



## Church Handbook

July 28, 2020

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**Pastoral Staff**

David Bond	Interim Pastor	dbond@absc.org	501-831-0223
James Bell	Associate Pastor	james@fbcvilonia.com	501-339-6166
Dan Kerr	Children’s Pastor	dan@fbcvilonia.com	501-336-4542
Matthew Sisson	Student & Young Adult Pastor	matthew@fbcvilonia.com	501-501-4147

**Ministerial/Office/Janitorial Staff**

Vicki Weaver	Office Manager	vicki@fbcvilonia.com
Martin McKissack	Treasurer	martin@fbcvilonia.com
Michael Kane	Music Minister	soundbooth@fbcvilonia.com
Jeremy Canitz	AV Tech Leader	
Various part-time	Janitorial Staff	

**Deacons**

Tony Heykoop  
 Les Hopp  
 Ken Kirkpatrick  
 Brian Lane  
 Kevin Luck  
 Martin McKissack  
 Jeff Musselman  
 Steve Otts  
 Roger Weaver

**Church mailing address:**  
 1206 Main St. Vilonia, AR 72173

**office phone:**  
 501-796-2103

**Church website:**  
[www.fbcvilonia.com](http://www.fbcvilonia.com)



## **Our Church Covenant**

Having been led by divine grace through the Holy Spirit to repent of our sin and believe in the Lord Jesus Christ and give up our lives to Him, and having been baptized upon our public profession of this faith, we now solemnly and joyfully enter into this covenant with each other.

We commit, through the power of the Holy Spirit, to remember one another in prayer, to help one another in times of need, to walk together in brotherly love, to work and pray for the unity of the Spirit and the bond of peace, to exercise humility, affectionate care and watchfulness over each other as we speak the truth in love, to be faithful in our responsibilities and commitments, to be just and honest in our dealings, to rejoice at one another's happiness and endeavor to bear one another's burdens and sorrows.

We commit to faithful participation in times of worship, prayer, study, and fellowship with other believers, to the building up of the Church by using our spiritual gifts in ministry, to contributing cheerfully and regularly for the ministry and expenses of the Church, the relief of the poor, and the spread of the Gospel to the world.

We commit to personal and family worship, endeavor to bring up any of those that may be under our care in the nurture and admonition of the Lord, and by a loving and Christ-like example to seek the salvation of our family, friends, and all peoples of the world.

We will seek, by Divine aid, to live carefully in the world, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, abstaining from things or practices which bring harm to our faith or the faith of another, and remembering that, as we have laid aside the old self and put on the new self, so there is on us a special obligation to lead a new and holy life in Christ.

We will work together for the continuance of a faithful evangelical ministry in this church, as we sustain its worship, ordinances, discipline, and doctrines and when we move from this place, as soon as possible, unite with some other local church where we can carry out the spirit of this covenant and the principles of God's Word.

May the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with us all.



## Our Core Values

We are followers of Jesus Christ who have joined together as a local church congregation to proclaim and promote the Gospel of Jesus Christ. As a people in love with Jesus, we strive for intentional growth in our core values:

**Scripture:** God's holy and inerrant word is the foundation of all we do and say.

**Worship:** We strive to exhibit true worship of Jesus Christ in all areas of our corporate and individual lives.

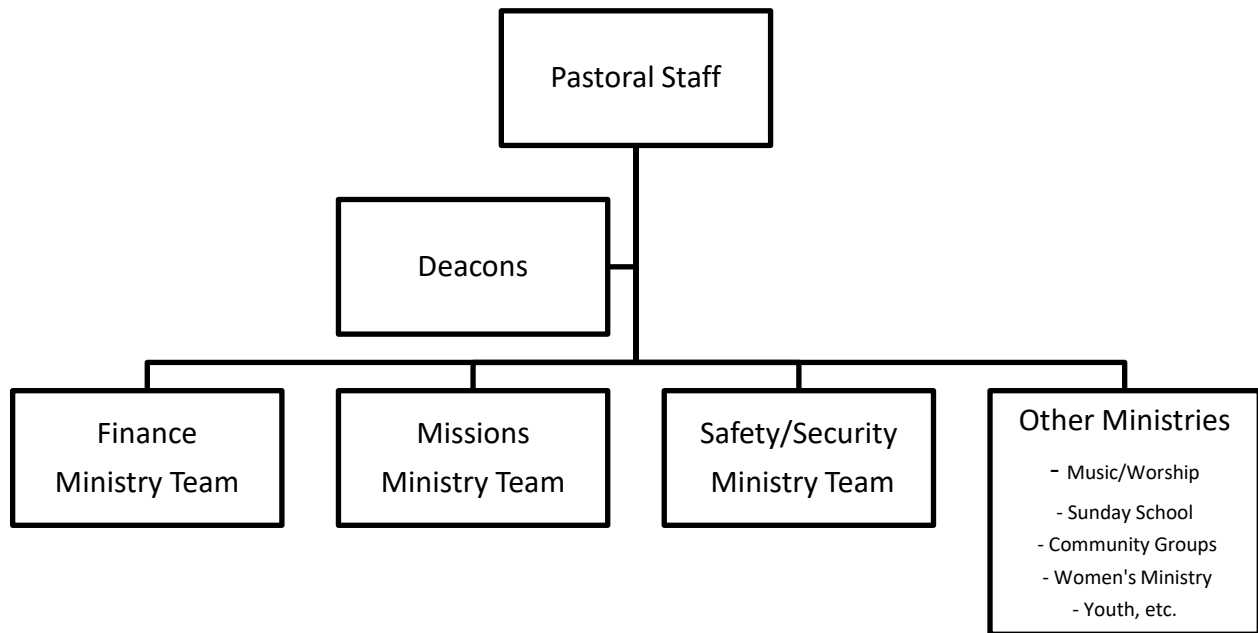
**Discipleship:** We equip God's people of all generations to follow Jesus with all their heart, soul, and mind: encouraging strong homes where the gospel is taught, modeled, and obeyed in order to build up the body of Christ.

**Missions:** We serve others, share the gospel, go on mission, and work with ministry partners in our community, county, state, nation, and around the world.

**Serving and Giving:** We encourage every member to use their God-given spiritual gifts, resources and talents to demonstrate their commitment to the gospel of Jesus Christ.

**Relationships:** We seek to build strong connections between individuals in our church, neighborhoods, and city for the purpose of caring, sharing, and fellowship.

## FBC Vilonia Leadership Structure and Decision Tree



### Pastoral Staff

- Called by and Accountable to the Church
- Responsible for General Leadership

### Deacons

- Selected and Ordained by the Church
- Function as Advisory Board to the Pastoral Staff
- Function as Personnel and Facilities review teams for the church

### Ministry Teams

- Finance, Missions, Safety – open membership; anyone can attend and participate
- Membership – members are by virtue of office
- Pastor Search – as needed, formed only for the purpose of filling a specific role on the pastoral staff
- Other Ministries – less structured, led and populated by willing volunteers

### Other Church Officers

- Church Clerk (nominated by Pastoral Staff, elected by church, indefinite term)
- Church Treasurer (nominated by Pastoral Staff, elected by church, indefinite term)
- Church Trustees (active deacons)

**Decision Process**

- The church meets at least quarterly for regular business meetings to disclose financial reports and to consider new business.
- Pastoral staff, deacons, and/or ministry teams may bring items of business to the church.
- Active church members may introduce new business to the church by submitting their suggestions or concerns to the pastoral staff, deacons, or ministry teams for consideration before the next regular business meeting.
- Pastoral staff, deacons, and/or ministry teams shall consider suggestions or concerns from the congregation and if/how to present them to the church for action.
- For special items of business, two weeks' notice shall be given to the church before meeting to conduct the business.
- Additional details are outlined in the Constitution and Bylaws.

## **Church Leadership/Decision Making Procedures**

Summary and clarification of the system established in the church bylaws

This document is intended to give a simple overview and description of how our church is organized, including its leadership structure, decision making processes, and the roles/responsibilities of the various teams used in those processes. The official framework of church polity is detailed in the established bylaws and this document neither takes precedent nor supersedes those bylaws. It is intended, however, as a summary and clarification of normal practices.

### **General Organization:**

First Baptist Church of Vilonia is a congregationally governed organization. This simply means that authority rests in the congregation of its members. The church vests its authority in pastoral leadership for spiritual guidance, overall direction, general ministry, and discipleship of the church. However, the pastors remain accountable to the church as a whole. Routine and ministry related activities are established by the Senior Pastor and Pastoral Staff, but other business is reviewed and recommended using various teams, such as: Deacons, Finance Team, Missions Team, and Safety Team, etc.

Each of these teams have at least one pastor for oversight/coordination and are led by a church member chosen from the team. The teams may be used to review and recommend decisions, policy changes, financial needs, or other items of business before presenting to the church in a formal business meeting. For instance, here are a few examples:

The Finance Team meets and formalizes a budget proposal for the church. This proposal is presented as a motion in a business meeting for church approval.

The Mission Team deliberates and decides to recommend a new missionary partner for the church. This recommendation is presented as a motion in a business meeting for church approval.

The Deacons review and recommend a contractor to repair the roof of the gym. This recommendation is presented to the church, after vetting and soliciting other bids, as a motion in a business meeting for the church approval.

