

The Constitution of the First Baptist Church Franklin



**"Then Jesus came to them and said, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to Me. Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age."
Matthew 28:18-20**

Index

Preamble	Page 2
Article I, Name	Page 2
Article II, Purpose and Priorities	Page 2
Article III, Affiliations	Page 3
Article IV, Articles of Faith and Practice	Pages 3-8
Article V, Church Covenant	Pages 8-9
Article VI, Membership	Pages 10
Article VII, Staff	Pages 11-13
Article VIII, Financial	Pages 13-14
Article IX, General Officers	Page 14
Article X, Leadership Team	Page 15
Article XI, Special Committees	Pages 16-17
Article XII, Church Meetings	Page 17
Article XIII, Church Calendar Year	Page 17
Article XIV, Miscellaneous	Page 18-19

Our ministry template The S.W.O.R.D. of the Lord

Service
Worship
Outreach
Relationships
Discipleship

Preamble

To the end that this body may be governed in an orderly manner consistent with the principles of God's Word and the Spirit of Jesus Christ, and the fulfillment of the scriptural principles of this Church to evangelize the lost, edify the believers, and empower God's people to discover and manifest their spiritual giftedness and talents in membership with other Christians in the body of Christ, we do declare and establish this constitution.

Article I Name

This body of baptized believers in Christ shall be known as the FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH of Franklin, Ohio, AKA First Regular Baptist Church of Franklin, Ohio, abbreviated FBCF.

Article II Purpose and Priorities

1. A great commitment to the Great Commission (Matthew 28:18-20) and the Great Commandment (Matthew 22:36-40) will build mature Christians and a greatly effective Church.
2. We fulfill our calling by utilizing the S.W.O.R.D. of the Lord-Service, Worship, Outreach, Relationships and Discipleship.

- b. The notice of this meeting shall be made from the pulpit on two consecutive Sundays prior to the meeting.

Article XIII Miscellaneous

Section 1. Emergencies

Any dire emergencies demanding immediate action shall be handled by the Pastor and the Moderator.

Section 2. Quorum

- a. A quorum for the Leadership Team shall be a majority of those present.
- b. A quorum for all regular or called meetings of the congregation shall be a majority of those present.

Section 3. Ex-Officio Members

- a. The Moderator and Pastor are Ex-Officio members of the Leadership Team.
- b. The Pastor is an Ex-Officio member of all Task Groups.

Section 5. Voting

- a. Active members sixteen years of age or older will be entitled to vote at a Business Meeting.
- b. Anyone necessarily absent on the day of voting may cast his/her signed vote on a ballot and bring or mail it to the church office within the week prior to the vote.

Section 6. Amending the Constitution

- a. The Constitution may be altered or amended by a majority vote held at a special meeting of the congregation.

Article III Affiliations

Said Church upholds local autonomy and independence from any other higher organizations speaking for this congregation in all matters of faith and Christian life, but affiliates only for mutual cooperation in mission work with the Miami Association of Baptist Churches, The American Baptist Churches of Ohio, and the American Baptist Churches USA.

Article IV First Baptist Church of Franklin, Ohio Articles of Faith and Practices We believe:

1. The Bible is the Word of God, fully inspired and without error in the original manuscripts, written under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit and has supreme authority in all matters of faith and conduct (2 Tim. 3:16).
2. There is one living and true God, eternally existing in three persons, the Father (Eph. 4:16), the Son (Heb. 1:8), and the Holy Spirit (Acts 5:3-4). These three are equal in every divine perfection. They execute distinct but harmonious offices in the world of creation, providence and redemption.

3. God the Father is an infinite personal spirit. He is perfect in holiness, wisdom, power, and love (Acts 17:24; John 4:24; 1 John 1:5; Matt. 11:21; Rev. 19:6; Eph. 2:4,5). He concerns Himself mercifully in human affairs (John 3:16; Heb. 12:6), hears and answers prayers (2 Chron. 7:14), and saves from sin and death all who come to Him through Jesus Christ (John 3:16; Rom. 5:8).
4. Jesus Christ is God's only begotten Son (John 3:16), eternal in nature (John 1:2), foretold by messianic prophesy in the Old Testament, conceived by the Holy Spirit (Luke 1:35), born of a virgin (Matt. 1:16), sinlessness in nature (2 Cor. 5:21), produced miracles and taught only truth (John 20:30-31). Jesus produced an atoning death through His shed blood (Matt. 20:28) which offered salvation to the world. He rose from the dead in bodily resurrection (1 Cor. 15:4), ascended to the right hand of the Father (Rom. 8:34), and serves in perpetual intercession for His people (Heb. 7:25). He will return in power and glory (1 Thess. 4:13-17).
5. The Holy Spirit was sent by the Father and Son to convict the world of sin, righteousness, and judgement (John 16:8), to regenerate (Titus 3:5), to sanctify (2 Thess. 2:13) and to empower all who accept Jesus Christ as their Savior and Lord (Gal. 5:16). The Holy Spirit indwells every believer in Christ (1 Cor. 6:19),

