

Midville
First Baptist Church

CONSTITUTION AND BY-LAWS

Amended and Approved July 2011

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CONSTITUTION

ARTICLE I – PREAMBLE AND COVENANT

Having been led as we believe by the spirit of God, to receive the Lord Jesus Christ our Savior and on profession of our faith, having been baptized in the name of the Father, and the Son, and of the Holy Spirit, we do now in the presences of God and this assembly, most solemnly and sincerely and joyfully enter into covenant with one another, 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 knowledge, holiness 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 in this community, and through all nations.

We also engage to maintain family and secret devotions; to provide opportunities for spiritual growth and development for our children; to be just in our dealings, faithful in our engagements, and exemplary in our life styles; avoid all tattling, backbiting and excessive anger; to abstain from the sale or use of harmful substances, to be zealous in our efforts to advance the Kingdom of God.

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 feelings and courtesy in speech; to be slow to take offense but always ready for reconciliation, and mindful of the rules of our Savior to secure it without delay.

And may the God of peace who brought again from the dead the great Shepherd of the sheep with the blood of an eternal covenant even our Lord Jesus make us perfect in every good thing to do His will working in us that which is pleasing in His sight through Jesus Christ to whom be the Glory forever and ever. Amen.

ARTICLE II – NAME

First Baptist Church of Midville, Georgia, Inc.

ARTICLE III – CHURCH MEMBERSHIP

SECTION 1. ADMISSION

Those applying for membership shall be received by vote of the congregation at the regular public worship services. If any objections are made, the case shall be referred automatically, without discussion the Pastor and Deacons for investigation and reported at a later date.

Method admission shall be as follows:

- a) **Baptism:** Upon satisfactory evidence of a saving experience with Jesus Christ, an applicant may be received as a candidate for baptism after which he (or she) shall enjoy full fellowship in the Church.
- b) **Letter:** A member of another Church of like faith and order may be received by a letter of transfer. If a letter cannot be received within ninety (90) days, the clerk shall record such member as received by statement of experience with Jesus Christ as Savior and upon statement of immersion.

- c) **Statement:** Any person who has been baptized by immersion, believing that this immersion is a symbol of the death of the sin-centered life and the beginning of the Christ-centered life, may be received upon a statement of this.
- d) **Restoration:** Any former member having terminated their membership for whatever reason may be restored to full membership by vote of the Church while in conference.

SECTION 2. TERMINATION

- a) **Letter:** The clerk will present a letter stating the member’s membership in the Church to the Church of the member’s choice, if Baptist, after permission of the Church in conference is granted.
- b) **Death:** The clerk shall remove the names of those who are deceased and report same to the Church. One page shall be set aside in the minutes as a memorial to the deceased member with pertinent information recorded thereon.
- c) **Dropped:** Upon action of the Church in conference, the clerk will drop the names of members who join other Churches. Also, the clerk will record on a non-resident listing those members who have moved away from this vicinity.
- d) **Discipline:** All matters of discipline shall be referred to the Deacons for investigation and report. Deacons and Church will be guided by the New Testament. Members shall be encouraged to display courtesy, confession and forgiveness.

ARTICLE IV – CHURCH ORDINANCES

SECTION 1 – BAPTISM

The Ordinance of Baptism shall be observed at the discretion of the Pastor, by the authority of the Church.

SECTION 2 – LORD’S SUPPER

The ordinance of the Lord’s Supper shall be observed by the Church during the first month of each quarter and at any other time the Pastor deems necessary.

ARTICLE V – WORSHIP SERVICES

The Church shall meet on Sunday morning, Sunday evening, Wednesday evening and at other times as recommended by the Pastor. The Pastor shall also recommend the cancellation of any service if it becomes necessary. The Church Calendar year shall begin on the first day of the Fourth Quarter and end the last day of the Third Quarter. Homecoming Celebration and Revivals shall be scheduled as set by the Church Council.

