

CONSTITUTION AND BY-LAWS

12/16/2018

First Baptist Church

Flora Vista, New Mexico

PREAMBLE

We, the believers as members of First Baptist Church of Flora Vista, New Mexico, accepting Jesus Christ as our Savior and Lord, and the Holy Bible as the full and sufficient rule of faith and practice; do gather and fellowship with one another as a Body of Believers in Jesus Christ, we, hereby adopt the following as our Constitution and by-laws.

ARTICLE I: NAME

The name of this Church Corporation shall be the First Baptist Church of Flora Vista, Inc located in Flora Vista, New Mexico.

ARTICLE II: OBJECT OF BUSINESS

The object of the First Baptist Church of Flora Vista is the worship of Almighty God, the salvation and nurture of immortal souls, and the advancement of the cause of Jesus Christ at home and abroad.

ARTICLE III: GOVERNMENT

Section 1

The government of this church shall be vested in the body of believers who compose it, and whose majority vote, (except as otherwise provided) is final. It is subject to no other ecclesiastical body. It acknowledges Jesus Christ as it's only Lord, and receives the Bible as its supreme guide in matters of faith, order and discipline.

Section 2

This Church, while having complete control over its own affairs in the light of scriptures, recognizes the obligations and privileges of cooperation and fellowship with sister churches of San Juan Baptist Association, the Baptist Convention of New Mexico, and the Southern Baptist Convention, in our cooperative missionary endeavors.

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Section 3

CHURCH COVENANT

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

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

By the grace of God, we also engage to maintain family and secret devotions; to religiously educate our children; to seek the salvation of our kindred and acquaintances; to walk circumspectly in the world; to be just in our dealings, faithful in our engagements, and exemplary in our deportment; to avoid all tattling, backbiting, and excessive anger, to use our influence to combat the abuse of alcohol, drugs and the use and spread of pornography; and to be zealous in our efforts to advance the kingdom of our Savior.

We further engage to watch over one another in brotherly love; to remember one another in prayer, to aid one another in sickness and distress; to cultivate Christian sympathy in feeling and Christian courtesy in speech; to be slow to take offence; but always ready for reconciliation and mindful of the-words of our Savior to secure it without delay, forgiving one another even as God has forgiven you. Ephesians 4:32

We moreover engage that when we move from this place we will as soon as possible unite with some other church where we can carry out the spirit of this covenant and principles of God's Word.

Section 4

Upon dissolution of the corporation as a Church described herein, after satisfaction of any financial debt or encumbrance, the remaining assets of the First Baptist Church shall be transferred to the San Juan Baptist Association, San Juan county, New Mexico in accordance with the Articles of Corporation and By-laws.

ARTICLE IV: MEMBERSHIP

Section 1

Membership in this the First Baptist Church of Flora Vista is based on the unconditional acceptance of the Church Covenant (section 3) and these bylaws, and meets one of the following sections concerning membership and formally requests to become a member.

Section 1 - Membership

By Baptism

Any person that is scripturally saved may be scripturally baptized by the authority of FBCFV. Following such action, that person is a member of the church.

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By letter

We receive members who have been scripturally saved and scripturally baptized in another Baptist church of like faith and order. We secure a letter from that church stating that the candidate was a member of that church in good standing.

By Statement

In the rare case where a letter cannot be secured from the other church, we will consider accepting a person for membership based upon their testimony of scriptural salvation and scriptural baptism

Section 2 – Letter of recommendation

Members may be dismissed by letter of recommendation to the fellowship of another Church of like faith and order upon action of this Church; but no letter shall be issued to individuals.

Section 3 - Church Discipline

A church member shall be excluded from membership only for the most grievous of offences and no action may be taken until every effort has been made in Christian love to secure the repentance and restoration of the offender, in accordance with the text of scripture (Matthew 18:15-18). The pastor and deacons will be jointly responsible for the effort and actions to restore the offending church member, to include counselling both from the church and other outside professionals as designated by the pastor and deacons. Before exclusion, a rebuke shall be given according to 1 Timothy 5:20. It shall require a vote by ballot of two-thirds (2/3) of the active members present at a business meeting to exclude a member.

The pastor, deacons, and staff will be treated with the same Christian love and concern in the event an offense is made by any one of them. All efforts to counsel and restore will be the same as that for any church member. In the event the pastor is the offender, the deacons shall be responsible for the counselling and restoration efforts. In the event that a restoration of the pastor is not possible, then the chairman of the deacons will assume the role as president of the church. The chairman and the deacons will provide for the ongoing operations. At the earliest convenience, a special called business meeting will be called. The matter of the offense and a summary of the restoration will be presented. A vote for dismissal will be conducted as prescribed in Article IX and Section III, and the results announced immediately.

