**

Any issue which is to be voted on by the Church and which is considered to have a strong and evident potential for a division of the membership, may be declared to be a major issue by a majority vote of the members present and voting. When declared a major issue, the issue shall be publicized for two consecutive Sundays, with a vote being taken on the third Sunday immediately after the morning worship service. When the issue involves a proposed change in policy, practice, or doctrine, a vote by at least two-thirds (2/3) of a majority of the members present and voting shall be required to adopt the change.

**Section 8. Parliamentary Rules.**

*Robert's Rules of Order*, as amended, shall be the parliamentary authority for all business meetings, ministry team meetings, Diaconate meetings and any other meeting of the Church requiring parliamentary procedure. These *Bylaws* and the Holy Scripture shall prevail if there is any conflict with *Robert's Rules of Order*.

**Section 9. Voting at Business Meetings**

- 7.9(1) The members in attendance at any regularly scheduled or properly announced special business meeting shall constitute a quorum.
- 7.9(2) An official act of the Church requires the approval of a majority of those members present and voting except as otherwise specified in these *Bylaws*.
- 7.9(3) When a vote is to be held, the Moderator, at his discretion, may call for a secret ballot. If a secret ballot is held, the Moderator shall appoint a committee to assist in the counting of the ballots. The Moderator shall certify the ballot count and be responsible for reporting the results of the vote to the Church.

**Section 10. Business Meeting Minutes**

The Church clerk shall ensure that minutes of all business meetings are prepared and secured in a safe place. A copy of the minutes of each business meeting shall be filed in the Church office within fifteen (15) days after the meeting in which they are approved.

## ARTICLE VIII. DEACONS AND THE DIACONATE

### Section 1. Roles

#### 8.1(1) Servants of the Church

The primary role of the deacon is to serve Christ's Church and to promote love and unity among the Church Body. A spirit of brotherhood and common purpose, a good reputation characterizes a deacon, being full of the Holy Spirit and wisdom, supporting and affirming the Pastor's leadership, and instilling unity by example in the Church while ministering to the needs of the members. Deacons shall be "known to be full of the Spirit and wisdom" and "full of faith" (*Acts 6:3,5*). The office of Deacon is one of two offices of the Church (along with the Pastor) recognized in the New Testament (*Philippians 1:1*).

#### 8.1(2) The Role of the Diaconate in Ministry

- (a) Deacons serving on the Diaconate are servants of the Church specializing in ministry by serving on standing and special committees, ministry teams, directing or teaching in Church programs and by visiting the sick, the bereaved and the homebound.

#### 8.1(3) The Role of the Diaconate in Business Matters

- (a) The responsibility of the Diaconate in the business activities of the Church, after consultation with the Pastor, is to recommend to the Church such policies, practices, and procedures as are advisable to accomplish the mission of the Church as detailed in Holy Scripture.
- (b) The counsel of the Diaconate shall be consulted by the laity leadership if the service of their respective positions results in differences of opinion that require resolution. The laity leadership shall be bound by the decision of the Diaconate when presented. Should the diaconate fail to provide resolution, the matter shall be presented to the church for consideration at the next regular business meeting.
- (c) Recommendations which are outside the regular or ordinary course of business or which have not been reviewed by a committee shall be presented to the Diaconate for concurrence prior to such recommendations being presented to the Church for consideration at a business meeting.
- (d) The concurrence of the Diaconate shall be required on those business items referenced in Section 7.2(3) of these bylaws. (Business meetings)

**Section 2.           Qualifications**

- 8.2(1)       A deacon shall meet the scriptural qualifications found in *1 Timothy 3:8-13 and Acts 6:1-8*.
- 8.2(2)       Church requirements of a deacon are to be faithful in Bible study and prayer, attendance and participation in the worship services and ministries of First Baptist Perry, tithing of his time, talents and possessions. Expanded understandings of the Church requirements for deacons are contained in the Deacon Handbook.
- 8.2(3)       Deacon candidates shall be at least 21 years old prior to his nomination and have been a member of this Church for at least one year.
- 8.2(4)       Each deacon shall affirm his support for the Church's Constitution and the Baptist Faith and Message as listed in the Constitution and the Bylaws.

**Section 3.           Number**

- 8.3(1)       The number of Deacons serving on the Diaconate shall be determined by the Church based on a recommendation by the Pastor with the concurrence of the Diaconate.
- 8.3(2)       Any change in the number of deacons serving on the Diaconate shall be accomplished at the next regularly scheduled Diaconate election by adding or omitting the necessary vacancies to provide for such change in the number of active deacons.

**Section 4.           Terms**

- 8.4(1)       Deacons shall be elected to serve a term of three (3) years, except when necessary to accomplish the purposes of Section 3 and paragraph 8.4(4) of this Article. The term of any deacon to serve less than three years to accomplish said purposes shall be determined by the Diaconate.
- 8.4(2)       Upon completion of a three (3) year term, a deacon may not serve again until one (1) year has elapsed since the completion of his most recent term.
- 8.4(3)       If a deacon has been appointed or elected to fill an unexpired term of one (1) year or less due to a vacancy on the Diaconate, he may be elected to serve a succeeding three (3) year term. However, in no event shall a deacon serve more than four (4) consecutive years on the Diaconate.
- 8.4(4)       Each year the assigned term of office of one-third (1/3) of the number of active deacons shall expire. An election shall be held annually to fill the vacancies created by this

rotation and/or any change in the number of deacons on the Diaconate pursuant to Section 8.3(1) of this article.