Greater detail will be presented below for each team, but generally speaking these teams are the route for church members to present new business or suggestions for the church to consider. All members are encouraged to be active, voice their opinions and concerns, and feel free to discuss anything with the Pastoral Staff, Deacons, or other teams. However, new business is only presented to the church in a business meeting after being reviewed and recommended by one or a combination of these groups.

### **Pastoral Staff**

The Senior Pastor establishes the vision and general direction of the church. He oversees the teaching of the Word of God and is charged to preserve the Articles of Faith of the church. He



oversees the general ministry of the church, protects the overall welfare of the church, and is responsible for leading the church. It is a tremendous privilege and sober responsibility for this man of God. It is also unreasonable and impractical to expect one man to have all the necessary skills and time for all pastoral responsibilities of the church. Therefore, the church has also established a staff of ordained pastors to partner with the Senior Pastor in shepherding the church. These men help to oversee the teaching of the Word of God and the general ministry of the church. They are responsible for leading the church in their specific areas of ministry and according to their giftings from the Lord.

In order to promote accountability and to safeguard against false accusations, the Pastoral Staff does not have signature authority for writing checks or access to bank accounts. Also, as much as practical, the pastors do not handle the offerings/tithes given, including access to the safe, and are not made aware of individual giving records.

### **Other Staff**

The church also has other employees that serve in a variety of functions. Generally, these are considered hourly part-time employees. This includes ministerial, office, and janitorial/maintenance categories. Examples are: Office Manager, Music Minister, Treasurer, Janitor, A/V tech, etc. Part time employees coordinate with the staff pastor that has oversight of their area. Priority is given to church members to fill these positions as needed.

### **Deacons**

The deacons are servants of the church who are set apart by the church to assist the pastoral leadership in carrying out the ministry of the church. These men are active members of the church with proven character molded by the Spirit of God. The general focus of the deacon body is to assist the Pastoral Staff in building up the church numerically, financially, and spiritually. They offer advice on policy and financial matters, assist in dispersing the elements of the Lord's Supper, visit and endeavor to remedy the physical and spiritual needs in the lives of its members, guard and protect the reputation of the church against gossip, lies, and false accusations, and support and pray for the pastoral leadership.

The testimony of Scripture, as final authority rather than any man-made tradition, dictates the office of deacon will not be taken to mean authority over the church and/or the Senior Pastor or other Pastoral Staff (1 Tim. 3:3-13; Acts 6:1-16). Rather they are an extremely important group of God-fearing and wise men who give counsel, recommendations, and partnership to the pastoral leadership. Generally speaking, the pastoral leadership consults with the deacons on all major decisions of the church, acknowledging the benefit of wise counsel (Prov. 1:5; 12:15). Selection for this group is detailed in the bylaws, but recommendations may be made to any of the deacons or Pastoral Staff for consideration. Potential candidates are presented to the church for approval as the need arrives.

The deacons will usually meet weekly with the Pastoral Staff for prayer, encouragement, and to discuss any items of business. Any recommendations from the team of deacons are acknowledged with a vote and may then be presented to the church as needed. Deacons also have

the authority to approve an expenditure under \$10,000 provided that the allocation is already approved in the budget. For instance:

The annual operating budget may have \$20,000 set aside for maintenance and upkeep of church facilities. This allocation has already been approved by the church. However, a need to replace an HVAC unit or repair to a roof, etc. might cost \$7,000. This falls under the annual budget amount already approved and the \$10,000 threshold, therefore the deacons may approve this expenditure without going to the church for further approval.

Anything over \$10,000, even if covered in the annual budget, is presented to the church for approval. If a need arises that is beyond the approved budget it may be presented to the church as an extra-budgetary special appropriation. The deacons will also recommend annual salaries/benefits and hourly wages for employees (including any pay increases) to the finance team to be incorporated into the budget. This is the one category that the deacons meet and discuss outside of the presences of pastoral leadership. This allows for a candid, objective discussion without undesired influence of those that would benefit from the decision.

### **Business Meetings**

The church meets at least once a quarter to review the quarterly financial report and to consider any new business. Regular business meetings, for routine business, may be held more frequently provided that they are announced one week in advance. For special business meetings dealing with significant decisions and/or financial expenditures (detailed in the bylaws) notice will be given two weeks in advance.

Business meetings are intended for active church members and are governed by common parliamentary procedures defined in the bylaws. Motions of new business are presented, discussed, and voted on by members physically present for the meeting.

### **Finance Team**

The finance team meets at least four times a year to review and approve the quarterly financial reports of the church. They also meet as needed throughout the year and also several times in the fourth quarter to create and recommend an annual operating budget for the church. They advise on financial matters of the church and monitor, analyze, and publish financial reports to the church. Their primary purpose is to monitor and verify the financial integrity of the church. Recommendations from this team are presented to the church during regular or special business meetings. The team approves recommendations with the majority vote of voting team members in attendance.

The team is comprised of active church members that are financially minded and willing to use their time and talents to serve the church in this area. The team elects their own chairman to facilitate meetings, coordinate with the Church Treasurer and Associate Pastor, and represent the team to the church during business meetings. Examples of Finance Team recommendations include: annual budget, quarterly financial reports, financial feasibility for purchases, projects, loans, and other financial/banking matters.

Participation on the team is available to anyone who wants to serve and all meetings are open to observers. One simply must attend three previous Finance Team meetings in order to be a voting member of the team. Openness, transparency, and responsible stewardship are key components of this team.

### **Missions Team**

First Baptist partners with individual missionaries and missionary organizations to promote the advancement of the Gospel to all parts of the world. The missions team provides oversight and support for the global missionary efforts of the church. The team recommends and administers the budget for the mission contributions of the church. As Faith Promise offerings are given, the money is distributed to existing partners each month and to other monetary needs that arise on the mission field. The team monitors and approves financial requests from the missionary partners. The team also recommends new missionary partners to the church and their level of monthly support. The team is responsible for monitoring the progress and work of supported missionaries. They also coordinate and facilitate an annual missions conference (aka Global Outreach Sunday) each year to celebrate missions and promote Faith Promise commitments for the new year.

The team is comprised of active church members that have a heart for missions and willing to use their time and passions to serve the church in this area. The team elects their own chairman to facilitate meetings, coordinate with the Associate Pastor (Missions Pastor), and represent the team to the church during business meetings. The team approves recommendations with the majority vote of voting team members in attendance, during any regular meeting.

Participation on the team is available to anyone who wants to serve and all meetings are open to observers. One simply must attend three previous Missions Team meetings in order to be a voting member of the team. Openness, transparency, and responsible stewardship are key components of this team.

### **Safety Team**

This team is concerned with the safety and security of the church campus, its services, and the people that are in attendance. It meets on an as-needed basis to cover three main categories: safety hazards/concerns regarding the facilities, safety/accountability for children and student ministries, and safety/security during ministry functions. This team reviews and recommends policies regarding background checks for volunteers, children/youth check-in and check-out procedures, accountability for volunteers interacting with minors, first-aid and first-responder procedures, and general security of the facilities.

The team is comprised of active church members that have a mind for safety/security and are willing to use their time and efforts to serve the church in this area. First responders, nurses, doctors, and/or other medical professionals, police/security professionals, or anyone with training in operational safety are encouraged to volunteer. However, no experience in these categories is required as there are a variety of service opportunities.

The team elects their own chairman to facilitate meetings, coordinate with the Associate Pastor, and represent the team to the church during business meetings. The team approves recommendations with the majority vote of voting team members in attendance, during any regular meeting. Participation on the team is available to anyone who wants to serve and all meetings are open to observers.

A subset of this team is the Security Team which provides an armed response to violent intruders or people who would otherwise want to disrupt or threaten the safety of those in attendance. Selection for this team is made by the Security Team leader in conjunction with pastoral leadership. These volunteers are either law enforcement personnel or those that possess a concealed carry permit and appropriate training. The team members remain anonymous, as much as is practical, to prevent them from being targeted.

**Wedding Instruction Sheet (*Reference Only*)**  
Policies and Procedures for Wedding Ceremonies and Rehearsals  
First Baptist Church  
Vilonia, Arkansas

A successful marriage ceremony requires proper planning and preparation. Our desire is for this occasion to go as smoothly as possible, and, therefore, we have found it necessary to make the following policies and procedures as it concerns use of the facilities.

**General policies:**

1. The church facilities are not rented for public use outside of the church family.
  - a. “Church family” is described as active members or their immediate family, subject to approval.
  - b. For the purposes of this policy, an “active member” is defined as someone who attends at least ½ of the Sundays during a given time period.
  - c. We reserve the right to refuse service to anyone, according to our doctrines and biblical convictions.
2. Although there may be a few exceptions, as a rule, the Pastor does not perform marriage ceremonies unless the bride or the groom has been an active member of First Baptist Church in good standing for at least six months prior to the wedding date.
3. The church facilities may not be used by those couples presently living together outside the bonds of matrimony. (See #2 above, regarding membership)
4. Plans for your wedding ceremony should not be finalized and/or published until both the bride and the groom have met and discussed the plans with the Pastor or Associate Pastor(s).
5. The bride and groom will be required to undergo pre-marital counseling with the Pastor (or another approved counselor) prior to using the facilities for the wedding ceremony.
6. Any marriage that is to be performed by someone other than the pastoral staff of First Baptist Church must have approval before the facilities are reserved.
7. Proper respect and decorum must be shown for this place of worship at all times:
  - a. No immodest clothing is to be worn in the church building at any time.
  - b. Smoking and/or drinking alcoholic beverages are not allowed on the church property during rehearsal, marriage ceremony, or at any other time.
  - c. No one will be allowed to participate in the rehearsal or wedding ceremony that is under the influence of intoxicating beverages or drugs.
  - d. No wedding will be performed on church property when intoxicating beverages are served at the reception, even if the reception takes place at a different location.