ARTICLE V: CHURCH LEADERSHIP & STAFF

Section 1 - Leadership

The leadership of this Church shall consist of the duly elected pastor and deacons.

Corporate Leadership – For matters of corporate and or legal concerns, the Pastor shall serve as the president of First Baptist Church of Flora Vista, Inc. Duly elected directors shall serve on the board of directors. The president and the board of directors shall execute the will of the Church body. The will of the Church body is demonstrated by a vote of members present during a business meeting.

Faith, Doctrine, and Stewardship Leadership – The pastor and deacons shall be the primary leaders of

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the Church in the matters of faith, doctrine, and stewardship to include approving of any teaching materials used for Sunday School, discipleship classes, presentations etc.

Section 2 – Church Staff

Church Staff – All church staff will be approved by majority vote of the pastor and deacons. Church staff may be a paid employee or a volunteer that performs tasks for the Church. All Church staff must be a member, in good standing of this Church. All Church staff shall accept and openly agree with the Church covenant and these bylaws. All church staff will be vetted by the pastor and deacons to include a criminal background check and any other inquiries that are deemed pertinent. Special circumstances may arise where a background check may be waived by a unanimous vote by the deacons and pastor.

Section 3 – Membership

The pastor, deacons, teachers, and servant leaders, duly elected or volunteers in service to this Church must be members of the First Baptist Church of Flora Vista.

Article VI - ELECTION AND DUTIES

Section 1 - Pastor

While both men and women are gifted for service in the church, the office of pastor is limited to men as qualified by Scripture.

A pastor selection committee will be convened, as necessary, to establish the criteria, as to the experience, education, and other pertinent details that will be used to select a new pastor. The chairman of the deacons will be the preside over this committee. The selection committee shall make its recommendation to the deacons. With approval by unanimous vote by the deacons, the deacons will present the final candidate to the church for a formal vote at a special called business meeting. The pastor shall be elected by a two-thirds (2/3) vote of members in good standing present. The Pastor shall be called for an indefinite period of time.

The Pastor shall be responsible for the general oversight of the work of the Church, and be the primary authority for matters of church doctrine, and the primary counselor for individual spiritual needs. The pastor shall be an ex-officio member of all boards or committees. The Pastor may be moderator at any business meeting, but no person may moderate at a business meeting that is not a member of the Church. In the absence of the Pastor, or upon his request the Chairman of the Deacons or Pastor's appointee may serve as moderator.

Section 2 - Deacons

While both men and women are gifted for service in the church, the office of deacon is limited to men as qualified by Scripture.

There shall be at up to four (4) Deacons for the first one hundred (100) resident members of the Church, and at least two (2) additional Deacons for each one hundred (100) additional members. They shall be men elected from among those members who have proven themselves to have scriptural

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qualifications and as approved by the current Deacons and Pastor and recommended to the Church for election.

The Deacons shall at all times consider themselves as servants of the Church, assisting the Pastor in the work of the Church, visiting the sick, seeing to the needs of the poor, and shall be diligent to maintain the purity of the Church in both doctrine and practice (1 Timothy 3:8-13). They are to act as a grievance committee and thereby endeavor to perpetuate harmony and good fellowship on the Church. The Pastor, or the Chairman of the Deacon body, may call the Deacons into special session whenever need for such arises.

Section 3 - Trustees (Directors)

The pastor and deacons will appoint a minimum of three (3) church members to serve as Trustees. Their term of office is of no defined period and may be terminated by the church or volunteer as needed.

The Trustees shall, as provided by law and the action of the Church, hold in trust the title to all property of the Church and shall represent the Church in all matters of legal responsibility regarding the purchase, improvement, and disposal of church property.

They shall execute all legal papers relating to the Church and to the community as the Church may direct.

They shall have no power to buy, sell, mortgage, lease, or transfer any property of the Church without a specific vote of the Church authorizing such action; neither shall they have any control over the use of the church property except by vote of the Church.

Section 4 - Clerk

The pastor and deacons will appoint a member and or one alternate to serve as Clerk. Their term of office is of no defined period and may be terminated by the church or volunteer as needed.

It shall be the duty of the Clerk to keep a true and correct record of the proceedings of the Church; and write them in a book set apart for that purpose; keep a record of all members, conduct the correspondence of the Church; and keep all papers and documents of the Church; and also prepare the annual association letter to be adopted by the Church.