## **Section 5. Nomination**

- 8.5(1)a One week prior to Deacon nomination (last Sunday in April) the Pastor will give a sermon on Deacon qualifications. A list of Church and scriptural qualifications will be available to the Church at this time.
- 8.5(1)b A list of all deacons currently serving and their terms of office shall be available at all times in the Church office. The nomination process will begin the first Sunday in May lasting through the third Sunday in May. Members of the Church may nominate any man whom they feel meets the Biblical orthodoxy and personal faithfulness required for service as a deacon. Nominations shall be made in writing and submitted to Chairman of the Deacons. A list of all prospective nominees shall be provided by the Chairman of the Deacons to the Pastor.
- 8.5(2) Pursuant to section 8.5(1)b of this article, the month of June will be used to evaluate the nominees' qualification and willingness to serve. A list of scriptural qualifications and Church requirements as listed in 8.2(1) and 8.2(2) will be mailed out to all nominees along with a letter of instruction from the Chairman of The Deacons. The nominee will have two weeks to respond as to his willingness to serve. The Diaconate will interview each responding nominee and provide clarification and/or counseling as necessary. Consenting to these requirements the nominee will be endorsed by the Diaconate and presented to the Church for election as provided herein.
- 8.5(3) Qualified nominees not elected will receive a letter from the Deacon Chairman and Pastor thanking them for their willingness to serve.

## **Section 6. Election**

- 8.6(1) Deacons shall be elected to fill vacancies on the Diaconate on an annual basis. This election shall be conducted on the fourth Sunday in July immediately following each regular morning worship service.
- 8.6(2) The list of deacon nominees shall be published and made readily available to the Church members for two weeks in advance of the next Diaconate election.
- 8.6(3) Ballots listing the qualified nominees will be distributed to all members present no sooner than the designated Sunday morning service for deacon elections. Ballots shall be collected immediately following the election and tabulated by the Diaconate. The number of nominees corresponding to the number of vacancies to be filled who receive the most votes shall be declared to be elected as deacons and shall be announced to the members in a worship service.

## **Section 7. Ordination**

- 8.7(1) Upon election, a deacon candidate not previously ordained in a Baptist Church of like faith and practice shall be questioned by a committee of ordained deacons and ministers as to his biblical orthodoxy and personal faithfulness.
- 8.7(2) The Ordination committee shall recommend to the Church those men elected to serve who meet the requirements of a deacon for immediate ordination in a worship service. Until ordination, a deacon may attend meetings of the Diaconate, but may not vote on matters before the Diaconate for consideration.

**Section 8. Discipline**

A deacon who fails to conform to the spiritual qualifications of a deacon or the principles of faith and practices of the Church, may be disciplined or separated from the Diaconate. Deacon discipline shall be determined by the Diaconate, in a spirit of love and compassion, tempered with justice, in accordance with the principles of Holy Scripture and the provisions of these bylaws. The privacy of a troubled deacon will be respected as much as is reasonably possible according to the circumstances surrounding his discipline.

**Section 9. Vacancies**

When a deacon is no longer able to serve due to death, incapacity, resignation, removal, or is no longer a member of this Church, the Diaconate shall determine whether or not the unexpired term of said deacon shall be filled prior to the next regular Diaconate election, and if so, the Diaconate shall determine the process by which such vacancy shall be filled.

**Section 10. Meetings and Officers**

- 8.10(1) The Diaconate and the Pastor shall meet on a regular basis. Active deacons are expected to attend all Diaconate meetings. Attendance by church and staff members shall have prior approval.
- 8.10(2) The deliberations of the body shall be maintained privately between the pastor and active deacons. The Diaconate shall keep minutes of their meetings and secure them in a safe place.
- 8.10(3) The Diaconate shall annually elect officers from among themselves including, but not limited to, a Chairman, Vice-Chairman and a Secretary.

**ARTICLE IX. THE PASTOR**

**Section 1. Role**

The Church affirms that the Lord Jesus Christ is the Head of the Church. With the assistance of the Holy Spirit, the Church shall call a qualified man to serve as its Pastor. The Pastor shall be God's under-shepherd and overseer of the Church and shall apply, teach, and proclaim God's Word in an unfettered manner, in order to nourish, strengthen, and guide the Church.

**Section 2. Qualifications**

- 9.2(1) The Pastor shall meet the qualifications of a Pastor found in *1 Timothy 3:1-7, Titus 1:7-9*, be ordained by this Church or a Baptist Church of like faith and practice and conform to the Articles of Faith of this Church.
- 9.2(2) As the spiritual and temporal head of the Church, the Pastor is accountable to God and the Church with respect to his personal life, his duties and his responsibilities as Pastor.

**Section 3. Duties**

- 9.3(1) The Pastor, or his designee(s), shall administer regularly the Ordinances of Baptism and the Lord's Supper in accordance with Scripture and in a manner that fulfills the spiritual needs of the Church.
- 9.3(2) The Pastor shall be the overseer of the ministries and programs of the Church and shall supervise directly or by delegation all Church staff members.
- 9.3(3) The Pastor shall work with the Diaconate, councils, committees and Church ministries in ministering to the spiritual and physical needs of the Church and the community.

**Section 4. Discipline**

The Pastor shall be counseled in the same manner as any other troubled member with a concern for redemption rather than punishment. If a breach of trust has occurred, the officers of the Diaconate and the chairman of the personnel committee shall counsel the Pastor to determine the extent of the damage of the pastoral witness. In cases where the breach of trust has not irreparably damaged the Pastor's witness or ministry the officers of the Diaconate and the chairman of the personnel committee shall recommend remedial or disciplinary action for the correction of the Pastor. Where gross misconduct has occurred they shall recommend to the Diaconate that the office of the Pastor be declared vacant.

**Section 5. Breach or Impairment of Office**

- 9.5(1) Believing that the person holding the office of Pastor cannot be the overseer of the Church if he has breached the scriptural qualifications of the office of the Pastor, or is physically or mentally unable to uphold the office of Pastor, or his leadership materially compromises the welfare or Articles of Faith of the Church, and upon submission of evidence of aforementioned breach as brought by a minimum of three witnesses, or evidence of physical or mental inability, the Diaconate shall decide by majority vote of a quorum of active deacons if the allegations presented are valid or if physical or mental

impairment is obvious. Upon an affirmative vote, the Diaconate shall recommend the Pastor's termination to the Church membership.