**Procedures for set-up and decorating:**

1. Keys and alarm codes for the church may be issued in the church office Monday-Thursday, 9 am – 4 pm. The keys should be returned to the church office by the next working day following the wedding.
2. Decorations are not allowed prior to the conclusion of the Wednesday evening service before a weekend ceremony.

3. Decorations shall not be placed on the pulpit or attached to the pews by pinning or nailing.
4. The platform furniture, musical instruments, audio/video equipment, decorations, etc. may be removed only under the supervision/instruction of a staff member (or their designee).
5. Proper precautions should always be taken before placing or moving anything on the wooden floor of the platform.
6. Proper precautions should be taken to prevent candle wax from dripping onto the carpet, furniture, or stage.

**Procedures for cleaning:**

1. There is a basic cleaning fee of \$125.00 (*due at the time that you secure your reservation*): The facilities will be cleaned and vacuumed before the weekend of the wedding ceremony and will need to be cleaned again before the next service by the custodial staff. This cleaning fee covers the use of the auditorium only. An addition of \$50 each will be added for use of the Family Life Center (Gym) and/or the Student Center. Any other area that is used, beyond these three, will need to be approved ahead of time and an additional cleaning fee may be required.
2. It is your responsibility to return anything used for the wedding in the Auditorium, Student Center, or Family Life Center (tables, table covers, furniture, equipment, dirty dishes, etc.) to their previous condition before the wedding. (This is not included in the cleaning fee)
3. Any tablecloths used must be washed or taken to the cleaners to be cleaned and returned to the church promptly after the wedding.
4. You are responsible to cover any additional costs incurred for clean-up and/or repairs that are above normal “wear and tear.”

**Procedures for the ceremony and rehearsal:**

1. The following people should be present at the wedding rehearsal: bride, groom, wedding coordinator, all attendants and ushers, the bride and groom’s parents, sound technicians, and the musicians (organist, pianist, soloists, etc.), as applicable.
2. The bride and groom are responsible for securing their own musicians. The pastoral staff will gladly make suggestions and recommendations, but the responsibility of contact rests with the bride and groom.
3. The pastoral staff is responsible for the content of all services held in our facilities. Therefore, all music used in the wedding ceremony must be approved before the wedding rehearsal. Music containing profane language, crudeness, or any themes contrary to the Christian life will not be allowed.
4. The church’s sound and video equipment is to be operated by approved personnel only. There is a required \$100 fee paid to compensate the sound technician for his time. Also, an additional \$50 is required to pay for someone to operate the computer (videos, slide show, etc.) and an additional \$25 is required if special lighting adjustments are requested.
5. It is proper, although not required, to give monetary gifts to the musicians, soloists, etc. (A good rule of thumb is a gift of at least \$50.00 if they are asked to be at both the wedding and the rehearsal.)

6. It is preferable that no wedding start after 2:00 PM on Saturdays. We also ask that the facilities be vacated by 6:00 pm on Saturday, regardless of the start time of the ceremony. This allows the custodial staff to adequately prepare the facilities for the next service.
7. No weddings will be held on Sundays.

We want your wedding day to be special and a memory that you will cherish always. The above policies and procedures have been made in accordance with the doctrines and convictions of First Baptist Church and based off of past experience. If you desire to use our facilities, you must agree to abide by these requirements.

**Concealed Carry of Handguns (*Reference Only*)**  
Policy for carrying concealed handguns on church property  
First Baptist Church  
Vilonia, Arkansas

As a result of changes to Arkansas Law Code 5-73-306(16)(B), First Baptist Church is required to specify our policy regarding the carry of handguns for members and guests that are on our church property.

**General policies:**

1. No unauthorized carrying of any firearms is allowed on church property.
2. The Church must give permission to each individual desiring to carry a handgun on campus.
3. Only those who are legally permitted to carry a handgun will be permitted. This includes law enforcement personnel with proper credentials as well as individuals who have a current Concealed Handgun Carry License.
4. Having a Concealed Handgun Carry License does not automatically give permission for that individual to carry a concealed handgun on church property.
5. The responsibility to know and understand the most current version of this policy remains with the individual carrying the handgun.
6. Those individuals approved to carry will be directed to members of the Safety Team for acknowledgement of approval and coordination in the future event of an emergency.

**Procedure for approval:**

1. Submit a request form (found at the bottom of this page) in writing to the church office.
2. Each request must provide specific information regarding legal carry credentials.
3. Requests must be approved and filed before permission is given.
4. Submission of this request form does not constitute an approval.

We understand the current state of the world and want to provide a safe environment. We also support the constitutional right of each person to bear arms and provide a defense. However, we must approach the issue of safety and security with a proper balance. It is our belief that this policy will allow First Baptist Church to have a controlled and organized response to the potential threats that may come against us. We appreciate your understanding and cooperation.

---

***Request to carry a concealed handgun on church property:***

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

Church Member? **yes** or **no**

Please list your current credentials to be considered, including the license # and expiration date:

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Request approved by: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_



## Facility Reservation and Use (*Reference Only*)

Church members ONLY may reserve facilities, but only as it does not interfere with ministry needs. This form may be accessed and turned-in at the church office:

# Reservation Form For Use of Church Facilities

### Request Information

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Please select one:  Family Life Center (Gym)  Student Center

Reason for use: (*i.e. sports teams, birthday party, family gathering, rec. time, etc.*) \_\_\_\_\_

Day of the week requested: \_\_\_\_\_

Please indicate if this is a:

One-time request  
Date requested: \_\_\_\_\_  
Time requested: From \_\_\_\_\_ to \_\_\_\_\_ (am or pm)\*

- OR -

Multiple-day request (*Please no more than one day per week*)  
Dates requested: From \_\_\_\_\_ to \_\_\_\_\_  
Time requested: From \_\_\_\_\_ to \_\_\_\_\_ (am or pm)\*

\* Please no more than 1 ½ hours each time

What is the best way to contact you?  E-mail  Phone

E-mail address: \_\_\_\_\_ or phone # \_\_\_\_\_

Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Please note: If you do not have a key/alarm code for the building, please coordinate with Bro. Dan or Bro. James so that a temporary key may be issued.

### Internal Use Only

Staff approval \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_ Entered on calendar  Party notified by staff

### **Summer Camp Financial Assistance (*Reference Only*)**

Policy for supplementing the cost of Super Summer and Kidz Kamp for regular attenders  
First Baptist Church  
Vilonia, Arkansas

First Baptist will supplement the cost of attending summer camps for regular attenders of our church. A regular attender is defined as a child/student that attends at least fifty-percent of ministry activities/opportunities designed for their age. Examples include, but are not limited to, Sunday school, Kidz Church, Fusion, Wednesday night small groups, and Awana.

A child/student is eligible for the financial aid once they: register for camp, submit the initial required deposit, and meet the attendance requirements. FBC will then pay fifty-percent of the remaining balance (minus the initial deposit).

#### ***Here are two hypothetical examples:***

Cost of camp is \$200. The initial deposit is \$50. This leaves a \$150 balance. The church will give (1/2) \$75 toward the cost of camp. This would result in the student paying \$125 total for camp (\$50 initial deposit + \$75 remaining balance).

-or-

Cost of camp is \$125. The initial deposit is \$25. This leaves a \$100 balance. The church will give (1/2) \$50 toward the cost of camp. This would result in the child paying \$75 total for camp (\$25 initial deposit + \$50 remaining balance).

Additionally, the church has the tradition of taking up a Super Summer love offering to further offset the increasing cost of camp. This love offering is divided up and distributed to those students participating in an organized church workday. This money is intended to be applied to the student's remaining balance and does not affect the fifty-percent supplement from the church.

**CONSTITUTION AND BYLAWS (REF. ONLY)**

First Baptist Church  
Vilonia, Arkansas  
Tax ID#: 71-0862581

**CONSTITUTION**

**PREAMBLE**

For the preservation and security of the fundamental principles of our faith (as described in Article II, Articles of Faith), to protect equally the rights and privileges of the individual church member as well as the freedom of action of this body in its relation to any other churches or religious organizations, and to the end that this body may be governed in an orderly manner, this constitution is hereby established.

**ARTICLE I  
NAME AND PURPOSE**

**Section A: Name**

The name of the church shall be First Baptist Church of Vilonia, Arkansas, referred to herein as the "Church."

**Section B: Business Location**

The address of the principle office of this church shall be: 1206 Main Street, Vilonia, Arkansas 72173

**Section C: Purpose**

The Church is organized to advance the Kingdom of God by supporting the worship of the One true God by its members, ministering to their physical, material, and spiritual needs as appropriate, and proclaiming the Gospel of Jesus Christ locally, nationally, and internationally through such ministries as may be determined by this Church.

**Section D: Governance**

The government of First Baptist Church is vested in its members. The membership retains unto itself the right of exclusive self-government in all phases of its life and organization, guided by the established pastoral leadership under the authority of Jesus Christ. The membership reserves the exclusive right to determine who shall be members of this church and the condition of such membership. The church is subject to the control of no other ecclesiastical body, but enjoys mutual counsel and cooperation with other churches of like faith and order.