submitted to the Leadership Team which will evaluate them based on the church's finances and ministry goals and provide them as needed.

Article XII Church Meetings

The Annual Church Meeting shall be held in December.

- a. At this time the budget and election of officers and members of the Leadership Team for the upcoming year shall be approved.
- b. A report from the Pastor and Leadership Team will be presented.
- c. Special meetings of the congregation may be called, as needed, by the Pastor or five members of the Leadership Team.
- d. Special congregational meetings may be called only after the general membership has been notified at least two weeks in advance from the pulpit.

Article XIII The Church Calendar Year

The Church Year shall be known as the Calendar Year, January 1 through December 31.

Article XI

Special Committees

Section 1. The Pulpit Committee

- a. The Pulpit Committee shall consist of seven (7) members of the church chosen at a special business meeting.
- b. They shall submit negotiations to the Leadership Team. Upon approval by the Leadership Team, the congregation will vote on the compensation package as part of the candidate's call.
- c. They shall present the candidate, the compensation package and the terms of his call at a congregational meeting called by letter of notification of the membership at least two weeks prior and notice from the pulpit on the two Sundays previous to the meeting time.
- d. Only one candidate may be presented at any one meeting. A seventy-five percent (75%) affirmative vote will be necessary for the church to extend the call to the candidate.

Section 2. Task Groups

- a. Task Groups will be formed as needed by the Leadership Team or church body.
- b. A Task Group will end after the work of the ministry they were formed to do is completed.
- c. Task Group members do not have to be members of the church.
- d. Resource requests from a Task Group (finances, people, promotion, etc.) should be

and is an abiding helper (John 16:7), teacher (John 14:26), and guide (Rom. 8:14)

6. Everyone is a sinner by nature and by choice and is therefore under condemnation by God (Rom. 3:23). Salvation is received only through faith in Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord (John 3:17) and is never a result of good works (Eph. 2:8-9)
7. God has given some people in the church the spiritual gifts for evangelizing, pastoring, and teaching, for the equipping of the saints for the work of ministry and to edify the body of Christ, His Church. The work will continue until all come to the unity of the faith and the knowledge of the Son of God to the fulness of Christ (Ephesians 4:11-13)
8. The one true Church is the living and spiritual redeemed body of which Christ is the head, regardless of the race or social standing (1 Cor. 12:12-13). There is be spiritual unity of all believers in our Lord Jesus Christ (John 13:34-35; Eph. 4:3-6). The local church consists of a company of believers in Jesus Christ, baptized with a credible profession of faith, repentance of sins (Acts 2:38), and associated for worship, work, and fellowship (John 4:23; Gal. 6:10; Heb. 10:25). God has laid upon the members of the local church the primary task of sharing the gospel of Jesus Christ to a lost world and

leading people of all nations to faith and maturity in Christ (Matt. 28:19-20)

9. Because every believer is part of the priesthood of all believers (Rev. 1:6), every believer has the privilege of going directly to God the Father in prayer in the name of Jesus (Matt. 6:9; John 14:16). Jesus is our perpetual Mediator (1 Tim. 2:5) with the Father.
10. Christians should live for the glory of God (1 Cor. 10:31) and the well-being of others. Our conduct should be blameless before the world (Acts. 2:47) and we should be faithful stewards of God's possessions which He has loaned to us while on this earth (Matt. 25:14-30). We should seek to realize for ourselves and others the full stature of maturity in Christ (Eph. 4:13). The disregard of God's teaching is just cause for church discipline as prescribed in scripture (Matthew 18, 1 Cor. 5).
11. Marriage is sanctioned by God in the joining of one man and one woman in a single, exclusive union, as delineated in Scripture (Gen. 1:27; Matt. 19:5). God intends sexual intimacy to only occur between a man and a woman who are married to each other (1 Cor. 7:2) and no intimate sexual activity be engaged outside of marriage between a man and a woman (1 Cor. 6:9, 7:1-3). Neither paid nor volunteer staff will participate in same-sex unions or marriages

Article X Leadership Team

The Leadership Team shall consist of the Sr. Pastor, the Moderator, and eight elected at-large members from the church body. Spouses and staff members (excluding the Sr. Pastor) may not serve on the Leadership Team.