- 9.5(2) Upon receipt of a recommendation from the Diaconate calling for the termination of the Pastor, the Church membership shall, at a special called meeting duly advertised for said purpose, vote by simple majority to uphold or reject the recommendation of the Diaconate. Upon a positive vote, the office of Pastor is declared vacant, and the termination shall be immediate.

## **Section 6. Vacancy in Office**

- 9.6(1) The Pastor shall serve the Church for an indefinite term or until the relationship is terminated by:

- (a) Death;
- (b) Resignation - the Pastor shall give the Church notice a minimum of two weeks prior to the effective date of his resignation;
- (c) The Church may declare the office of Pastor vacant. Such action shall take place at a special business meeting called for that purpose, of which at least two weeks public notice has been given. The meeting may be called upon a recommendation of a majority of the deacons. The meeting may also be called as a result of a petition signed by not less than one-fourth (1/4) of the resident Church members. In the event a petition is initiated, the chairman of the Deacons shall be notified that a petition is being started and the petition shall be completed or discontinued within thirty days. The vote to declare the office vacant shall be by secret ballot with a two-thirds (2/3) affirmative vote necessary to declare the office vacant. Except in cases of gross misconduct, the Church will compensate the Pastor with not less than one-twelfth (1/12) and not more than one-fourth (1/4) his total annual compensation unless an alternate compensation arrangement is approved by three-fourths (3/4) majority vote by the Church. The termination shall be immediate and the compensation rendered within thirty days.

## **Section 7. Procedure Upon Vacancy**

- 9.7(1) Upon the death, resignation, or vacancy of the office of Pastor, the church shall elect a Pastoral Transition Team and a Pastoral Search Team, each consisting of seven (7) church members. Each member of the Pastoral Transition Team and Pastoral Search Team shall be "known to be full of the Spirit and wisdom" and "full of faith". (*Acts 6:3, 5*).

- 9.7(2) The nominating process for Pastoral Transition Team and a Pastoral Search Team members shall begin the first Sunday after the vacancy in the office of the pastor, and shall run for four consecutive Sundays. Nominations shall be made in writing to the Chairman of the Diaconate. The Diaconate shall confirm each candidate's willingness to serve and understanding of responsibilities of service, and shall upon confirmation,

present a slate of candidates for the Pastoral Transition Team and Pastor Search Team to the Church for election.

- 9.7(3) Each Team shall elect a Chairman. No member of the Pastoral Transition Team shall serve on the Pastor Search Team.
- 9.7(4) The Pastoral Transition Team and Pastoral Search Team shall begin work within six weeks from the first Sunday following the vacancy in the office of the Pastor.
- 9.7(5) The Pastoral staff, the Chairman of the Diaconate and the Interim Pastor, shall be consulted as needed by the members of the Pastoral Transition Team in the performance of their duties.
- 9.7(6) Until the Pastoral Transition Team is active, the Diaconate shall ensure that the pulpit is filled for each worship service, and designate worship leaders as necessary.
- 9.7(7) The Personnel Committee shall designate a member of the Pastoral staff who shall be responsible for supervising the Church staff.

**Section 8. Duties of the Pastoral Transition Team**

- 9.8(1) Ensure that the pulpit is filled for each worship service, and designate worship leaders as necessary.
- 9.8(2) Recommend an Interim Pastor as soon as is reasonably possible after prayerful and careful deliberation based on recommendations from the Nominating committee, the Diaconate, Pastoral staff, and Church members. Recommendations from denominational leaders may also be considered.
- 9.8(3) Recommend those measures, which seem to best ensure harmony within the Church during the transition period.
- 9.8(4) The chairman of the Pastor Transition Team shall provide the Church with regular reports of the team's progress.
- 9.8(5) Upon the acceptance of a call by a candidate for Pastor, the Pastor Transition Team shall be disbanded.

**Section 9. Interim Pastor**

- 9.9(1) Qualifications and Duties
  - (a) An interim Pastor shall have the same spiritual qualifications as a permanent Pastor, conform to the Articles of Faith of the Church, and be accountable to God, the Church, and the Diaconate.
  - (b) The Pastoral Transition Team, after consultation with the Personnel Committee,

Finance Committee and the Diaconate, shall determine the financial terms of his employment and his duties and responsibilities before the interim Pastoral candidate is presented to the Church in view of a call.

9.9(2) Call and Termination

- (a) The Pastoral Transition Team, with the concurrence of the Diaconate, shall recommend an interim Pastor to the Church for approval. The approval by 3/4 vote of the Church is necessary to issue a call to an interim Pastor. The chosen interim Pastor shall serve until the relationship is terminated by either his request or that of the Church. In either case, at least fourteen (14) days notice shall be given unless otherwise mutually agreed upon.
- (b) Upon the recommendation of the Pastoral Transition Team or the Diaconate, the services of an interim Pastor may be terminated by approval of a majority of the Diaconate casting a vote after reasonable notice to the Diaconate and interim Pastor has been issued.

**Section 10. Pastor Search Team**

9.10(1) Duties

- (a) The primary call of a Pastor must be from God, and it is the responsibility of the Pastor Search Team to seek God's leadership in taking the necessary steps to secure a Pastor.
- (b) The chairman of the Pastor Search Team shall provide the Church with regular reports of the team's progress.
- (c) Upon the acceptance of a call by a candidate for Pastor, the Pastor Search Team shall be disbanded.

**Section 11. Selection of Pastoral Candidates**

9.11(1) The Pastor Search Team may solicit from Church members the attributes and qualities desired of a new Pastor. In addition, the Pastor Search Team may solicit recommendations for a Pastor from Church members, Southern Baptist Pastors, and other Christian leaders.

9.11(2) The Pastor Search Team shall have the authority to consider as many Pastoral candidates as are necessary and attend worship services led by Pastoral candidates. Sufficient funds shall be provided to pay the reasonable expenses incurred.

9.11(3) The internal workings, discussions and visits of the Pastor Search Team shall always be and remain confidential.

9.11(4) An interim Pastor shall not be considered as a candidate for Pastor.