**ARTICLE II  
ARTICLES OF FAITH**

**Section A**

The Articles of Faith do not exhaust the extent of our faith. The Bible itself is the sole and final source of all that we believe. We do believe, however, that the following statement of faith accurately represents the teaching of the Bible, and therefore, is binding upon all members.

### **Section B: What We Believe**

1. About the Bible: We believe the Bible is God's written message to humanity, which has been sovereignly preserved through the centuries. The human authors were under the supernatural guidance of the Holy Spirit so that what was written was the very Word of God. Because it is inspired by God, it is true and trustworthy without any mixture of error, and it has the power to transform lives. Therefore, it is the supreme source of authority for Christian belief and behavior. The scriptures provide help and hope to mankind. (*II Tim. 3:16-17; II Pet. 1:19-21; Acts 1:16; Acts 28:25; Psa. 119:160; Psa. 119:105; Psa. 119:130; Luke 24:25-27; John 17:17; Luke 24:44-45; Psa. 119:89; Prov. 30:5-6; Rom. 3:4; I Pet. 1:23; Rev. 22:19; John 12:48; Isa. 8:20; Eph. 6:17; Rom. 15:4; Luke 16:31; Psa. 19:7-11; John 5:45-47; John 5:39*)
2. About the Father: We believe there is only one God. God is the Creator and Sustainer of the universe. He is all-knowing, all-powerful, all-present and all-good. He has eternally existed in three Persons: the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. These three are co-equal and are one. (*Ex. 20:2-3; Gen. 17:1; I Cor. 8:6; Eph. 4:6, John 4:24; Psa. 147:5; Psa. 83:18; Psa. 90:2, Jer. 10:10; Ex. 15:11; Rev. 4:11; I Tim. 1:17; Rom. 11:33; Mark 12:30; Matt. 28:19; John 15:26; I Cor. 12:4-6; I John 5:7; John 10:30; John 17:5; I Cor. 2:10-11; Phil. 2:5-6; Eph. 2:18; II Cor. 13:14*)
3. About Jesus Christ: We believe Jesus Christ is the Son of God, is co-equal with God and has always existed. Because of His love for the world and obedience to the Father, He chose to lay aside His glory and come to earth in the form of a man. He was both wholly God and wholly man. He was conceived by the Holy Spirit and born of a virgin. Jesus lived a sinless life, taught with authority, and performed many miracles. He offered Himself as a perfect sacrifice by acting as a substitute for humanity and dying on the cross in their place and for their sins. He arose from the dead after three days to demonstrate His power over sin and death and to secure our salvation. He ascended to heaven, was given all authority, and will return again someday to manifest His eternal reign. (*Gen. 3:15; Isa. 7:14; Matt. 1:25-28; Luke 1:27, 35; Mark 1:1; John 1:1-14; John 19:30; Acts 1:11; Psa. 2:7; Phil. 2:5-11; Gal. 4:4; Heb. 4:14, 15; Heb. 7:25-27; I John 5:20; I Cor. 15:47; Eph. 1:20*)
4. About the Holy Spirit: We believe the Holy Spirit is co-equal with God and has always existed. His purpose is to be a "Counselor" who assists us. He is present in the world to make people aware of their sin and need for Jesus Christ. To those who believe in Jesus, the Spirit brings salvation and new life. He then dwells in the life of every Christian from the moment of salvation, providing such things as assurance, power for service, understanding of spiritual truth, resistance to sin, guidance in following God, and development in Christ-likeness. He gives every believer at least one spiritual gift at the point of conversion for the purpose of serving others. The gifts are to be exercised in an orderly manner to build up and unify the church. As Christians we seek to live under the daily leadership of the Holy Spirit. (*John 14:16-17; Matt. 28:19; Heb. 9:14; John 14:26; Luke 1:35; Gen. 1:1-3; II Thess. 2:7; John 16:8-11; John 15:26-27; Acts 5:30-32; John*

- 3:5-6; Eph. 1:13-14; Matt. 3:11; Mark 1:8; Luke 3:16; John 1:33; Acts 11:16; Luke 24:49; John 16:13; Rom. 8:14, Rom. 8:16; II Thess. 2:13; I Pet. 1:2; Rom. 8:26-27)
5. About Human Beings: We believe men and women are made in the image of God. They have a spiritual dimension allowing them to commune with God and a moral dimension allowing them to differentiate right from wrong. People are the supreme object of God's creation. The human race has been marred by disobedience toward God. The scriptures call this disobedience "sin." Sin separates people from God and causes a multitude of problems, both individually and corporately. The ultimate result of sin is spiritual death and eternal separation from God. (*Gen. 1:1; Ex. 20:11; Acts 4:24; Col. 1:16-17; Heb. 11:3; John 1:3; Rev. 10:6; Rom. 1:20; Acts 17:23-26; Jer. 10:12; Neh. 9:6; Gen. 1:26-27; Gen. 2:21-23; Gen. 1:11; Gen. 1:24; Gen. 2:24; Gen. 19:5, 13; Gen. 26:8-9; Lev. 18:1-30; Rom. 1:26-29; Rom. 7:2, I Cor. 5:1; I Cor. 6:9*)
  6. About Salvation: We believe that the problem of sin has no human remedy. Jesus Christ died on the cross for the sins of all humanity. Jesus Christ is the only way people can come to God to receive salvation. Salvation is God's free gift to us, but we must accept it. We can never please God with our own efforts or make up for our sin by self-improvement or any other good work. Both repentance (turning from sin) and faith (turning to God) are inseparable aspects of the single event of conversion. When we choose to repent of our sins and place our faith in Jesus Christ, we are converted, receiving salvation and a new life. Salvation consists of God establishing our relationship with Him (justification), beginning His work of making us more like Christ (sanctification), and accomplishing His goal of making us like Christ when we die (glorification). Salvation is maintained by the grace and power of God, not by the self-effort of Christians. Consequently, nothing a believer can do can cause him or her to lose the gift of salvation. (*Gen. 3:1-6; 24; Rom. 5:12; Rom. 5:19; Rom. 3:10-19; Eph. 2:1, 3; Rom. 1:18; Ezek. 18:19-20; Rom. 1:32; Rom. 1:20; Rom. 1:28; Gal. 3:22; Eph. 2:8; Acts 15:11; Rom. 3:24; John 3:16; Matt. 18:11; Phil. 2:7; Heb. 2:14; Isa. 53:4-7; Rom. 3:25; I John 4:10; I Cor. 15:3; II Cor. 5:21; John 10:18; Phil. 2:8; Gal. 1:4; I Pet. 2:24; I Pet. 3:18; Isa. 53:11; Heb. 12:2; I Cor. 15:20; Isa. 53:12; Heb. 9:12-15; Heb. 7:25; I John 2:2; John 3:3; II Cor. 5:17; Luke 5:27; I John 5:1; John 3:6-7; Acts 2:41; II Pet. 1:4; Rom. 6:23; Eph. 2:1; II Cor. 5:19; Col. 2:13; John 1:12-13; Gal. 5:22; Eph. 5:9; I Thess. 1:4; Col. 3:12; I Pet. 1:2; Titus 1:1; Rom. 8:29-30; Matt. 11:28; Isa. 55:1; Rev. 22:17; Rom. 10:13; John 6:37; Isa. 55:6; Acts 2:38; Isa. 55:7; John 3:15-16; I Tim. 1:15; I Cor. 15:10; Eph. 2:4-5; John 5:40; John 3:18; John 3:36; Acts 13:39; Isa. 53:11; Zech. 13:1; Rom. 8:1; Rom. 5:9; Rom. 5:1. Tit. 3:5-7; Rom. 1:17; Hab. 2:4; Gal. 3:11; Rom. 4:1-8; Heb. 10:38; Acts 20:21; Mark 1:15; Acts 2:37-38; Luke 18:13; Rom. 10:13; Psa. 51:1-4; Psa. 51:7; Isa. 55:6-7; Luke 12:8; Rom. 10:9-11 )*
  7. About the Church: We believe the head of the church is Jesus Christ. The church is a local and unified group of baptized believers who share a common faith in Jesus Christ, commitment to the scriptures, and follow Christ's commission to make disciples. The New Testament also speaks of the church as the body of Christ, which includes all of the redeemed of all ages. Church members are to model the life of Christ and as such are to live holy lives. Church members also care for one another, and are to support the vision and ministry of the church with their time, talents and treasures. The leaders of the church are to model the servant leadership of Jesus. The church is an autonomous body,

operating under the headship of Jesus Christ. (*Acts 2:41; Acts 2:42; I Cor. 11:2; Eph. 1:22-23; Eph. 4:11; I Cor. 12:4, 8-11; Acts 14:23; Acts 6:5-6; Acts 15:23; Acts 20:17-28; I Tim. 3:1-13; Matt. 28:19-20; Col. 1:18; Eph. 5:23-24; I Pet. 5:1-4; Acts 15:22; Jude 3-4; II Cor. 8:23-24; I Cor. 16:1; Mal. 3:10; Lev. 27:32; I Cor. 16:2; I Cor. 6:1-3; I Cor. 5:11-13; Gal. 3:28; Eph. 5:22-23; Col. 3:18; I Thess. 4:1-8; I Tim. 2:8-15; I Tim. 3:4-5, 12; Heb. 13:4*)