Section 5 - Business Administrator

The pastor and deacons will appoint a member and or one alternate to serve as business manager. Their term of office is of no defined period and may be terminated by the church or volunteer as needed. It shall be the duty of the Business Administrator to facilitate, establish, monitor, and direct all business activities on behalf of the Church. The Business Administrator shall abide by the policies and procedures set forth in the by-laws and as approved at a business meeting. The Business Manager may as situations require, temporarily create or modify a procedure until it can be reviewed and approved at the next regular business meeting. In the absence of the Business Administrator the Deacon's Body will be called upon to execute these duties.

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Section 6 - Receiving Treasurer

The pastor and deacons will appoint a member and or one alternate to serve as receiving treasurer. The term of office is of no defined period and may be terminated by the church or volunteer as needed.

It shall be the duties of the Receiving Treasurer to secure all offerings from the persons responsible for collecting them, make out the appropriate deposit slips, and deposit the offerings into such bank the church shall designate. The Receiving Treasurer shall present to the Disbursing Treasurer a total of the deposit (s) each week no later than the morning following the deposit so that the Disbursing Treasurer will be able to enter a true and accurate deposit amount into the checkbook. The Receiving Treasurer shall also present the Financial Secretary a copy of the deposit slip itself in a timely manner. The Receiving Treasurer shall not sign checks for the church.

Section 7 - Disbursing Treasurer

The pastor and deacons will appoint a member and or one alternate to serve as Disbursing Treasurer. Their term of office is of no defined period and may be terminated by the church or volunteer as needed.

The disbursing treasurer shall see that all deposits are recorded into the checkbook and issue such checks as directed by the Church. The Disbursing Treasurer shall receive all bills incurred by the church and shall facilitate the paying of them in a timely manner. If there are not sufficient funds in the checking account to pay all bills, the Disbursing Treasurer shall consult with the Budget and Finance Committee. The decision of the Budget and Finance Committee shall be considered as a decision made by the Church. It shall also be the responsibility of the Disbursing Treasurer to reconcile the checkbook with the bank statement as it is received each month from the Financial Secretary. The Disbursing Treasurer shall withhold all applicable taxes from the salaries of the church employees, deposit those withholdings into the church's savings account, make a report each quarter to the IRS and pay such withholdings and church contributions to the IRS in a timely manner. The Disbursing Treasurer shall not receive offerings or make deposits for the church.

Section 8 - Tellers

A deacon shall serve as teller each time an offering is taken or received. A deacon may select any church member to assist in the collection and recording of an offering. It shall be the responsibility of the tellers to receive and count all offerings to the Church in its regular services and or at special services. They shall count all offerings and tithes and make a record of such for the receiving treasurer, and the receiving treasurer shall check the recorded total against the totals of the deposit. Under no circumstances shall a teller perform the counting and recording by themselves. Any church member may be selected by the a deacon to assist in the collection and recording of the offering.

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Section 9 - Financial Secretary

It shall be the duty of the Financial Secretary to do the duties of a bookkeeper for the church. The Financial Secretary shall keep the budget of the church, and reconcile all expenditures of the Church with the budget, shall receive the bank statement of account and reconcile such with the receipts and books given each month by the Disbursing Treasurer and the deposit receipts given by the Receiving Treasurer. The Financial Secretary shall make a report of the financial condition of the Church at each regular business meeting. The Financial Secretary shall answer all questions posed by the congregation at the business meeting or at any time a question shall arise. The Financial Secretary shall maintain close communication with the Receiving Treasurer and the Disbursing Treasurer to insure that an accurate account of the books is given each month. The Financial Secretary is the ultimately responsible person for keeping track of all the church accounts, and both Receiving and Disbursing Treasurers shall report to the Financial Secretary. The Financial Secretary shall not sign checks for the Church.

ARTICLE VII: BUSINESS MEETINGS

Business meetings shall be monthly but may be called by the Pastor, Deacons, or Trustees, provided previous notice of general circulation has been made as to time and purpose of the meeting.

ARTICLE VIII: FINANCES & BUDGETS

The Church shall adopt a budget and after its adoption shall operate according to its outline. Any expenditure not provided for in the budget shall be referred to the Finance Committee before the Disbursing Treasurer is authorized to make expenditure.

ARTICLE IX: VOTING**Section 1 – Non-disciplinary & Disciplinary Votes**

All non-disciplinary votes shall be taken by a show of hands and affirmed by a majority vote of members present. In a vote calling for the dismissal of a pastor, or deacon, the vote shall be by secret ballot. All secret ballots will be counted immediately, by the Deacon's present and the results announced at that time. The vote to dismiss shall be affirmed by a 2/3 vote of members present

Section 2 – Proxy Voting

No voting by proxy shall be allowed at Business Meetings.