## **Section 12. Presentation of a Pastoral Candidate to the Church**

9.12(1) When the Pastor Search Team finds the man whom they believe is God's choice for Pastor of the Church, and the Personnel and Finance Committees have reached an acceptable understanding as outlined in the budget on the terms of employment as Pastor, the Team shall invite the candidate to meet the Diaconate and the existing Pastoral staff. Upon concurrence by the Diaconate, the Pastoral candidate shall be invited to preach all Sunday morning worship service(s) in view of a call as Pastor.

9.12(2) Immediately after the Pastoral candidate has been presented to the Church and has had the opportunity to preach, the Pastor Search Team shall provide the Church with the candidate's biographical information, the financial terms of employment and the notice and posting of a business meeting to consider the call of a Pastor. This business meeting shall take place following the next Sunday morning worship service(s). Approval by a 3/4 vote of the Church is necessary to issue a call to a Pastor.

## **ARTICLE X. MINISTERS AND DIRECTORS**

### **Section 1. Qualifications and Duties**

10.1(1) Ministers shall meet the standards found in *I Timothy 3:1-7 and Titus 1:7-9*. If ordained, this Church or a Baptist Church of like faith and practice shall have ordained the minister. Ministers and directors shall meet the requirements of biblical orthodoxy and personal faithfulness and conform to the Articles of Faith of the Church.

10.1(2) The Pastoral staff shall assist the Pastor in overseeing the ministries and programs of the Church, serve as an extension of his ministry to the Church, and shall serve within the guidelines and job description adopted by the Personnel Committee. Members of the Pastoral staff are accountable to God, the Pastor, their immediate supervisor and the Church. The Pastoral staff shall be faithful in service to First Baptist Perry and to the furtherance of the Church and its goals.

### **Section 2. Selection of Ministers**

10.2(1) A Search Committee as defined by section 14.1(1) shall work with the Pastor or Diaconate (if a pastor is not available) to recruit and recommend a ministerial candidate and the terms of his employment to the Personnel Committee and Finance Committee for concurrence.

10.2(2) Upon concurrence by the Diaconate, the candidate's biographical information, the

financial terms of employment, and the notice and posting of a business meeting to consider the call of a minister shall be given to the Church at least ten (10) days in advance. Approval by a 3/4 vote of the Church is necessary to issue a call to a minister.

**Section 3. Selection of Directors**

- 10.3(1) The Pastor or a director's immediate supervisor shall recommend a qualified candidate to the Personnel Committee.
- 10.3(2) If the Personnel and Finance committees are in agreement with the recommendation, the terms of his/her employment and the name of the candidate shall be forwarded to the Diaconate for concurrence.
- 10.3(3) Upon concurrence by the Diaconate, the candidate's biographical information, the financial terms of employment, and the notice and posting of a business meeting to consider the call of a director shall be given to the Church at least ten (10) days in advance. Approval by a 3/4 vote of the Church is necessary to issue a call to a director.

**Section 4. Church Support Staff**

- 10.4(1) The Church shall employ support staff (full or part-time) as required by the needs of the Church. The Pastor shall recommend the creation of new support staff positions to the Personnel and Finance Committee for their consideration and determination whether to present such requests to the Church Leadership Council for their review and to the Church for their decision.
- 10.4(2) The Church shall approve or disapprove such new staff positions by a majority vote at either a regular or special business conference.
- 10.4(3) All support staff personnel shall be employed by the Church and managed by the pastor and/or his designee with the oversight of the Personnel Committee.

**ARTICLE XI. INTERIM PASTORAL STAFF**

**Section 1. Qualifications, Duties and Selection**

- 11.1(1) Upon the death, resignation or removal of a Pastoral staff member, the Pastor and/or Leadership Council, with the approval of the Personnel Committee and Finance Committee may recommend hiring an interim Pastoral staff member.
  - (a) An interim Pastoral staff member shall have the same spiritual qualifications as a permanent Pastoral staff member, conform to the Articles of Faith of the Church, and be accountable to God, the Pastor and the Church.

- (b) The Pastor and/or Leadership Council in consultation with the Personnel Committee, shall determine the need for and the duties and responsibilities of an interim Pastoral staff member. The Personnel Committee shall forward the name of the candidate to the Diaconate for their concurrence.
- (c) The candidate's biographical information, the terms of employment, and the notice and posting of a business meeting to consider the call of a minister shall be given to the Church at least ten (10) days in advance. Approval by a 3/4 vote of the Church is necessary to issue a call to a minister
- (d) An interim Pastoral staff member shall serve until death, resignation, removal or until a permanent Pastoral staff member is called by the Church for that position.

## **ARTICLE XII. LAITY LEADERSHIP ROLES**

### **Section 1. Organizational, Coordinators, Department Directors and Teachers**

- 12.1(1) All who serve as organizational coordinators and department directors shall be members of the Church for at least one year and shall be "known to be full of the Spirit and wisdom" and "full of faith". (*Acts 6:3,5*).
- 12.1(2) Organizational coordinators, department directors and teachers shall be nominated by the Nominating Committee and shall be elected by the Church. They shall be in agreement with and committed to the Church's purpose, beliefs, and covenant as stated in the *Constitution*. They are ultimately accountable to the Church.
- 12.1(3) Laity leadership will seek resolution for unresolved conflict as stated in 8.1(3)c.

### **Section 2. Church Officers**

- 12.2(1) Officers of the Church shall include, but not be limited to, The Trustees, the Moderator, the Treasurer and Assistant Treasurers and the Church Clerk.
- 12.2(2) Qualifications of Church Officers
  - (a) All who serve as officers, shall be members of the Church for at least one year, not less than 21 years old and shall be "known to be full of the Spirit and wisdom" and "full of faith". (*Acts 6:3,5*).
  - (b) All who serve as officers shall work in cooperation with the appropriate Pastoral staff member, but shall be ultimately accountable to the Church. All who serve as officers shall be committed to and in agreement with the Church's purpose, beliefs, and covenant as stated in the *Constitution*.