8. About Baptism and the Lord's Supper: Christian baptism is the immersion of a believer in water. It is an act of obedience symbolizing the believer's faith in a crucified, buried, and risen Savior, the believer's death to sin, the burial of the life, and the resurrection to walk in newness of life in Christ Jesus. The Lord's Supper is a symbolic act of obedience whereby members memorialize the death of the Redeemer and anticipate His second coming. (*Acts 8:36-39; Matt. 3:6; John 3:23; Rom. 6:4-5; Matt. 3:16; Matt. 28:19; Rom. 6:3-5; Col. 2:12; Acts 2:41-42; Matt. 28:19-20; I Cor. 11:23-28*)
9. About Family: God has ordained the family as the foundational institution of human society. Marriage is the unity of one man and one woman in covenant commitment for a lifetime. The husband and wife are of equal worth before God, since both are created in God's image. The marriage relationship models the way God relates to His people. Children, from the moment of conception, are a blessing and heritage from the Lord. (*Gen. 1:1; Ex. 20:11; Acts 4:24; Col. 1:16-17; Heb. 11:3; John 1:3; Rev. 10:6; Rom. 1:20; Acts 17:23-26; Jer. 10:12; Neh. 9:6; Gen. 1:26-27; Gen. 2:21-23; Gen. 1:11; Gen. 1:24; Gen. 2:24; Gen. 19:5, 13; Gen. 26:8-9; Lev. 18:1-30; Rom. 1:26-29; Rom. 7:2, I Cor. 5:1; I Cor. 6:9*)
10. About Last Things: We believe God, in His own time and in His own way, will bring the world to an appropriate end. Though some of the details of the events encompassing this time period are highly debated, there are many certainties. Jesus Christ will return to manifest the kingdom of God. At this time, the dead will be raised and all humanity will be judged by God. Those people who have accepted salvation through Christ will be received into heaven. Those people who have rejected salvation through Christ will be consigned to hell. Both heaven and hell are real places of eternal existence. (*Mal. 3:18; Gen. 18:23; Rom. 6:17-18; Prov. 11:31; I Pet. 1:18; Rom. 1:17; I Cor. 15:22; Acts 10:34-35; John 2:29; Rom. 6:16; I John 5:19; Gal. 3:10; Rom. 7:6; Rom. 6:23; Prov. 14:32; Luke 16:25; Matt. 25:34, 41; John 8:21; Luke 9:26; John 12:25; Matt. 7:13-14; Matt. 28:6-7; Luke 24:39; John 20:27; I Cor. 15:4; Mark 16:6; Luke 24:2-7; Acts 1:9, 11; Luke 24:15; Mark 16:19; Rev. 3:21; Heb. 8:1; Heb. 12:2; Heb. 8:6; I Tim. 2:5; I John 2:1; Heb. 2:17; Heb. 5:9-10; John 14:3; I Thess. 4:16; Matt. 24:27; Matt. 24:42; Heb. 9:28; I Cor. 15:42-44, 51-53; I Thess. 4:17; Phil. 3:20-21; Luke 1:32; I Cor. 15:25; Isa. 11:4-5; Psa. 72:8; Rev. 20:1-4; Rev. 20:6*)

### **ARTICLE III CHURCH COVENANT**

Having been led by divine grace through the Holy Spirit to repent of our sin and believe in the Lord Jesus Christ and give up our lives to Him, and having been baptized upon our public profession of this faith, we now solemnly and joyfully enter into this covenant with each other.

We commit, through the power of the Holy Spirit, to remember one another in prayer, to help one another in times of need, to walk together in brotherly love, to work and pray for the unity of the Spirit and the bond of peace, to exercise humility, affectionate care and watchfulness over each other as we speak the truth in love, to be faithful in our responsibilities and commitments, to be just and honest in our dealings, to rejoice at one another's happiness and endeavor to bear one another's burdens and sorrows.

We commit to faithful participation in times of worship, prayer, study, and fellowship with other believers, to the building up of the Church by using our spiritual gifts in ministry, to contributing cheerfully and regularly for the ministry and expenses of the Church, the relief of the poor, and the spread of the Gospel to the world.

We commit to personal and family worship, endeavor to bring up any of those that may be under our care in the nurture and admonition of the Lord, and by a loving and Christ-like example to seek the salvation of our family, friends, and all peoples of the world.

We will seek, by Divine aid, to live carefully in the world, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, abstaining from things or practices which bring harm to our faith or the faith of another, and remembering that, as we have laid aside the old self and put on the new self, so there is on us a special obligation to lead a new and holy life in Christ.

We will work together for the continuance of a faithful evangelical ministry in this church, as we sustain its worship, ordinances, discipline, and doctrines and when we move from this place, as soon as possible, unite with some other local church where we can carry out the spirit of this covenant and the principles of God's Word.

May the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with us all.

## **BYLAWS**

### **ARTICLE I CHURCH MEMBERSHIP**

#### **Section A: Membership**

This church shall consist of people having made a profession of faith in Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior and who have been scripturally baptized by immersion subsequent to this profession of faith. This sovereign and autonomous Baptist Church, under the Lordship of Jesus Christ, retains exclusive rights to determine who shall be members of this Church and the condition of such membership.

#### **Section B: Candidacy**

Upon a majority vote of the members present at any church service or meeting, membership shall be extended to all who have had, and whose lives evidence, a genuine experience of regeneration through faith in the Lord Jesus Christ; who renounce sin; who endeavor to live a

consecrated life wholly unto the Lord; who fully subscribe to the Articles of Faith contained herein; and who enter into the Church Covenant contained herein; and upon compliance with any one of the following conditions:

1. By baptism (immersion) as a true believer in Christ Jesus as personal Savior;
2. By letter of transfer from another Bible-believing church of like faith and practice, or other written statement of good standing from the prior church if the applicant has been baptized by immersion subsequent to a profession of faith;
3. By statement of faith, having been scripturally baptized by immersion. We believe in scriptural baptism, not simply “Baptist” baptism. If a person has been baptized by immersion, subsequent to their confession of faith in Christ, they may be accepted based on this statement of faith.
4. By restoration, if having been removed from membership, upon majority vote of the congregation after confession is made publicly before the church, and satisfactorily evidencing repentance.

The pastoral staff will evaluate and recommend acceptance of a prior baptism on a person-by-person basis. Their baptism will be accepted upon determination that the person has been scripturally baptized by immersion, subsequent to their salvation, and in symbolism of that experience. Any person coming from a church that teaches doctrines contrary to those as stated in the Articles of Faith, as determined by the pastoral leadership, must submit to believer’s baptism by immersion in this Church and adopt the view of faith, as stated in the Articles of Faith, held by this Church.

### **Section C: Classes of Members**

There shall be two classes of members of the Church: active and inactive membership.

1. The first class of members shall be referred to as the active membership roll, and shall consist of all initial members of the Church as of the date of these Bylaws, and all members admitted hereafter from time to time.
2. The second class of members shall be referred to as the inactive membership roll, and shall consist of the active membership roll that have been moved to the inactive membership roll by the Membership Team when those members are not ‘actively involved’ in the Church’s activities.
3. The Membership Team shall annually, or as the need arises, inspect the active membership roll and determine those members on said roll which have not been ‘actively involved’ in the Church’s activities within the last six months. Upon identification of those members and contact with them, the Membership Team shall transfer those members from the active membership roll to the inactive membership roll. The Membership Team shall mail a letter to those members at their last known address according to the Church’s records advising them of this change.
4. The term ‘actively involved’ shall mean that a member has attended a regular or special service of the Church and has made a contribution to the Church, within the last six months.
5. Each member whose name appears on the inactive membership roll may request that their name be transferred to the active membership roll by making a formal request to the



Membership Team after becoming ‘actively involved’ in the Church’s activities again. The subsequent transfer to the active membership roll shall be made by the Membership Team no sooner than, and effective upon, thirty days after the request is made, providing the Membership Team is able to confirm the member has become ‘actively involved’ in the Church again.

#### **Section D: Duties and Rights of Members**

1. Members are expected to:
  - a. Regularly attend the services of the church.
  - b. Give regularly for its support and its causes in time, money, talents, and spiritual gifts.
  - c. Live lives that are led by the Spirit, honor the Lord Jesus Christ in all aspects of private and public life, strengthen His church, and actively display brotherly love for all the members of the church.
  - d. Willingly submit to the pastoral leadership of the church and pray for them as they seek to faithfully shepherd the Lord’s flock. (Acts 20:28; Heb. 13:17, 18)
2. Members of the church shall have the right and privilege to full participation in the life and work of the church. Active members shall have a voice and the right to express their opinion on any matter.
3. Active members are eligible to serve in leadership and teaching capacities, serve on various ministry teams, and may be considered as candidates for elective offices of the church.
4. Members of the church may participate in the ordinances of the church as administered by the church.
5. Voting rights of active members:
  - a. Active members who have attained the age of thirteen (13) years shall have the right to vote in all aspects of church transactions authorized or mandated by these Bylaws.
  - b. Unless otherwise indicated, all business matters brought before the church for a vote require a simple majority vote (51%) of the active members present for approval.
  - c. Voting by proxy is prohibited.
  - d. Any vote requiring a  $\frac{3}{4}$  vote will be done by secret ballot. Furthermore, members may request that any item presented for vote be done by secret ballot. Secret ballots shall be counted by at least two (2) deacons as a minimum.
  - e. Dissolving or disposition of all, or substantially all, of the church assets requires a  $\frac{3}{4}$  vote of active members present.
  - f. Acquisition or sale of realty property, and/or building projects and related indebtedness requires a  $\frac{3}{4}$  vote of active members present.
  - g. Amendments to the Constitution and Bylaws of the church require a  $\frac{3}{4}$  vote of active members present.
  - h. Calling or removal of the Senior Pastor requires a  $\frac{3}{4}$  vote of active members present.
6. Inactive members of the church are not entitled to a vote or voice on any matter.
7. Rights of membership in the church do not confer ownership of any of the church’s assets.