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ARTICLE X: AMENDMENTS

Section 1 – Notification of Amending Vote

This Constitution may be amended or changed at any regular business meeting of the Church by a two-thirds (2/3) majority vote of members present, provided such amendment or change is not subversive or in violation of the spirit and purpose of this Constitution, and written notice of such change or amendment was read at the previous business meeting, and filed with the Clerk of the Church, preceding the vote.

Section 2 – Independence & Sovereignty

Article III, section four of this Constitution shall not be subject to amendment in order that the independence and sovereignty of the Church shall be safeguarded.

ARTICLE XI: BY-LAWS

Section 1 - Scriptural By-Laws

This Church shall have a right to make such by-laws and rules according to the Scriptures. This Constitution and such amended by-laws shall compose the constitution and by-laws of the First Baptist Church of Flora Vista, Inc. and supersedes any previous constitutions and by-laws.

ARTICLE XII: MARRIAGE & SEXUALITY

Section 1 - Marriage, Gender, and Sexuality

We believe that God wonderfully and immutably creates each person at birth as male or female. These two distinct, complementary genders together reflect the image and nature of God. (Gen 1:26-27.) Rejection of one's biological sex is a rejection of the image of God within that person. Therefore, a person born a male, shall be in the eyes of this church, a male and bear the responsibilities set forth by scripture for men, A person who is born female, shall be in the eyes of this church, a female and bear the responsibilities set forth by scripture for women.

We believe that the term "marriage" has only one meaning: the uniting of one natural born man and one natural born woman in a single, exclusive union, as delineated in Scripture. (Gen 2:18-25.) We believe that God intends sexual intimacy to occur only between a man and a woman who are married to each other. (1 Cor 6:18; 7:2-5; Heb 13:4.) We believe that God has commanded that no intimate sexual activity be engaged in outside of a marriage between a man and a woman.

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We believe that any form of sexual immorality, including sex outside of marriage, transgenderism, homosexual behavior, bisexual conduct, bestiality, incest, and use of pornography is sinful and offensive to God. (Matt 15:18-20; 1 Cor 6:9-10.) We believe that in order to preserve the function and integrity of First Baptist Church of Flora Vista as the local Body of Christ, and to provide a biblical role model to the organization members and the community, it is imperative that all persons employed by the organization in any capacity, or who serve as volunteers, or who wish to become members of this church, agree to and abide by this Statement on Marriage, Gender, and Sexuality. (Matt 5:16; Phil 2:14-16; 1 Thess 5:22.)

We believe that God offers redemption and restoration to all who confess and forsake their sin, seeking His mercy and forgiveness through Jesus Christ. (Acts 3:19-21; Rom 10:9-10; 1 Cor 6:9-11.) We believe that every person must be afforded compassion, love, kindness, respect, and dignity. (Mark 12:28-31; Luke 6:31.) Hateful and harassing behavior or attitudes directed toward any individual are to be repudiated and are not in accord with Scripture nor the doctrines of First Baptist Church of Flora Vista.

Section 2 – One Man & One Woman

Because God has ordained marriage and defined it as the covenant relationship between a natural born man, a natural born woman, and Himself, First Baptist Church of Flora Vista will only recognize marriages between a natural born biological man and a natural born biological woman. Further, the Pastor and staff of the First Baptist Church of Flora Vista shall only participate in weddings and solemnize marriages between one Christian man and one Christian woman. Finally, the facilities and property of the First Baptist Church of Flora Vista shall only host weddings between one Christian man and one Christian woman.

The first Baptist Church of Flora Vista will perform funerals for any Christian member of this church and or any affirmed Christian who is a member of another Christian church.

ARTICLE XIII:**Section 1 - Church Facility Use Policy**

The church's facilities were provided through God's benevolence and by the sacrificial generosity of church members. The church desires that its facilities be used for the fellowship of the Body of Christ and to bring God glory. Although the facilities are not generally open to the public, we make our facilities available to approved non-members as a witness to our faith, in a spirit of Christian charity, and as a means of demonstrating the Gospel of Jesus Christ in practice.

But facility use will not be permitted to persons or groups holding, advancing, or advocating beliefs or practices that conflict with the church's faith or moral teachings, which are summarized in, among other places, the church's constitution and bylaws. Nor may church facilities be used for activities that contradict, or are deemed inconsistent with, the church's faith or moral teachings. The pastor, or his official designee, is the final decision-maker concerning use of church facilities.