**Section 3. Nominations, Elections and Vacancies of Church Officers**

- 12.3(1) All Church officers, shall be nominated by the Nominating Committee, reviewed by the Leadership Council and Diaconate and elected by the Church annually.
- 12.3(2) If the Nominating Committee believes it is in the best interest of the Church that an unexpired term is filled upon the death, resignation or departure of a Church officer, the Nominating Committee shall nominate another Church member, presented with the review of the Diaconate and Leadership Council to the Church for election.

**Section 4. The Board of Trustees**

- 12.4(1) Five Trustees shall hold in trust all Church property. Upon approval by the Church authorizing such action (budgeted items have prior Church approval), the Trustees shall be empowered to affix their signatures to legal documents involving the sale, mortgage, purchase, or rental of property, etc., where the signatures of Trustees are required. The Church agrees to indemnify the Trustees for any liability they may incur in their capacity as Trustees as a result of performing actions directed by the Church.
- 12.4(2) Each Trustee shall serve a five-year term with one Trustee rotating off annually. At the commencement of the Church year, the Board of Trustees shall elect the following officers from their members: a corporate president, two corporate vice presidents, a corporate secretary and a corporate treasurer. The five Trustees shall serve as the corporate Board of Directors for the sole purpose of complying with the requirements of Georgia law concerning non-profit corporations.

**Section 5. Moderator**

- 12.5(1) The Moderator shall be elected annually, serving no more than three consecutive years. The Moderator shall preside at all business meetings, except as otherwise provided in these *Bylaws*.
- 12.5(2) If the Moderator cannot serve, or excuses himself from serving, or the Church is without a Moderator, the chairman of the Diaconate or his designee, shall serve as the Moderator of business meetings. Otherwise, the Church clerk shall convene the business meeting and a Moderator shall be elected from the floor.
- 12.5(3) The Moderator shall ensure that all matters presented on the agenda were properly reviewed by the Pastor, the Diaconate and/or the appropriate Church committee(s).
- 12.5(4) The Moderator shall appoint a qualified person to serve as the parliamentarian for a business meeting, if necessary.

**Section 6. Treasurer and Assistant Treasurers**

- 12.6(1) The Church shall elect a Treasurer and two Assistant Treasurers annually, with each person serving no more than three consecutive years. The Assistant Treasurers shall be authorized to act whenever necessary due to the unavailability of the Treasurer.
- 12.6(2) The Treasurer shall receive and disburse all monies according to approved financial procedures; shall keep a current and itemized account of all receipts, disbursements and fixed assets of the Church; and shall render to the Church, appropriate committees and Pastoral staff, itemized reports of receipts and disbursements, on a monthly, quarterly, and annual basis. The Treasurer and Assistant Treasurers are authorized to sign or co-sign checks as needed, give assistance and advice to the Pastoral staff and appropriate committees as requested. The Treasurer and Assistant Treasurer(s) shall serve as ex-officio members of the Finance Committee. The Treasurer's books shall be audited as directed by the Finance Committee, but in no event less than once every three (3) years.

### **Section 7. Church Clerk and Recording Secretary**

- 12.7(1) The Church clerk shall be elected annually and shall serve no more than three consecutive years.
- 12.7(2) The clerk shall be responsible for safekeeping a suitable record of all official actions voted on by the Church. The clerk shall be responsible for keeping a register of the names of members with dates of admission, dismissal, death, or erasure, together with a record of baptisms. The clerk shall issue letters of dismissal voted by the Church, and give required notice of all meetings where notice is necessary as indicated in the *Bylaws*. The clerk shall be responsible for preparing the Annual Church Profile.
- 12.7(3) The Church may appoint an assistant Church clerk if deemed necessary.
- 12.7(4) The church shall elect annually a recording secretary whose function shall be to take and transcribe the minutes of each business meeting and special conference of the church. The recording secretary will see that such minutes are preserved and a copy thereof maintained in the church office. At the end of the church year, the original minutes transcribed shall be delivered to the church clerk, who shall keep and preserve them as a part of the permanent records of the church.

### **Section 8. Church Messengers**

- 12.8(1) The Pastor, in consultation with the Pastoral staff and the chairman of the Diaconate, shall nominate members as official Church messengers to the Rehoboth Baptist Association, the Georgia Baptist Convention, the Southern Baptist Convention and other such denominational meetings and conventions at least seven (7) days in advance. Church messengers shall be "known to be full of the Spirit and wisdom" and "full of faith". (*Acts 6:3,5*).
- 12.8(2) By virtue of his office, the Pastor shall always be designated as a messenger to all denominational meetings to which the Church sends messengers.

12.8(3) Nomination for Church messengers shall be the result of prayerful deliberation after seeking to identify qualified volunteers and making reasonable efforts to ensure that the number of nominees is reasonably balanced between Church staff and laypersons.

12.8(4) Church messengers shall be elected by the Church by any method approved by the Church.

**Section 9. Sunday School**

12.9(1) The Sunday School shall be the basic organization for the Bible teaching program. Its tasks shall be to teach the biblical revelations, reach persons for Christ and Church membership, perform the functions of the Church within its consistency, and provide and interpret information regarding the work of the Church and denomination. The Sunday School shall be organized by departments and/or classes as appropriate for all ages, and shall be conducted under the direction of the Sunday School director elected by the Church. Persons shall have been a member of this Church for not less than one year before serving as Sunday School Director, Assistant Director or Departmental Director. In regard to the one year period, this policy does not apply to members who are called to be teachers, class officers, and other Sunday School officers or leaders who are not elected by the Church, nor to previous members in good standing who have moved their membership back to this Church.

12.9(2) The Sunday School Council consists of Directors of all Sunday School Departments, Preschool, Children, Youth, Adult and Senior Adult. The Sunday School Council is led by the Sunday School Director. This Council will provide strategic leadership and organization, including staffing, as outlined in the Sunday School Handbook.