#### **Section E: Termination of Membership**

Membership shall be terminated in the following ways:

1. Death of the member

2. Transfer of letter to another church of like faith
3. Removal upon written request or reasonable evidence of membership in another church
4. Exclusion by action of this Church

#### **Section F: Exclusion of a Member**

It shall be the practice of this church to pursue every reasonable measure for peace and reconciliation. However, should one member sin against another member or the Body of members (the Church), engage in unrepentant moral failure, or deny or teach contrary to the Articles of Faith contained herein, the aggrieved member(s) shall follow in a tender spirit the instructions given by our Lord in Matthew 18:15-17; 1 Corinthians 5:9-13; Galatians 6:1; and 1 Thessalonians 5:12-14. All such interventions shall be pervaded by a spirit of Christian kindness and forbearance, keeping the matter as private as is reasonably possible. In the event the matter cannot be resolved between the members, it shall be referred to the pastoral leadership for counsel and guidance.

After personal notification, hearing in private, and faithful efforts to bring such member to repentance and reconciliation have proven futile, the Senior Pastor, or his designee, shall present the matter to the church at an appropriate time. Membership shall be terminated upon a majority vote of active members present at a regular business meeting. It shall be the practice of this church to emphasize to its members that every reasonable measure will be taken to assist any troubled member. The attitude of the members toward one another shall be guided by a concern for redemption and restoration rather than punishment. At no time shall grievances between persons be brought to the church without following the herein prescribed action and the matter being first presented to the pastoral leadership.

#### **Section G: Restoration of a Member**

The church may restore membership to any excluded person upon making a voluntary confession, showing true repentance, and expressing their desire to re-unite with the church fellowship. Membership shall be restored upon recommendation of the pastoral leadership and a majority vote of active members present at a regular service or meeting.

## **ARTICLE II CHURCH OFFICERS, STAFF AND TEAMS**

#### **Section A: Church Officers**

The two church offices prescribed in 1 Timothy 3:1-13 are that of Pastors and Deacons. However, in order that this church may operate lawfully as a corporation and effectively as a non-profit business, we hereby also recognize the office of Church Clerk, Church Treasurer, and Trustee. As an accommodation to corporate designations, the Senior Pastor shall serve as President of the corporation; the Church Clerk shall serve as Secretary of the corporation; the Church Treasure shall serve as Treasurer of the corporation; and the active Deacons shall serve as the Trustees of the corporation. All who serve as officers of the church shall be active members of the church.

## **1. Senior Pastor**

- a. Qualifications
  - i. The qualifications for Senior Pastor shall be consistent with those listed in 1 Timothy 3:1-7.
  - ii. His training, skills, and experience shall be suitable for the responsibilities of this position as deemed appropriate by the Pastoral Search Team.
  - iii. A woman shall not be considered for, nor serve in this office, based on the qualifications set forth in 1 Timothy 3:1-7.
- b. Responsibilities
  - i. The Senior Pastor is responsible for establishing the vision and general direction of the Church. He oversees the teaching of the Word of God and is charged to preserve the Articles of Faith of the Church. He oversees the general ministry of the Church, protects the overall welfare of the Church, and is responsible for leading the Church.
- c. Selection Procedures
  - i. The Pastoral Search Team shall nominate qualified candidates to the Church for consideration.
  - ii. Only one candidate at a time shall be considered.
  - iii. The Senior Pastor shall be selected by the affirmative vote of three-fourths ( $\frac{3}{4}$ ) of the active members present at a special business meeting for this purpose, duly noticed pursuant to Article III, Section D of these Bylaws. Voting shall be administered by secret ballot and pursuant to Article I, Section D(5).
  - iv. If the Senior Pastor candidate does not receive the required affirmative vote, the Pastoral Search Team shall continue to pursue candidates for the position until the next candidate is selected for consideration.
- d. Term of Office
  - i. The Senior Pastor shall serve an indefinite term of service until duly terminated.
- e. Termination From Office
  - i. The Senior Pastor may voluntarily resign from office by written notification.
  - ii. The office of Senior Pastor may be declared vacant upon death or disability.
  - iii. The Senior Pastor shall be removed from office by the affirmative vote of three-fourths ( $\frac{3}{4}$ ) of the active members present at a special meeting for this purpose, duly noticed pursuant to Article III, Section D of these Bylaws. The recommendation for removal shall be initiated upon a majority vote of the Pastoral Staff and Deacons. Consideration for removal shall only be for one of the following reasons:
    1. Falling into sinful and worldly practices without repentance,
    2. Engaging in conduct that could hinder the purpose of the Church,
    3. Teaching doctrines inconsistent with the Bible or specifically the Articles of Faith contained herein,
    4. Gross neglect of duties.
- f. Vacancy
  - i. During a period of vacancy in the Senior Pastor position, leadership will pass to the existing Pastoral Staff. In the event that the Pastoral Staff is unable to fulfill this function, leadership will pass to the Deacons.
  - ii. The interim leadership will initiate the formation of a Pastoral Search Team pursuant to Article II Section C of these Bylaws.

## 2. Pastoral Staff

- a. Qualifications
  - i. The qualifications for each member of the Pastoral Staff shall be consistent with those listed in 1 Timothy 3:1-7.
  - ii. The training, skills, and experience for each pastoral position shall be suitable for the responsibilities of the defined position as deemed appropriate by the Senior Pastor and/or the Pastoral Search Team.
- b. Responsibilities
  - i. Each Pastor is responsible for partnering with the Senior Pastor in establishing the vision and general direction of the Church. They help to oversee the teaching of the Word of God and are charged to preserve the Articles of Faith of the Church. They help to oversee the general ministry of the Church, protect the overall welfare of the Church, and are responsible for leading the Church in their specific areas of ministry.
  - ii. The Senior Pastor and/or Pastoral Search Team will write a job description for each new Pastoral Staff position, if one does not exist.
- c. Selection Procedures
  - i. The Senior Pastor and/or Pastoral Search Team shall nominate qualified candidates to the Church for consideration.
  - ii. Only one candidate at a time shall be considered.
  - iii. Pastoral Staff shall be selected by the affirmative vote of a majority of the active members present at a special business meeting for this purpose, duly noticed pursuant to Article III, Section D of these Bylaws. Voting shall be administered by secret ballot and pursuant to Article I, Section D(5).
  - iv. If the pastoral candidate does not receive the required affirmative vote, the Senior Pastor and/or Pastoral Search Team shall continue to pursue candidates for the position until the next candidate is selected for consideration.
- d. Term of Office
  - i. All Pastoral Staff shall serve an indefinite term of service until duly terminated.
- e. Termination From Office
  - i. Any Pastor may voluntarily resign from office by written notification.
  - ii. Any Pastoral Staff position may be declared vacant upon death or disability.
  - iii. Any Pastor shall be removed from office by the affirmative vote of three-fourths ( $\frac{3}{4}$ ) of the active members present at a special meeting for this purpose, duly noticed pursuant to Article III, Section D of these Bylaws. The recommendation for removal shall be initiated upon recommendation of the Senior Pastor, along with a majority vote of the remaining Pastoral Staff and Deacons. Consideration for removal shall only be for one of the following reasons:
    1. Falling into sinful and worldly practices without repentance,
    2. Engaging in conduct that could hinder the purpose of the Church,
    3. Teaching doctrines inconsistent with the Bible or specifically the Articles of Faith contained herein,
    4. Gross neglect of duties,
    5. The position is no longer deemed necessary, appropriate, and/or feasible to the ongoing mission of the Church.
- f. Vacancy

- i. During a period of vacancy in a Pastoral Staff position, the Senior Pastor, Pastoral Staff, and Deacons shall determine if the need exists to fill the position.
- ii. The Senior Pastor shall initiate the formation of a Pastoral Search Team pursuant to Article II Section C of these Bylaws, upon determination of such need.

