

**BY-LAWS
FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH OF MARYVILLE**

ARTICLE I. CHURCH MEMBERSHIP

SECTION A. GENERAL

This is a sovereign and democratic Baptist Church under the leadership of Jesus Christ. The membership retains the exclusive right of self-government in all phases of the life of the church. The membership reserves the right to determine who shall be members of this church.

SECTION B. CANDIDACY

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

1. Persons who present themselves on public profession of Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord, and requesting baptism.
2. Persons who hold membership in another Baptist church, and present themselves on promise of a letter from that church.
3. Persons who make a statement of Christian faith experience and previous believer's baptism from another church of like faith and order.
4. New members will be received into the fellowship at quarterly church conferences by a majority vote of members present and voting.
5. New members of the church are expected to assume responsibilities in:
 - Financial support of the work of the church through tithes and offerings,
 - Participate in Bible Study and Worship on a regular basis, and
 - Participate in the missions activities and ministries of the church.

SECTION C. RIGHTS OF MEMBERS

1. Every member of the church is entitled to vote in all elections and on all questions submitted to the church in conferences, provided the member is present or provision has been made for absentee balloting.
2. Every member of the church is eligible for consideration by the membership as candidates for selective offices in the church, subject to Bible teachings and any special rules for the office, if any.
3. Every member of the church may participate in the ordinances of the church as administered by the church.

SECTION D. RESOLUTION OF DISPUTES

In consideration of the privilege of belonging to the church and in obedience to the commands of 1 Corinthians 6, each member, including its ministers, agree to submit any and all legal disputes with First Baptist Church of Maryville, its ministers, employees or other members to the Trustees and to relinquish any right each might otherwise have to seek resolution of the dispute before a court of law, administrative body or other civil authority. The decision of the majority of the Trustees present and voting at a properly called meeting shall be binding on all parties to the dispute. If any party is dissatisfied with the decision, appeal may be made to the congregation as a whole. Appeals must be made within 30 days of the Trustees decision and shall be addressed in writing to Trustees, who shall have the matter placed on the agenda at the next regular or specially called church conference. The decision of the majority of the congregation present and voting shall be final and not subject to review by civil authorities.

SECTION E. TERMINATION OF MEMBERSHIP

Membership may be terminated in the following ways:

1. Death
2. Transfer to another Baptist church
3. Erasure upon request or proof of membership in another church
4. Exclusion by action of this church in accordance with two-thirds vote of members present at a special church conference. It shall be the responsibility of the church to maintain an accurate roll of church members, record transfers of membership and report all transfers of membership at regular church conferences.

ARTICLE II. ORGANIZATION, OFFICERS AND STAFF

SECTION A. CHURCH OFFICERS AND ORGANIZATION

The officers of this church shall be the Senior Pastor, Pastoral Council, Deacons, Church Clerk, Financial Officers and Trustees. Task Forces and Ministry Teams will be directed by these officers to carry out the mission of the church.

SECTION B. CHURCH STAFF

1. SENIOR PASTOR

The Senior Pastor shall be the spiritual leader of the church and shall be elected to serve as long as mutually agreeable. The Senior Pastor is responsible for leading the church to function as a New Testament church and is charged to be true to the Word of God in preaching and in lifestyle. The Senior Pastor shall be ex-officio member of all organizations, boards and councils. The Senior Pastor shall serve as a member of the Pastoral Council.

The Senior Pastor shall serve as the moderator of all church conferences. In the case of the Senior Pastor's absence, the Associate Pastor shall serve as the moderator or the church body may elect a moderator for that meeting.

2. PASTORAL TEAM

The Pastoral Team member shall be called and employed as the church determines the need for such offices. A job description shall be on file or written when the need for a staff member is determined.

3. CHURCH EMPLOYEES

Non-pastoral team employees shall be employed by the church as the church determines the need for services. The Church Administrator shall have the authority to employ and terminate the services of these employees in conjunction with the supervising staff member.

SECTION C. PASTORAL COUNCIL

The Pastoral Council (hereafter referred to as Council) consists of the senior pastor and a group of spiritually mature members who have displayed wisdom and discernment in their relationships and actions. Council members are elected by the church membership to lead, discern, and foster the spiritual growth of our church by advising and assisting our church body in matters that may affect the spiritual health of the church.

Roles and Responsibilities of the Council:

1. Spiritual leadership

The primary responsibility of the Council is to provide encouragement, advice, and spiritual leadership to the congregation.

2. Spiritual discipline

If spiritual, ethical, or moral issues among church members cannot be resolved by Matthew 18:15-17, the Council shall provide direction to help resolve such matters.

3. Accountability

Council members will hold each other spiritually, ethically, and morally accountable.

4. Limitations on role

The Council will have no administrative authority or responsibilities. The Council will not serve as a review group to consider or endorse recommendations or give approval for programs of the elected teams of the church. The Council will not serve as staff to the senior pastor. The Council as a body should assume no responsibilities other than those described above.

Structure of the Council:

- The Council shall be composed of six members: five elected by the church membership who have been FBCM members for a minimum of two years and the senior pastor.
- Ideally, both men and women should be members of the Council.
- Elected members will serve for three years.
- Other than the Senior Pastor, Council members may not serve on both the Pastoral Council and the Administrative Council simultaneously.
- Members of the same immediate family may not serve on the Council together.
- The Council will meet monthly and as needed.