**Section 10. AWANA and AWANA Commander**

The purpose of AWANA is to teach children to know, love and serve Christ for life through programs that serve children ages K-3 through 6th grade. AWANA provides evangelism tools to reach children, youth and families with the gospel of Christ and provides teaching that builds an enduring biblical faith. AWANA shall be organized by appropriate age groups under the direction of the AWANA Commander elected by the Church. The Commander and AWANA leaders shall have been a member of this Church for not less than one year except for temporary substitutes. The Commander may use his/her discretion in this matter.

**ARTICLE XIII. STANDING COMMITTEES**

**Section 1. Definitions, Responsibilities and Names**

13.1(1) Standing Committee — a group of qualified Church members elected by the Church to

make recommendations to the Pastor, Pastoral staff, Diaconate, Leadership Council and the Church regarding those matters which have been assigned to that committee by the Church and these *Bylaws*. Standing committees shall adopt appropriate policies and procedures, and authorize expenditures and actions. Job descriptions listing each committee's responsibilities shall be determined by the Nominating Committee.

- 13.1(2) Standing Committees shall be composed of six Church members with a non-voting chairman.
- 13.1(3) Standing Committees shall include, but not be limited to, the following: (1) the Nominating Committee, (2) the Finance Committee, (3) the Personnel Committee, (4) the Church Property and Space Committee and (5) Missions Committee.
- 13.1(4) The Leadership Council shall determine the need for and functions of any additional standing committees. Recommendations for additional standing committees shall be presented to the Diaconate for concurrence and the Church for approval.

## **Section 2. Qualifications of Standing Committee Members**

- 13.2(1) All nominees shall have been members of the Church for at least one year. Committee members shall be "known to be full of the Spirit and wisdom" and "full of faith". (*Acts 6:3, 5*).
- 13.2(2) Two persons from the same immediate family, (spouse, sibling, parent, child or in-law) shall not serve on the same committee. Church staff and members of their immediate families (spouse, sibling, parent, child or in-law) shall not serve on the Nominating Committee, Finance, or Personnel committees.
- 13.2(3) At least one member of the Diaconate or a recently served deacon shall serve on each standing committee.
- 13.2(4) Although members of standing committees are asked to serve a three (3) year term, the Church shall elect/re-affirm committee members annually. In the event that a member is not re-affirmed by the Church, Section 5 hereinafter shall govern the vacancy if the member served on the Nominating Committee, and Section 12.8(3) hereinafter shall govern the vacancy if the member served on another standing committee.
- 13.2(5) No person shall serve on two standing committees simultaneously.
- 13.2(7) Committee members shall be faithful in service to First Baptist Perry to the furtherance of the Church and its goals.

## **Section 3. Duties of The Nominating Committee**

The Nominating Committee shall nominate qualified Church members to serve on all other Standing Committees. Job descriptions listing each committee's responsibilities

shall be determined annually by the nominating committee, reviewed by the Church Leadership Council and elected by the Church.

**Section 4. Nomination and Election of the Nominating Committee**

13.4(1) The Nominating Committee shall be comprised of six (6) persons with at least one (1) member being a deacon. Two members of the committee shall rotate off annually. The members of the Nominating Committee shall be nominated and elected as follows:

- (a) Annually, the Diaconate and Leadership Council shall each nominate one Church member to serve on this committee. Both of these persons shall be nominated to serve a three-year term.
- (b) Nominees to the Nominating Committee shall be elected and approved by the Church.
- (c) The Nominating Committee elects its own chairperson.

**Section 5. Terms and Vacancies of The Nominating Committee**

Upon the death, resignation or departure of a Nominating Committee member, if the Leadership Council believes it is in the best interest of the Church that the vacancy be filled, the position shall be filled by the same process as described in 13.4(1). If the vacancy is not filled immediately, a replacement shall be nominated to fill the unexpired term at the beginning of the new committee year.

**Section 6. Duties of Other Standing Committees**

As set forth above, the duties and responsibilities of the other standing committees shall be determined by the Nominating Committee and approved by the Church. Standing committees shall adopt the appropriate policies and procedures to fulfill their duties.

**Section 7. Nomination and Election of Members of Other Standing Committees**

The Nominating Committee shall present nominees to the Leadership Council for concurrence and the Church for election.

**Section 8. Terms and Vacancies of Members of Other Standing Committees**

13.8(1) Committee members shall serve three (3) year terms with one third (1/3) of the members rotating off annually.

13.8(2) Committee members who have served a full three-year term may not serve another term on another standing committee until a full year has passed.

13.8(3) Upon the death, resignation or departure of other standing committee members, if the

Nominating Committee believes it is in the best interest of the Church that the vacancy be filled, another Church member shall be nominated by the Nominating Committee with the

review by the Diaconate and Leadership Council and presented to the Church for election and approval. If the vacancy is not filled, the Nominating Committee shall nominate a replacement to fill the unexpired term at the beginning of the new committee year.

- 13.8(4) Members of any standing committee who filled an unexpired term of one year or less may be re-elected to serve a full term.

**Section 9. Committee Officers and Duties**

- 13.9(1) Annually, each standing committee shall elect a chairman.
- 13.9(2) Each committee chairman shall present the committee's motions to the Diaconate for review and the Church for approval.
- 13.9(3) Other officers, such as vice-chairman and secretary, shall be elected by each committee. The vice-chairman shall temporarily substitute for the chairman, if necessary. The secretary shall keep complete minutes of all committee actions. Minutes should be submitted to the Church office within one week following their approval by the committee. Personnel Committee minutes shall remain confidential.
- 13.9(4) Upon the death, resignation or departure of the chairman of a standing committee, a new chairman shall be elected by the committee to fill the unexpired term.