ARTICLE VI – CHURCH CONFERENCES

Conferences shall be held at least quarterly.

ARTICLE VII – OFFICERS OF THE CHURCH

Church officers shall be the General Staff Officers: Pastor, Ministerial Staff, Church Clerk, Church Treasurer, and Chairman of the Trustees. The Church shall operate under the direction of the Pastor in accordance with this Constitution and the Church By-Laws.

ARTICLE VIII – ORGANIZATIONAL DIRECTORS

The Organizational Directors shall be the Sunday School, Women’s Missionary Union and Men’s Ministry (Brotherhood).

ARTICLE IX – TRUSTEES

Trustees of the Church shall be responsible for the legal affairs of the Church.

ARTICLE X – DEACONS

Deacons of the Church shall be the servants and spiritual leaders of the Church and are to serve and minister to the Church in the name of Jesus Christ. The Deacons, together with the Pastor and Church Council, shall be responsible for the pastoral care of the Church and shall assist the Pastor and Church Council with the ministries of the Church.

ARTICLE XI – ORGANIZATIONS AND COMMITTEES

All organizations and committees of the Church shall be accountable to the Church. The Pastor and Chairman of Deacons, or a Deacon designated by the Chairman, are ex-officio members of all organizations and committees. Any member, organization or committee having an unresolved issue may have a hearing before the Deacons and/or Church Council.

ARTICLE XII – BY-LAWS

The Church may adopt By-Laws in furtherance of the intent of this Constitution. Following at least a two (2) week notice by announcement at Sunday morning worship services, the By-Laws may be amended by a two-thirds (2/3) vote of the members present in Church Conference. Any amendments to the By-Laws shall be reduced to writing and attached to the By-Laws as a permanent part thereof.

ARTICLE XIII – AMENDMENTS OF THE CONSTITUTION

Following at least a one month notice by announcement at Sunday morning worship service, this Constitution may be amended by a two-thirds (2/3) vote of the members present in Church Conference. Any amendments to the Constitution shall be reduced to writing and attached to the Constitution as a permanent part thereof.

BY-LAWS

ARTICLE I

Reserved.

ARTICLE II

Reserved.

ARTICLE III

Reserved.

ARTICLE IV

Reserved.

ARTICLE V

Reserved.

ARTICLE VI – CHURCH CONFERENCES

SECTION 1 – REGULAR CHURCH CONFERENCE.

The regular Church Conference shall be held after Sunday Morning Worship Service on the first month of each quarter to conduct the business of the Church. The date and agenda for regular Church Conferences shall be published at least two (2) weeks prior in the Church Bulletin. The Pastor shall preside and, in his absence, the Chairman of Deacons. Robert's Rules of Order shall be observed.

SECTION 2 – CALLED CHURCH CONFERENCE.

Called Conferences shall be announced in the two (2) preceding Sunday Morning Worship Services. Purpose for Called Conferences shall be published at least two (2) weeks prior in the Church Bulletin. The content of the meeting shall pertain only to the purpose for which it was called. Conferences may be called by the Pastor, Chairman of Deacons or by petition of twenty (20) or more members.

SECTION 3 – QUORUM.

Members present at any regular or called conference shall constitute a quorum.

SECTION 4 – VOTING RIGHTS

Each member present is entitled to one (1) vote. Proxy votes are not permitted. Recommendations for written ballot shall be made when appropriate.

SECTION 5 – RECOMMENDATIONS.

Recommendations that are brought before the Church shall be voted on by the Church as described in the Constitution and these By-Laws. Recommendations that affect the ministries, programs, and welfare of the Church shall first be referred to the Church Council then to the Deacons for review, then sent to the Church to be voted on in Conference.

ARTICLE VII – OFFICERS OF THE CHURCH

All Church Officers shall be members of the Church. With exception of the Pastor and Ministerial Staff, Church Officers shall be nominated by the Nominating Committee and elected by the Church annually in Conference.