- a. The at-large members will serve a two year term and may be reelected for an additional 2 year term. A person may serve up to four years before being off the Leadership Team for at least one year.
- b. The Leadership Team shall meet monthly, or as deemed necessary by the group.
- c. The Leadership Team shall provide spiritual, financial, property and administrative guidance to the church.
- d. The Leadership Team will be allowed to authorize expenditures of up to \$5000 outside the budget per calendar year. Any amount over \$5000 must go before the church and be approved at a church business meeting.
- e. The Leadership Team will prepare the budget for the upcoming year to be presented at the December Business Meeting.
- f. The Leadership Team will present the slate for the election of officers and Leadership Team members at the December Business Meeting.
- g. The Leadership Team will work with the church family to organize Task Groups for the ministries of the church, including, but not limited to, visitation, Communion, and funeral dinners.

Section 4. The Treasurer

This person will be employed by the church. The Leadership Team shall be responsible for a job description and overseeing the work of the Treasurer.

Article IX General Officers

The general officers are: Church Clerk, Moderator, and Vice Moderator. All general officers are to be elected for a one year term at the Annual Business Meeting from nominations made by the Leadership Team.

Section 1. Church Clerk

The Church Clerk shall take and keep a record of all congregational business meetings. The Church Clerk will keep the roll of the church.

Section 2. Moderator

The Moderator shall serve as moderator for all congregational business meetings. The Moderator will serve as an Ex-Officio Member of the Leadership Team.

Section 3. Vice Moderator

The Vice Moderator shall serve in the absence of the Moderator.

nor will such ceremonies be conducted on church property.

12. God offers redemption and restoration to all who confess and forsake their sin, seeking His mercy and forgiveness through Jesus Christ (Prov. 28:13; 1 John 1:9). Every person must be afforded compassion, love, kindness, respect and dignity. Hateful and harassing behavior or attitudes directed toward any individual are to be repudiated and are not in accord with scripture nor the doctrines of the church (Luke 19:10; Rom. 5:8; Eph. 4:32; Jude 1:23).
13. The Lord Jesus Christ has committed two ordinances to the local church: Baptism (Acts 2:38) and the Lord's Supper (1 Cor. 11:17-34). Christian Baptism is the immersion of a believer in water in the name of the Triune God (Matt. 28:19). The Lord's Supper was instituted by Christ with His disciples for the regular remembrance of His death for all believers. The local church should not deny any believers the opportunity to remember Him (1 Cor. 11:24-26). These two ordinances should be observed and administered until the return of our Lord Jesus Christ.
14. We grow spiritually through Bible study (2 Tim. 4:2), prayer (1 Thess. 5:17), witnessing, ministry to others (Matt. 5:16; Gal 6:10),

dependence on the Lord (Gal. 5:16), and involvement in a Bible believing church (Heb. 10:25) to fulfill the mission of the church.

15. Every human being has direct relations with God (John 1:12). FBCF is independent and must be free from interference by any ecclesiastical or political authority (Acts 5:29). The church and state have different functions with the church fulfilling its duties free from dictation or patronage of the government.
16. There will be a personal visible return of the Lord Jesus Christ to earth and the establishment of His Kingdom (Rev. 20:6). There will be a resurrection of both the saved and the lost with those who are saved unto the resurrection of life and those lost unto the resurrection of damnation (John 5:28-29).

Article V Church Covenant

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

Team unless moral issues require immediate termination.

Section 3. Administrative Assistant

- a. The Administrative Assistant shall be recommended by the Pastor and hired by the Leadership Team. The Administrative Assistant shall be the Pastor's secretary and in charge of the church office duties.

Section 4. Additional Staff

Additional paid staff may be added upon approval of the Leadership Team and upon a vote by the church. The compensation package will be negotiated by the Leadership Team and approved by the congregation.

Article VIII Financial

Section 1. The Leadership Team shall provide for at least two (2) or more members counting all offerings.

Section 2. The giving records are to be held in strictest confidence.