**ARTICLE XIV. SPECIAL COMMITTEES**

**Section 1. Definition, Responsibilities and Names**

- 14.1(1) Special Committee – a group of qualified Church members elected by the Church to make recommendations to the Pastoral staff, the Diaconate and the Church regarding those special matters that have been assigned to that committee. The Church Leadership Council shall determine the need for, authority, scope and specific responsibilities for each special committee formed. Upon completion of the assigned task, the special committee shall disband.
- 14.1(2) Special committees shall include, but not be limited to: Bylaw Committee, Long-Range Planning Committee, Pastoral Transition Team and Pastoral Search Team.
- 14.1(3) All who serve as committee members or officers shall serve at the discretion of and be

accountable to the Church and shall serve in cooperation with the appropriate Pastoral staff member. Special Committee members shall be “known to be full of the Spirit and wisdom” and “full of faith” (*Acts 6:3,5*).

**Section 2. Qualifications of Special Committee Members**

- 14.2(1) All nominees shall have been members of the Church for at least one year prior to their nomination.
- 14.2(2) Two persons from the same immediate family, (spouse, sibling, parent, child or in-laws) may not serve on the same special committee. Church staff and members of their immediate families may not serve on any special committee.
- 14.2(3) At least one deacon, who is active at the time of nomination, shall serve on each special committee.
- 14.2(4) Special committee members shall be faithful in service to First Baptist Perry and to the furtherance of the Church and its goals.

**Section 3. Nomination and Election of Special Committee Members**

The Nominating Committee shall present nominees to the Leadership Council and Diaconate for concurrence and to the Church for election.

**Section 4. Terms and Vacancies**

- 14.4(1) The number of persons who serve on a special committee shall be determined by the Nominating Committee and shall be comprised of an odd number of members including a voting chairperson.
- 14.4(2) Special committee members shall serve until the committee’s task is completed, and are not subject to any rotation system.
- 14.4(3) Upon the death, resignation or departure of a special committee member, and the Nominating Committee believes it is in the best interest of the Church that the vacancy be filled, another Church member shall be nominated by the Nominating Committee and presented to the Diaconate for concurrence and to the Church for election.

**Section 5. Special Committee Officers and Duties**

- 14.5(1) Each special committee shall elect its own chairman from its membership.
- 14.5(2) The chairman shall present the committee’s recommendations to the Leadership Council, the Diaconate for concurrence, and to the Church for approval. The chairman of a special committee shall continue to serve in this capacity until the committee is disbanded.

14.5(3) Other officers such as vice-chairman and secretary, shall be elected by each committee. The vice-chairman shall temporarily substitute for the chairman, if necessary. The secretary shall keep complete minutes of all committee actions. Minutes shall be submitted to the Church office within one week following their approval.

14.5(4) Upon the death, resignation or departure of the chairman of a special committee, a new chairman shall be elected by the committee to fill the un-expired term.

## **ARTICLE XV. MINISTRY TEAMS**

### **Section 1. Definition, Responsibilities and Names**

15.1(1) A Ministry Team is a group of volunteers called by God to serve this Church body and/or its prospects in a Church-authorized ministry. Ministry team members shall not be subject to any required rotation system. Members and regular attendees are encouraged to volunteer and participate in the various ministries of the Church through ministry teams.

15.1(3) Ministry teams may include (but not be limited to) the following:

- a) Music
- b) Baptismal
- c) Media/Library
- d) Audio-Visual
- e) Benevolence
- f) Lord's Supper
- g) Transportation
- h) Charity
- i) Flowers
- j) Ushers
- k) Greeters
- l) Men's Ministry
- m) Women's Ministry
- n) Puppet Ministry
- o) Teresi Scholarship Ministry
- p) Pastor Relations
- q) Food Services
- r) Youth
- s) Publicity
- t) Stewardship

### **Section 2. Ministry Team Coordinators**

15.2(1) Each ministry team shall be led by a ministry team coordinator. Coordinators shall be Church members at least one year prior to being nominated by the Nominating

Committee and presented to the Diaconate for concurrence and election by the Church.

15.2(2) Ministry team coordinators may continue to serve year after year if approved by the Church.

15.2(3) All who serve as ministry team coordinators shall serve at the discretion of and be accountable to the Church and the appropriate Pastoral staff member. Ministry team coordinators shall be “known to be full of the Spirit and wisdom” and “full of faith”.(Acts 6:3,5).

## **ARTICLE XVI. LEADERSHIP COUNCIL**

### **Section 1. Function**

Under the leadership of the Pastor or Interim Pastor, the Leadership Council will meet monthly, and once each quarter with the entire Church Council, and serve as the vehicle through which the Pastor carries out the assignments given to him by the Church Body.

### **Section 2. Members**

Chairpersons of all Standing Committees, or their representatives, along with the Chairman of the Diaconate, Church Officers and Chairpersons of all current and future Special Committees, or their representatives, shall serve as The Leadership Council for the First Baptist Church of Perry.

## **ARTICLE XVII. CHURCH COUNCIL**

### **Section 1. Function**

The Church Council shall serve the church by leading in planning, coordinating, conducting, and evaluating the ministries and programs of the Church and its organizations. The Church Council shall meet at least quarterly.

The primary function of the Church Council shall be to recommend to the Church suggested objectives and Church goals; to review and coordinate ministry and program plans recommended by the Church officers, organizations, committees, and ministry teams; to recommend to the Church the use of leadership, calendar time, and other resources according to programs' priorities; and to evaluate achievements in terms of Church objectives and goals. The Church Council provides a forum in which all interested Church members may bring information and concerns regarding Church business. Anyone requesting recognition at a Church Council meeting should contact the chairman to be included on the agenda.

All matters agreed upon by the Church Council which call for action not already approved by the Church, shall be referred to the Church for approval or disapproval.

The Church Council's motions shall be forwarded to the Diaconate for concurrence at least one week prior to being presented to the Church for approval.

**Section 2. Members**

Regular members of the Church Council shall be the Pastor or Interim Pastor, other Pastoral staff members, directors of Church program organizations, chairman of the deacons, Church officers, and chairpersons of standing committees, special committees, and ministry teams

**Section 3. Chairperson**

The chairperson of the Church Council shall be elected by the Church Council and have been a member of the Church for at least one year.