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This restricted facility use policy is necessary for two important reasons. First, the church may not in good conscience materially cooperate in activities or beliefs that are contrary to its faith. Allowing its facilities to be used for purposes that contradict the church's beliefs would be material cooperation with that activity, and would be a grave violation of the church's faith and religious practice. (2 Cor 6:14; 1 Thess 5:22.)

Secondly, it is very important that the church present a consistent message to the community, and that the church staff and members conscientiously maintain that message as part of their witness to the Gospel of Jesus Christ. Allowing facilities to be used by groups or persons who express beliefs or engage in practices contrary to the church's faith would have a severe, negative impact on the message that the church strives to promote. It could also cause confusion and scandal to church members and the community because they may reasonably perceive that by allowing use of our facilities, the church agrees with the beliefs or practices of the persons or groups using its facilities.

Therefore, in no event shall persons or groups who hold, advance, or advocate beliefs, or advance, advocate, or engage in practices that contradict the church's faith use any church facility. Nor may church facilities be used in any way that contradicts the church's faith. This policy applies to all church facilities, regardless of whether the facilities are connected to the church's sanctuary, because the church sees all of its property as holy and set apart to worship God. (Col 3:17.)

In the event that a nonmember use of the facility is approved, the pastor or a deacon, or a designated church member is to be present to open the church facility for use and then be present to lock the facility after the use. At no time will keys and codes be given to nonmembers.

Section 2 - Approved Users and Priority of Use

The pastor or official designee must approve all uses of church facilities. Generally, priority shall be given to church members, their immediate families, and organized groups that are part of the ministry, organization, or sponsored activities of the church. Church facilities and equipment will be made available to non-members or outside groups meeting the following qualifications:

1. Groups or persons requesting facility use must affirm that their beliefs and practices and planned uses of the facilities are consistent with the church's faith and practice.
2. The group or person seeking facility use must submit a signed "Church Facility Reservation Request and Agreement" form.
3. The group or person seeking facility use must be willing to take responsibility for the facilities and equipment used and must agree to abide by the church's rules of conduct for facility use, as stated below and as described in any additional instructions by church staff. At no time will keys or access codes be given to nonmembers

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Section 3 - Scheduling Events

Facility use requests shall be made to the pastor, a deacon. If no other conflicting events are scheduled, the use may be approved by verbal confirmation from the deacon or pastor. Nonmember use requests must submit a "Church Facility Reservation Request and Agreement" form. After proper review the event will be scheduled and placed on the church calendar.

Section 4 – Fees

Generally, First Baptist Church does not charge a fee for using church facilities. However, should a situation arise that would warrant a fee, the Pastor and the Deacon's Body will confer and provide one.

Section 5 - Facility Use Guidelines

1. Alcohol Policy: No alcohol may be served or consumed in or on church facilities.
2. Tobacco Policy: No tobacco or marijuana products, e-cigarettes, vapor products or un-prescribed drugs are to be used on or in any church facilities.
3. Groups are restricted to only those areas of the facility that the group has reserved.
4. Food and beverages are to be consumed in the fellowship hall only. Bottled water may be consumed in the sanctuary.
5. Church equipment, such as tables and chairs, must be returned to original placement, unless arranged otherwise prior to the event.
6. All lights must be turned off and doors locked upon departure.
7. Clean-up is the responsibility of the party using the facility.
8. Abusive or foul language, violent behavior, and drug or alcohol abuse are strictly prohibited on church premises. Any person exhibiting such behavior will be required to leave the premises.
9. Any person or group must sign the "Church Facility Reservation Request and Agreement" form prior to reservation of church facilities.

ARTICLE XIV:**Section 1 - Insurance**

For all non-church-sponsored events, the group or person using the facilities may be required to provide insurance to cover the event. The pastor or any deacon can inquire with the First Baptist Church of Flora Vista insurer at the time and notify the requesting user of any insurance needs and fees. The user must also sign a "Facility Use and an Indemnity and Hold Harmless Agreement."

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ARTICLE XV: RECORDINGS AND POSTINGS

Copies of the Certificate of Incorporation and by-laws shall be kept in the Church office at all times. All amendments to or revisions hear-of, after passage by the Church, such filing and recording required by state law, shall be prepared in duplicate by the Church Clerk and attached to the copies and originals of the Certificate of Incorporation, Articles of Corporation, and by-laws adopted by the Church. Copies of all of these are to be made available to Church members.

Pastor - James Mahan (President)	Date
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Russell Clelland II (Director)	Date
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Cindy Galloway (Director)	Date
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Richard MacDonald (Director)	Date
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Patricia Whipple (Director)	Date
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This constitution and by-laws, of the First Baptist Church of Flora Vista, Inc. will be effective as of this _____ day of _____, _____