Section 3. The Financial Secretary

This person will be a member of the church and employed by the church. The Leadership Team shall be responsible for a job description and overseeing the work of the Financial Secretary.

expense of the church, and the pulpit supplies shall be the responsibility of the church.

- e. Whenever there is a vacancy in the pastorate, the Pulpit Committee shall recommend to the church a candidate for the pastorate. The Pastor shall be called for an indefinite period of time.
- f. The Pastor shall be considered vacant by the resignation or dismissal of the Pastor. It may be terminated upon thirty (30) days notice on the part of the Pastor, the church, or for such period as may be mutually agreed upon between the Pastor and the Leadership Team. Termination by the church shall be effected by a vote of the church at a special business meeting after notice thereof and all requirements of calling this special meeting are met. The affirmative vote of seventy-five percent (75%) of the members present and qualified to vote shall be necessary to terminate the pastorate.

Section 2. Assistants to the Pastor

- a. Assistants to the Pastor, whether full time or part time, are to be recommended by the Leadership Team. If the Leadership Team approves the person and compensation package, it will be presented to the church. With a favorable vote of seventy-five percent (75%) of the eligible voters present, the person will be extended a call.
- b. The duties of these Assistants shall be determined by the Leadership Team. Employment shall be terminated upon thirty (30) days' notice after approval by the Leadership

We promise, therefore, by the aid of the Holy Spirit, to walk together in Christian love, to strive for the advancement of this church in knowledge, holiness, and comfort; to promote its spirituality; to sustain its worship, ordinances, discipline, and doctrines; to contribute cheerfully and regularly to God through the church and for it to be used in the support of the ministry, the relief of the poor, and the spread of the gospel through all nations

We promise to maintain family and secret devotions; to religiously educate our children; to seek the salvation of our kindred and acquaintances; to be just in our dealings, faithful in our engagements, and exemplary in our conduct; to refrain from gossiping, backbiting, and excessive anger; and to use the gift of speech to encourage one another in the Christian life; to remember that our body is the temple of the Holy Spirit, and we promise to use it to glorify God; to be zealous in our efforts to advance the kingdom of our Savior, and we further promise to watch over one another in brotherly love; to remember each other in prayer; to aid each other in sickness and distress; to cultivate Christian sympathy in feeling and courtesy in speech; to be slow to take offense, but always ready for reconciliation, and mindful of the rules of our Savior, to secure without delay.

We promise if we move from this church, we will as soon as possible, unite with another church where we can carry out the spirit of this covenant and the principles of God's Word.

Article VI Membership

Section 1. Membership Acquired

A person desiring to become a member of the church should communicate to the pastor an expression of interest to join the church. The pastor will verbally evaluate the candidate to ensure all aspects for membership have been met. When all have been met, the pastor will present a recommendation to the Leadership Team for the person to be accepted into membership of the church. If the Leadership Team approves the candidate for membership, the person will be accepted into the church's membership.

Section 2. Membership

The membership of this Church will be composed of individuals who have believed and accepted the Lord Jesus Christ as their personal Savior and Lord, express a public confession of faith, have been baptized by immersion and will uphold the tenets of First Baptist Church's Constitution, including the Articles of Faith and Practices. Their membership will be listed on the church's membership roll.

Section 3. Termination of Membership

A member's name will be removed from the church's membership roll by a written request by the church member, a transfer of letter request from another church or action by the Leadership Team to update the membership roll of inactive members.

Article VII Staff

The staff shall consist of the Pastor and any additional support staff deemed necessary by the church to fulfill its ministry.

Section 1. Pastor

- a. The Pastor shall be considered the spiritual leader of the church. He shall preach the gospel of Jesus Christ and teach the whole counsel of God. He shall administer the ordinances, watch over and shepherd the congregation, have in his charge the spiritual welfare of the congregation and the public worship services. He shall be designated as the Senior Pastor to oversee any added pastoral staff the church may choose to add. He shall be an ex-officio member of the Leadership Team and any Task Groups he so desires.
- b. He shall be an ordained Baptist minister in complete accordance with the Articles of Faith and Practices and the church Covenant as stated in this Constitution.
- c. The Pastor's total employment package shall initially be negotiated by the Pulpit Committee and approved by the church. Subsequent changes in the package will be negotiated by the Leadership team and approved by the church.
- d. The Pastor may attend the state and national conventions of the church's affiliation at the