**ARTICLE XVIII. CHURCH OPERATIONS, POLICIES AND PROCEDURES**

**Section 1. Operations and Policies**

- 18.1(1) The Nominating Committee shall designate the persons and the appropriate committees to annually review and update if necessary, the policies and procedures which describe the lines of authority, responsibilities, and operating procedures used by the Church staff and committees to administer Church activities. Any Church member upon request may view these written policies and procedures during regular business hours.
- 18.1(2) A manual containing these policies shall be prepared and a copy maintained in the Church office and the Church library.
- 18.1(3) Church members or Church organizations may suggest changes to the committee policies and procedures of the Church by presenting proposed changes in writing to the Leadership Council for assignment for review by the appropriate committee.
- 18.1(4) The committee policies and procedures for the Church and any material changes thereafter are subject to concurrence by the Diaconate before being submitted to the Church for approval.

**ARTICLE XIX. CHURCH FINANCES**

**Section 1. Fiscal Year**

- 19.1 The Church fiscal year shall run concurrently with the calendar year, which begins January 1 and ends December 31.

**Section 2. General Policy Relating to Budget**

19.2 It is the policy of this Church to operate under a budget system, and to control financial obligations and disbursements for current operations and plant maintenance within the total receipts and unencumbered general funds surplus available for current operations during the fiscal year.

**Section 3. Budget**

19.3 The Finance Committee in consultation with the staff, Church Council, Leadership Council, and other committee and organizational leaders, shall prepare an inclusive budget for the church, indicating by items the amount needed and sought for all local and other expenses. The proposed budget will then be presented to the Diaconate for their review and recommendation(s). After such changes (if any) as recommended by the Diaconate have been addressed, the Finance Committee will present and make available copies of the proposed budget to the church members a minimum of one week prior to it being presented to the church for final approval and adoption. The financial program of the Church shall be supported only by tithes, free-will offerings, interest income and contributions.

**Section 4. Financial Control and General Administration**

19.4(1) Except as approved by the Church budget or otherwise as specifically authorized by the Church in a business session, no person may enter into an agreement or make a commitment that would incur financial obligation to the Church.

19.4(2) Proposals to exceed the budget shall be referred to the Finance Committee for study and recommendations, then to the Diaconate for review and the Church for action.

**Section 5. Accounting Procedures**

19.5 All funds received by the Treasurer, Assistant Treasurer(s), and the Financial Secretary shall be properly recorded on the financial records of the church. Those who have responsibility that involves actual handling of funds shall be bonded, with the church paying the cost of the bond(s)(See Article XII, Section 6, Church Treasurer and Assistant Treasurers). A system of accounting that will adequately provide for the handling of all funds shall be the responsibility of the Finance Committee.

**ARTICLE XX. BYLAW CHANGES AND CONFLICTS**

A copy of the *Constitution* and *Bylaws* will be kept in the Church library and Church Office. Upon request, Church members may receive a copy of the *Constitution* and *Bylaws* in the Church office.

**Section 1. Bylaw Changes**

- 20.1(1) Requests for bylaw change(s) shall be made in writing to the chairman of the Diaconate who shall forward any such request to the Diaconate and the Pastor.
- 20.1(2) The Diaconate shall consider the requested change(s). If the Diaconate believes the request is significant, a special committee (Bylaw Committee) shall be formed according to the provisions of Article XIV.
- 20.1(3) If the Bylaw Committee approves the requested change(s), the recommendation shall be presented to the Leadership Council for review, the Diaconate for concurrence, and the Church for approval at a business meeting after notice and posting has been made. The Bylaws Committee shall publish a draft of any proposed bylaw change(s) at least seven (7) days prior to a business meeting.
- 20.1(4) Periodically, but not less than every five (5) years, a Special Committee (Bylaw) shall be formed according to the provisions of Article XIV to review The Articles of Incorporation and Bylaws and reconcile any inconsistencies, correct obsolete or erroneous information, reduce legal risk, and to insure the legal documents are accurate and conform to current church practice. Following the review, the findings and recommendations of the Bylaw Committee shall be presented in accordance with the provisions of Paragraph 20.1(3).

## **Section 2. Conflicts with Bylaws**

These *Bylaws* shall be the final authority in the event that any conflict should arise between any Church policy and these *Bylaws*.

## **ARTICLE XXI. AMENDMENT OF THE ARTICLES OF INCORPORATION**

### **Section 1.**

- 21.1 The Trustees may recommend amendments to the *Articles of Incorporation*. The approval by a majority vote of the Church is required to amend the *Articles of Incorporation*, except as otherwise provided in these *Bylaws*.
- 21.2 The process by which amendments to the *Articles of Incorporation* are announced, posted and approved by the Church are the same as those for Bylaw Amendments, except as otherwise provided in these *Bylaws*.
- 21.3 Changes of the registered agent, registered office or other material changes to the *Articles of Incorporation* which are within the ordinary course of business, may be made with the approval of a majority of the Trustees.

## ARTICLE XXII. MISCELLANEOUS

### Section 1.

- 22.1 Headings: The article, paragraph, and subparagraph entitlements in these *Bylaws* are inserted for convenience or reference only, and shall in no way alter, modify or define, or be used in construing the text of such articles, paragraphs, and subparagraphs.
- 22.2 If any portion of these *Bylaws* shall be invalid or inoperative, then so far as is reasonable and possible, the remainder of these *Bylaws* shall be considered valid and operative, and effect shall be given to the intent manifested by the portion held invalid or inoperative.
- 22.3 These *Bylaws* and other documents referred to herein shall be construed and enforced in accordance with, and governed by, the laws of the State of Georgia.

## ARTICLE XXIII. EFFECTIVE DATE

These *Bylaws*, effective March 1, 2009, revoke all previous bylaw provisions of First Baptist Church of Perry, Georgia.

### Bylaw Committee

Richard Andel, Chairman

Paul Brown

Eddie Green

Ken Lindsey

Lewis Meeks

Jim Mehserle

### Bylaw Re-drafting Committee

Final Diaconate approval date – January 11, 2009

Church Review date – January 25, 2009