SECTION 1 – PASTOR

The Pastor is to be responsible for leading the Church in functioning as a New Testament Church. The Pastor, in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, is to preach the Gospel, supervise the work of the Church, lead and minister to the congregation, and serve the people for Jesus' sake. The Pastor is first accountable to Christ and then to the members of Midville First Baptist Church through the elected Deacons, subject to review and adjustment in conjunction with the Church through the Deacons. The office of Pastor shall be filled when necessary by vote of the Church in Conference, acting upon the recommendation of a Ministerial Search Committee. The office of Pastor shall be elected by a three-fourths (3/4) affirmative vote by written ballot.

SECTION 2 – MINISTERIAL STAFF

The Ministerial Staff shall be paid staff members, called by the Church for specific ministry purposes. Each Ministerial Staff member shall function under an agreed upon job description and shall be under the supervision of the Pastor.

SECTION 3 – CHURCH CLERK

The Church Clerk shall keep minutes of all Church Conference proceedings, keep a register of names and personal data of all members of the Church, sign all letters of recommendations, and shall be responsible for the compilation of data for the Annual Associational Church Profile.

SECTION 4 – CHURCH TREASURER

The Church Treasurer shall be responsible for making all authorized payments on behalf of the Church and shall serve as Chairman of the Finance Committee. There shall also be an Assistant Treasurer to serve in the absence of the Treasurer, and as Vice-Chairman of the Finance Committee.

SECTION 5 – CHAIRMAN OF TRUSTEES

The Chairman of Trustees is included as an Officer of the Church to provide counsel in policies regarding use of the Church and properties.

ARTICLE VIII – ORGANIZATIONAL DIRECTORS

The Organizational Directors of the Church shall be nominated by the Nominating Committee and elected by the Church annually in Conference. They shall consist of the Director of Sunday School, Men’s Ministry (Brotherhood) and Women’s Missionary Union. Each Organizational Director shall administer all departments of their respective organizations.

ARTICLE IX – TRUSTEES

The Trustees of the Church shall be responsible for the legal affairs of the Church.

SECTION 1 – ELECTION AND SERVICE

There shall be three (3) members elected to the Board of Trustees one of which shall be a Deacon. Members shall serve for a period of three (3) years, with one (1) member rotating off the Board each year. The member rotating off will not be eligible for re-election until the expiration of one (1) year. The Nominating Committee shall recommend to the Church a replacement.

SECTION 2 – OFFICERS

The Chairman of the Trustees shall be President of the Church Corporation. Vice-Chairman of the Trustees shall be Vice-President of the Corporation. The Secretary of the Trustees shall be Secretary of the Corporation. The Trustees shall elect officers at their first meeting.

SECTION 3 – DUTIES

The Trustees shall:

- a) Recommend polices regarding use of properties and equipment;
- b) Recommend policies regarding proper insurance for all properties and equipment of the Church;
- c) Keep a proper inventory and control system of Church property;
- d) Affix their signatures as corporate officers to all legal documents affecting the business of the Church, and;
- e) Have no power to buy, sell, mortgage, lease or transfer any property without a specific vote of the Church in Conference.

ARTICLE X – DEACONS

Deacons of the Church shall be servants and spiritual leaders of the Church and are to minister and serve the Church in the Name of Jesus Christ. The Deacons, together with the Pastor, shall be responsible for the pastoral care of the Church, and shall assist the Pastor with the ministries and programs of the Church.

SECTION 1 – NUMBER AND TERM OF OFFICE

Deacons shall be elected by the Church in Conference, the term of office being three (3) years, except when filling the unexpired term of a Deacon. There shall be up to nine (9) Deacons who shall serve for a term of three (3) years.