### **3. Deacons**

- a. Qualifications
  - i. The qualifications for each Deacon shall be consistent with those listed in 1 Timothy 3:8-13.
  - ii. He must be an active member of the Church for at least one year immediately prior to the time of selection.
  - iii. He must be a regular contributor to the ministry of the Church through acts of service and financial giving to include both tithes and offerings.
- b. Responsibilities
  - i. Deacons are servants of the Church who are full of the Spirit and of wisdom; set apart by the Church to assist the pastoral leadership in carrying out the ministry of the Church. The testimony of Scripture, as final authority rather than tradition, dictates the office of Deacon shall not in any way be taken to mean authority over the church and/or Senior Pastor or other Pastoral Staff (1 Tim. 3:3-13; Acts 6:1-6).
  - ii. The general duties, aside from appointed tasks, shall be to assist the Senior Pastor and Pastoral Staff in building up the Church numerically, financially, and spiritually; to advise on policy and financial matters; to assist in dispersing the elements of the Lord's Supper; to visit and endeavor to remedy the physical and spiritual needs in the lives of its members; to guard and protect the reputation of the Church against gossip, lies, and false accusations; and to support and pray for the pastoral leadership earnestly and continually.
  - iii. The active Deacons shall also act as the Trustees of the church as needed for legal purposes.
- c. Selection Procedures
  - i. Active members of the Church may submit their nominations of those who meet the qualifications of the office to the Senior Pastor, Pastoral Staff and/or active Deacons.
  - ii. Candidates for the office of Deacon shall be evaluated by the pastoral leadership and active Deacons to ensure all qualifications are met.
  - iii. The Senior Pastor or his designee shall present the necessary number of qualified candidates to the Church for consideration.
  - iv. The number of candidates to be considered at one time shall not exceed the number of vacancies to be filled.
  - v. Deacons shall be selected by the affirmative vote of a majority of the active members present at a special business meeting for this purpose, duly noticed pursuant to Article III, Section D of these Bylaws. Voting shall be administered by secret ballot and pursuant to Article I, Section D(5).
- d. Term of Office
  - i. Deacons shall serve a three (3) year term in office. They may, at the recommendation of the Senior Pastor and active Deacons, be re-elected immediately following a completed term.
- e. Termination From Office

- i. Any Deacon may voluntarily resign from office by written notification.
- ii. Any Deacon position may be declared vacant upon death or disability.
- iii. Any Deacon shall be removed from office by an affirmative vote of a majority of the active members present at a special meeting for this purpose, duly noticed pursuant to Article III, Section D of these Bylaws. The recommendation for removal shall be initiated upon recommendation of the Senior Pastor, along with a majority vote of the remaining Deacons. Consideration for removal shall only be for one of the following reasons:
  - 1. Falling into sinful and worldly practices without repentance,
  - 2. Engaging in conduct that could hinder the purpose of the Church,
  - 3. Teaching doctrines inconsistent with the Bible or specifically the Articles of Faith contained herein,
  - 4. Gross neglect of duties.
- f. Vacancy
  - i. Upon vacancy of any Deacon position, the Senior Pastor or his designee shall initiate the selection process and schedule a special business meeting for this purpose, duly noticed pursuant to Article III, Section D of these Bylaws.
  - ii. The Church shall elect as many qualified men to serve as Deacons as deemed necessary by the Senior Pastor and active Deacons to fulfill the ministry of the Church.

#### **4. Church Clerk**

- a. Qualifications
  - i. The training, skills, and experience for the Church Clerk shall be suitable for the responsibilities as defined in a job description prepared by the pastoral leadership and Deacons.
  - ii. The Church Clerk must be an active member of the Church in good standing.
- b. Responsibilities
  - i. The Clerk shall be responsible for documenting the minutes of all business meetings of the Church; the correspondence of the Church as assigned to them; and keeps an orderly file of all records of membership, dismissals, ordinations, licenses and baptisms. The Church may delegate some or all of the clerical responsibilities to a secretary who will assist the elected Church Clerk.
- c. Selection Procedures
  - i. The Senior Pastor, upon consultation with the Deacons, will recommend one person for the position of Church Clerk and present them before the church for consideration.
  - ii. The Church Clerk shall be selected by the affirmative vote of a majority of the active members present at a special business meeting for this purpose, duly noticed pursuant to Article III, Section D of these Bylaws. Voting shall be administered by secret ballot and pursuant to Article I, Section D(5).
- d. Term of Office
  - i. The Church Clerk shall serve an indefinite term of service until duly terminated.
- e. Termination From Office
  - i. The Church Clerk may voluntarily resign from office by written notification.
  - ii. The Church Clerk office may be declared vacant upon death or disability.

- iii. The Church Clerk shall be removed from office by an affirmative vote of a majority of the active members present at a special meeting for this purpose, duly noticed pursuant to Article III, Section D of these Bylaws. The recommendation for removal shall be initiated upon recommendation of the Senior Pastor, along with a majority vote of the active Deacons.
- f. Vacancy
  - i. Upon vacancy of the Church Clerk office, the Senior Pastor or his designee shall initiate the selection process and schedule a special business meeting for this purpose, duly noticed pursuant to Article III, Section D of these Bylaws.
  - ii. During a period of vacancy, the duties of Church Clerk will temporarily pass to the Church Treasurer. If the Church Treasurer is unable to perform such duties, the Senior Pastor and/or Deacons may appoint an interim Church Clerk until one is duly elected.

## **5. Church Treasurer**

- a. Qualifications
  - i. The training, skills, and experience for the Church Treasurer shall be suitable for the responsibilities as defined in a job description prepared by the pastoral leadership and Deacons.
  - ii. The Church Treasurer must be an active member of the Church in good standing.
- b. Responsibilities
  - i. The Church Treasurer shall be responsible for the reporting of all financial activities of the Church and compile monthly, quarterly, and yearly reports to that effect.
  - ii. The Church Treasurer will keep an individual contribution record of each financial contributor. A copy of this record shall be provided to the contributor after the conclusion of each calendar year and/or at the request of the contributor.
  - iii. The Church Treasurer will be an active member of the Finance Team and attend all team meetings.
- c. Selection Procedures
  - i. The Senior Pastor, upon consultation with the Deacons, will recommend one person for the position of Church Treasurer and present them before the church for consideration.
  - ii. The Church Treasurer shall be selected by the affirmative vote of a majority of the active members present at a special business meeting for this purpose, duly noticed pursuant to Article III, Section D of these Bylaws. Voting shall be administered by secret ballot and pursuant to Article I, Section D(5).
- d. Term of Office
  - i. The Church Treasurer shall serve an indefinite term of service until duly terminated.
- e. Termination From Office
  - i. The Church Treasurer may voluntarily resign from office by written notification.
  - ii. The Church Treasurer office may be declared vacant upon death or disability.
  - iii. The Church Treasurer shall be removed from office by an affirmative vote of a majority of the active members present at a special meeting for this purpose, duly noticed pursuant to Article III, Section D of these Bylaws. The recommendation for removal shall be initiated upon recommendation of the Senior Pastor, along with a majority vote of the active Deacons.

- f. Vacancy
  - i. Upon vacancy of the Church Treasurer office, the Senior Pastor or his designee shall initiate the selection process and schedule a special business meeting for this purpose, duly noticed pursuant to Article III, Section D of these Bylaws.
  - ii. During a period of vacancy, the duties of Church Treasurer will temporarily pass to the Church Clerk. If the Church Clerk is unable to perform such duties, the Senior Pastor and/or Deacons may appoint a member of the Finance Team as an interim Church Treasurer until one is duly elected.

### **Section B: Non-Ministerial Staff**

Non-ministerial staff shall be employed as the Church determines the need for their services. The Senior Pastor and/or Pastoral Staff shall have the authority to employ and to terminate services of non-ministerial staff members.

### **Section C: Church Teams**

The following teams shall serve at the discretion of the Church as needed in its ministry:

#### **1. Membership Team**

- a. Purpose
  - i. To monitor and maintain the active and inactive membership rolls for the Church.
- b. Responsibilities
  - i. The Membership Team shall annually, or as the need arises, inspect the active membership roll and determine those members on said roll which have not been 'actively involved' pursuant to Article I of these Bylaws. Upon identification of those members and contact with them, the Membership Team shall transfer those members from the active membership roll to the inactive membership roll. The Membership Team shall mail a letter to those members at their last known address according to the Church's records advising them of this change.
  - ii. The Membership Team shall review all requests for additions to the active member roll in accordance with Article I of these Bylaws.
- c. Selection
  - i. The Membership Team shall consist of the Senior Pastor, Pastoral Staff, Church Clerk, and a select number of Deacons.

#### **2. Finance Team**

- a. Purpose
  - i. To monitor and verify the financial integrity of the Church.
- b. Responsibilities
  - i. The Finance Team shall coordinate with the Church Treasurer to create and recommend an annual budget to the Church; shall advise on financial matters of the Church; shall monitor, analyze and publish a quarterly report of receipts and expenditures for the Church to review.
- c. Selection
  - i. Active Church members are allowed to serve on this team. Voting members of this team are expected to have participated in at least three previous Finance Team meetings.



- ii. Voting members of the team shall elect a chairman. The chairman facilitates team meetings, coordinates with the Church Treasurer in preparing for and scheduling meetings, and represents the Finance Team to the Church during business meetings.

### **3. Missions Team**

- a. Purpose
  - i. To provide oversight and support for the global missionary efforts of the Church.
- b. Responsibilities
  - i. The Missions Team recommends and administers a budget for the mission contributions of the Church; recommends new and current missions support; monitors progress and work of supported missions; and coordinates and facilitates an annual Missions Conference.
- c. Selection
  - i. Active Church members are allowed to serve on this team. Voting members of this team are expected to have participated in at least three previous Missions Team meetings.
  - ii. Voting members of the team shall elect a chairman. The chairman coordinates with the Pastoral Staff in preparation for and scheduling of meetings and represents the Missions Team to the Church during business meetings.

### **4. Pastoral Search Team**

- a. Purpose
  - i. To seek and recommend qualified pastoral candidates to the Church.
- b. Responsibilities
  - i. The Pastoral Search Team shall evaluate the requirements of the vacant position and write a job description for the position if one does not exist.
  - ii. The Pastoral Search Team shall solicit candidates for the vacant position, review each of the submitted candidates, and upon selection of a qualified candidate make a formal recommendation to the Church.
- c. Selection
  - i. The Senior Pastor and/or Pastoral Staff, pursuant to Article II Section A of these Bylaws, will initiate the formation of the Pastoral Search Team.
  - ii. The Pastoral Search Team shall consist of the Senior Pastor (unless vacant), Pastoral Staff, three or more active Deacons, and three or more active Church members.
  - iii. The Pastoral Search Team shall disband upon the elimination of the vacancy.