Selection of Council Members:

- First, the church membership will nominate prospective members via ballot.
- After a vetting process of interviewing, prayers, and discernment by the Council, selected nominees will be presented to the church membership.
- For a period of at least one month following presentation, the church membership has the opportunity to express any concern to the nominee and/or Council members. Then, the nominee(s) will be presented to the church membership for a vote.
- After serving for their elected term and rotating off the Council, a member must have an intervening period of at least one year before being eligible to be nominated for the Council again.
- In the event of an unexpired vacancy, the same process will be used to fill the remainder of the term.

SECTION D. DEACONS

Deacons are to be spiritual leaders and ministers to the congregation based upon 1 Timothy 3. Their primary duties include but are not limited to:

- Assisting with Offering, Communion and Baptism.
- Assisting with ministry to those experiencing physical, financial, and spiritual crisis.
- Assisting with the guiding and nurturing of the spiritual life of the church.
- Assisting the Pastors by encouraging and supporting the ministries of the church.

SECTION E. CLERK

The church shall elect annually a clerk as its clerical officer. The clerk shall be responsible for keeping a suitable record of all official actions of the church. All church records are church property, and should be kept in the church office.

SECTION F. FINANCIAL OFFICERS

It shall be the duty of the church administrator and the financial secretary to receive, preserve, and disburse and upon receipt of authorized vouchers, all monies or things of value paid or given to the church. They shall keep an itemized account of all receipts and disbursements. It shall be the duty of the Church Administrator to bring to the church at each church conference, a financial report of the receipts and disbursements of the preceding months.

A CPA Firm shall audit the report and records annually.

Upon rendering the annual amount at the end of each fiscal year, and its acceptance and approval by the church, the records shall be delivered to the church clerk, who shall keep and preserve the account as a part of the permanent records of the church.

The church shall operate under a budget system, and all expenditures shall be guided by it.

SECTION G. TRUSTEES

Nine Trustees, one must be an attorney, shall be elected by the church. The Trustees shall serve for three-year terms, staggered so that the term of three Trustees expires each year. The Trustees shall be responsible for executing contracts and other legal documents on behalf of the church. They shall also be responsible, with the approval of the church, for the acquisition and/or disposition of all real property and personal property as well as the establishment and oversight of endowments. The Trustees shall also be responsible for borrowing money, subject to the approval of the church.

SECTION H. TASK FORCES AND MINISTRY TEAMS

The church staff and leadership will use task forces and rotating ministry teams to assist with conducting the ministries of the church.

ARTICLE III. CHURCH ORDINANCES

SECTION A. BAPTISM

Baptism as part of any worship service of the church, shall be immersion in water and may be administered by the Senior Pastor or whomever the Senior Pastor designates.

SECTION B. COMMUNION

Communion will be observed at least quarterly. The Pastoral Team and deacons shall administer Communion.

ARTICLE IV. CHURCH MEETINGS

SECTION A. WORSHIP SERVICES

The church shall meet regularly each Sunday morning, Sunday evening, and Wednesday evening for worship of Almighty God. Prayer, praise, preaching, instruction and evangelism shall be among the activities of these services. Additional times may be added as directed by the Pastoral Council.

SECTION B. SPECIAL SERVICES

Revival services, Bible studies, and any other church meetings essential to the advancement of the church objectives shall be placed on the church calendar.

SECTION C. REGULAR CHURCH CONFERENCE

The church shall hold a quarterly church conference on a designated Sunday.

SECTION D. SPECIAL CHURCH CONFERENCES

The church may conduct called church conferences to consider matters of special nature and significance. A one-week notice must be given for the special church conference. The notice shall include subject, date, time, and place and it must be given in such a manner that all members have an opportunity to know of the meeting. When extreme urgency renders such notice impractical, the one week notice may be waived; however, any decision or decisions made in an emergency situation must later be approved for a second time or ratified in a regular church conference or a special called church conference meeting giving the one week's notice.

SECTION E. QUORUM

A quorum consists of a simple majority of those members who attend the church conference, provided it is a stated meeting or properly called.

SECTION F. PROCEDURE

Roberts' Rules of Order, Revised is the authority for parliamentary rules of procedure for all church conferences.

ARTICLE V. CHURCH FINANCES

SECTION A. BUDGET

A Budget Task Force in consultation with the Pastoral Team and led by the Church Administrator shall prepare a budget and submit it to the Church body for approval. The budget shall indicate by items the amount needed for all expenses.

SECTION B. ACCOUNTING PROCEDURES

All funds received for any and all purposes shall be delivered to the Church financial secretary and properly recorded on the books of the Church. Those receiving funds on the behalf of the Church shall be insured at the cost of the church.

SECTION C. FISCAL YEAR

The Church fiscal year shall begin on July 1 and end on June 30.

ARTICLE VI. AMENDMENTS

These By-Laws may be amended by a majority vote of Church members present and voting at any regular church conference of the Church. An amendment to the By-Laws may be presented for vote only if the amendment has been presented in writing at the previous church conference and copies of the proposed amendment furnished to each member present at the previous church conference.

The official copy of the By-Laws shall be kept in the Church office.

-- Originated in 2004; last amended on 3/13/15