SECTION 2 – METHOD OF ELECTION

Any Church member who meets the qualifications as set forth in Article X, Section 3, shall be eligible for election as a Deacon. The nomination and election of Deacons shall be as follows:

Prior to the June Conference, the Nominating committee shall appoint a committee of five (5) members to nominate candidates to fill vacancies occurring in the ensuing year. The names of five (5) nominees shall be submitted to the Church in Conference for approval.

Candidates for Deacons will be voted upon from this list. There shall be no nominations made from the floor. Any unexpired term may be filled by special election.

SECTION 3 – QUALIFICATIONS OF A DEACON

- a) Accepts the Bible as the authority for personal conduct and Church policy;
- b) Understands that the position is to be one a “Ministering Servant.” The wishes of the congregation must have priority over personal wishes;
- c) Feels the conviction that the Baptist faith is the best expression of Christian faith;
- d) Will commit to protecting the unity of the church;
- e) Keeps confidential the deliberations of the Deacon meetings when in the best interest of the Church;
- f) Has been a member of the First Baptist Church of Midville for at least one (1) consecutive year preceding nomination for election.

SECTION 4 – DUTIES

- a) Cooperate with and assist the Pastor in all the servant and benevolent interests of the Church;
- b) Devote themselves to the spiritual welfare of the Church members and to the enlistment in active Church service;
- c) Conduct hearings for any unresolved issues among members, organizations, and committees;
- d) The Chairman of the Deacons shall be responsible for the Lord’s Supper preparation, service and storage and care of the Lord’s Supper equipment and supplies.

SECTION 5 – MEETINGS

Regular meetings of the Deacons shall be held once monthly, unless otherwise scheduled. Special meetings may be called at any time upon reasonable notice by the Chairman or the Vice-Chairman.

SECTION 6 – ELECTION OF OFFICERS

The Deacons shall elect, at their first regular meeting of each Church year, a Chairman, Vice-Chairman and Secretary to serve for the ensuing year. The previous year's officers shall continue to serve until new officers are elected.

SECTION 7 – RESIGNATION OR REMOVAL

Any active Deacon who become incapacitated or is not able to perform his duties as such, because of health, indifference or otherwise, may be removed in the following manner:

- a) Resignation: A Deacon may resign on his own after same has been presented to the Deacons. After investigation of the Deacons, recommendation shall be made to the Church members in conference.
- b) Removal: A Deacon may be asked to resign for cause after same has been referred to a committee of three (3) Active Deacons for investigation and report and same has been reported back to the body of Deacons for recommendations to the Church. The Church must vote on such action in a regular Church conference.

ARTICLE XI – ORGANIZATIONS AND COMMITTEES

All Organizations and Committees shall be under the direction of the Church. The Pastor and Chairman of the Deacons, or a Deacon designated by the Chairman shall be ex-officio members of all organizations and committees. Any member, organization or committee having an unresolved issue may have a hearing before the Deacons and/or Church Council. Committees shall be added or deleted by agreement of the Pastor, the Deacons and the Church Council, before recommending such motion the church body in Conference for approval.

ORGANIZATIONS

SECTION 1 – CHURCH COUNCIL

Church Council shall consist of the Ministerial Staff, all Church Officers, Chairman of Deacons, Chairman of Trustees, all Organizational Directors, Chairman of each Committee and at least one (1) additional member to be recommended to the Church by the Nominating Committee. It shall be the duty of the Council to act as a general coordinating and advisory group to the Pastor. The Council shall:

- a) Recommend to the Church in Conference suggested objectives and goals;
- b) Review and coordinate all programs;
- c) Recommend to the Church the use of leadership, calendar time and other resources according to the program priorities;
- d) Evaluate program achievements in terms of Church goals and objectives;
- e) Conduct hearings for any unresolved issues among members, organizations and committees.

All matter agreed upon by the council for action not already authorized shall be referred to the Deacons for review and then to the Church for approval. The Church council shall meet prior to a Regular church conference unless otherwise scheduled due to conflict in the Church schedule. the Pastor shall be Chairman and the Chairman of Deacons, Vice-Chairman.