## **Section D: Team Organization and Governance**

Each team may elect other officers of that organization as they deem appropriate to function. A simple majority of each team shall constitute a quorum for any meeting, and all actions of the team, not otherwise set forth herein, shall be by majority vote of those voting members present. Team members shall receive actual verbal or written notice of meetings prior to any meeting of a team.

## **ARTICLE III CHURCH MEETINGS AND MINISTRIES**

### **Section A: Worship Services**

The Church shall assemble regularly, at least weekly on Sundays, for the corporate worship of God. These gatherings are open to all people who wish to participate, providing they are not deemed an inappropriate distraction to the services, and shall be conducted under the direction of the Senior Pastor or his designee.

### **Section B: Special Services**

The Church shall schedule other services and/or activities as deemed appropriate to the promotion of the Church's purpose. All services and activities are subject to the authority and discretion of the Church.

### **Section C: Regular Business Meetings**

The Church shall meet in a regular business meeting at least every quarter to disclose the quarterly financial report and consider any new business. The Senior Pastor or his designee shall be the moderator of the business meeting. Regular business meetings may be held more frequently provided they are announced one (1) week in advance for all routine business, excluding: the election/removal of Church Officers or Staff, the significant expenditure of assets, amendments to this Constitution and Bylaws, approval of the annual Church budget. New business shall be presented by the Senior Pastor, Pastoral Staff, or a representative on behalf of the active Deacons or other ministry teams during a regular business meeting. Any active member of the Church shall have the right to introduce new business to the Church by submitting their idea to the Senior Pastor, Pastoral Staff, Deacons, and/or other appropriate ministry team for consideration before the next regular business meeting.

### **Section D: Special Business Meetings**

Special business meetings shall be scheduled to consider matters of significant and/or immediate nature. Notice for a special business meeting shall be given during the regular Sunday morning services at least two (2) weeks before the special meeting and a clear purpose of the special meeting is included in the announcement. The proposal shall be presented by the Senior Pastor, Pastoral Staff, or a representative on behalf of the active Deacons or other ministry teams during a regular business meeting. Any active member shall have the right to request a special business meeting to introduce new business to the Church by submitting the idea to the Senior Pastor, Pastoral Staff, Deacons, and/or other appropriate ministry team for consideration. The Senior Pastor or his designee shall be the moderator of the business meeting. The Pastoral Staff, in consultation with the Deacons, shall designate a moderator for the special business meeting in the event the Senior Pastor cannot.

### **Section E: Quorum**

A quorum consists of those active members who attend any regular or special business meeting duly noticed pursuant to Article III of these Bylaws.

### **Section F: Parliamentary Authority**

The rules contained in the latest edition of *Robert's Rules of Order* shall govern the procedure for all business meetings of the Church, providing they are not inconsistent with these Bylaws and any special rules of order that may be properly adopted.

### **Section G: Sunday School and Other Small Groups**

The Church shall establish classes and other small groups to facilitate Bible education and application with the goal of spiritual growth. The classes/groups shall be appropriately divided according to size, age, and demographic requirements and be subject to the authority and discretion of the Church. All teachers of said classes/groups shall be active members of the Church and fully ascribe to the Constitution, Bylaws, Covenant and Articles of Faith of the Church.

### **Section H: Missions Ministry**

The Church shall support missionary activities locally, nationally, and internationally through financial, prayerful, and physical means. The financial support for the mission ministry will be generated through the annual church operating budget as well as annual Faith Promise offerings. The church shall collect Faith Promise Offering commitments from its members annually that shall be used for budgeting purposes in support of the Church's Global missionary partners and shall be administered by the Missions Team pursuant to Article II, Section C of these Bylaws.

Due to the large number of missionaries and related organizations supported by and dependent on the Church, any significant change to the system of giving through Faith Promise offerings and/or the system of direct support of missionaries and related organizations shall adhere to the following procedure:

1. A special meeting of the Missions Team shall be duly scheduled accompanied by an announcement regarding the specific subject of the proposed change.
2. Upon an affirmative majority vote of the voting members of the Missions Team present, the recommendation will then be presented to the Senior Pastor, Pastoral Staff, and Deacons.
3. Upon the affirmative vote of three-fourths ( $\frac{3}{4}$ ) of the Senior Pastor, Pastoral Staff, and Deacons, the recommendation will be presented to the Church during a special business meeting for this purpose, duly noticed pursuant to Article III, Section D of these Bylaws.
4. Voting shall be administered by secret ballot and pursuant to Article 1, Section D of these Bylaws. The affirmative vote of three-fourths ( $\frac{3}{4}$ ) of the active members present at the special business meeting for this purpose shall be required for passing the proposal.
5. In the event that the system of direct support of independent missionaries and/or organizations is duly altered or abandoned by the Church, a period of one (1) year of support will be provided to the existing missionary/organization partners of the Church for purposes of transition.

## **ARTICLE IV CHURCH ORDINANCES**

### **Section A: Baptism**

The Church shall receive for baptism all persons who have placed their faith and trust in Jesus Christ as Savior, who profess Him publicly, and who indicate a commitment to follow Jesus Christ as Lord.

1. Baptism shall be by immersion in water as an outward expression of faith in the death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus.

2. The Senior Pastor, Pastoral Staff, or whomever they authorize, shall administer baptism.

### **Section B: Lord's Supper**

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

1. The Lord's Supper shall be observed regularly as scheduled by the Church.
2. The Senior Pastor, Pastoral Staff, Deacons, and whomever they authorize, shall administer the Lord's Supper and distribute the elements.
3. The Lord's Supper is limited to baptized believers alone; who after a time of self-examination feel led to partake; and who are not under church discipline pursuant to Article I, Section F of these Bylaws.

## **ARTICLE V CHURCH FINANCES**

### **Section A: Budget**

The Church shall approve operating and ministry expenses under an annual budget for each fiscal year. The Finance Team and Church Treasurer shall prepare and submit the proposed budget to the Senior Pastor, Pastoral Staff, and Deacons for consideration. Upon their endorsement, the Chairman of the Finance Team will present the proposed budget to the Church for approval. The budget shall be approved by the affirmative vote of a majority of the active members present at a special business meeting for this purpose, duly noticed pursuant to Article III, Section D of these Bylaws. Additional expenses, outside of the approved budget, must be submitted to the Church for approval as a special appropriation during a special business meeting, duly noticed pursuant to Article III, Section D of these Bylaws.

### **Section B: Accounting Procedures**

The Church shall maintain an itemized account of all monetary receipts and disbursements made to or on behalf of the Church. The Church Treasurer shall be specifically tasked with this responsibility and shall coordinate with the Finance Team to publish monthly, quarterly, and annual reports for review by the Church. The Church shall maintain a policy of transparency regarding its financial receipts and expenditures to its members.

### **Section C: Fiscal Year**

The fiscal year of the Church shall begin on January 1<sup>st</sup> and end December 31<sup>st</sup>.

## **ARTICLE VI AMENDMENTS**

This Constitution and Bylaws may be altered, amended, or repealed, and new bylaws adopted by the affirmative vote of three-fourths ( $\frac{3}{4}$ ) of the active members present at a special meeting for this purpose, duly noticed pursuant to Article III, Section D of these Bylaws. Proposed

changes in the Constitution and Bylaws shall be published in writing and available to active members of the Church at least two (2) weeks prior to the business meeting.

## **ARTICLE VII OPERATION AND DISSOLUTION**

The Church is organized and operated primarily for the purpose of advancing the Kingdom of God, supporting the worship of God by its members, and proclaiming the Gospel of Jesus Christ through all parts of the world. Therefore, it is to be operated in such a manner that does not result in accrual of distributable profits or realization of private gain resulting from payment of compensation in excess of a reasonable allowance for salary or other compensation for services rendered, or realization of any other form of private gain.

In the event that First Baptist Church of Vilonia should by the affirmative vote of three-fourths ( $\frac{3}{4}$ ) of the active members present at a special business meeting for this purpose, duly noticed pursuant to Article III, Section D of these Bylaws, decide to dissolve and cease functioning as a local organized church and corporate entity, the following actions shall be performed:

1. All monies from any existing Church fund shall be deposited into the Church's "General Fund."
2. All property (land, furnishings, vehicles, equipment, and all other items in or on this property) must be sold for current market value, except for items donated to charitable organizations, and the proceeds be deposited into the General Fund of the Church.
3. The Church shall pay or make provision for payment of all the liabilities and obligations of the Church.
4. Upon the liquidation of assets and the payment of all liabilities and obligations, the Church shall transfer the remaining assets to such organization or organizations formed and operated exclusively for religious purposes qualified as a charitable organization under the Internal Revenue Code of 1986, as amended. International mission projects may be considered as recipient of funds.

## **ARTICLE VIII ADOPTION**

This Constitution and Bylaws were adopted by a majority vote of the active members present at a special meeting for this purpose, duly noticed pursuant to Article III, Section D of these Bylaws and pursuant to Article VI concerning amendments.

This Constitution and Bylaws supersede any other Constitution and/or Bylaws of First Baptist Church of Vilonia.

DATED: June 25, 2017

          \*signed\*            
Vicki Weaver, Church Clerk