SECTION 2 – SUNDAY SCHOOL DIRECTOR

There shall be a Sunday School under the direction of the Pastor, divided into classes for all ages and conducted under the leadership of the Sunday School Director. The Sunday School Director, in consultation with the various Sunday School Class Teachers, will be responsible for ordering all literature for these classes. He shall also be an ex-officio member of the Vacation Bible School leadership team.

SECTION 3 – WOMEN’S MISSIONARY UNION

There shall be a Women’s Missionary Union, with such officers and such forms of organizations and supported by the Church council as needed, to teach missions; leading all women and children to participate in missions; provide organization and leadership for special mission projects of the Church; and to provide and interpret information regarding the work of the Church denomination. Actions, Girls in Action and Mission Friends shall be under the direction of the Women’s Missionary Union.

SECTION 4 – MEN’S MINISTRY (BROTHERHOOD)

There shall be Men’s Ministry (Brotherhood) with such officers and such forms of organizations supported by the Church Council as needed. The responsibility shall be to teach missions, lead all men and children to participate in mission activities; provide organizations and leadership for special projects; provide and interpret information regarding the work of the Church and denomination. The Royal Ambassadors shall be under the direction the Men’s Ministry (Brotherhood).

COMMITTEES

Members of regular committees shall be nominated by the Nominating Committee. The Nominating Committee shall be nominated by the Church Council in May and elected by the Church in Conference for a three (3) year term. All Committees shall be on a rotating basis (i.e. one or two members may rotate off the Committee after one (1) year, one or two members may rotate after two (2) years and one or two members may rotate off the Committee after three (3) years,) until a full three (3) year rotation is established under these By-Laws. Committee members may, at the discretion of the Nominating Committee, serve additional time on a Service Committee, (Nominating, Finance and Trustees are not included in this provision.) These Committees shall meet at least quarterly, and more often as necessary to accomplish their purposes.

SECTION 1 – NOMINATING COMMITTEE

The nominating Committee shall have five (5) members. Replacements are to be recommended by Church Council. The Committee shall coordinate the staffing of all Church volunteer positions. It shall submit recommendations for Organizational Directors and Regular committee vacancies not later than the third quarter Conference. Organizational and Regular Committees are expected to assist this Committee in filling vacant positions. It shall be the responsibility of this Committee to recommend acting chairmen of the various committees from the members, until such time as each committee elects its own chairman.

SECTION 2 – FINANCE COMMITTEE

The Finance Committee shall consist of four (4) members and The Church Treasurer. The Church Treasurer shall be a non-rotating member. The duty and function of this Committee shall be:

- a) To manage financial affairs of the Church and carry out a stewardship education program;
- b) To authorize expenditures within the provisions of the budget or as directed by the Church in Conference;
- c) To prepare and submit to the Church an annual budget using recommendations of the various Committees and Church staff;
- d) To evaluate requests for unbudgeted capital expenditures;
- e) To prepare an annual review of Church finances.

SECTION 3 – FELLOWSHIP COMMITTEE

The Fellowship Committee shall consist of six (6) members. This Committee is responsible for the purchase of supplies, inventory, preparation of food and upkeep of the Church kitchen and Social Hall. Use of the kitchen and Social Hall shall be subject to prior approval of the Fellowship Committee. This Committee shall serve as the official welcoming committee and shall coordinate official Church functions. They shall also aid other Committees in Church activities as required or requested.

SECTION 4 – BUILDING AND GROUNDS COMMITTEE

The Building and Grounds Committee shall consist of six (6) members. This Committee shall be responsible for recommending and assisting the Church in matters relating to maintenance and upkeep of the Church building and grounds.

SECTION 5 – BAPTISM COMMITTEE

The Baptismal Committee shall consist of two (2) men and two (2) women. The Committee shall assist candidates for baptism by preparation of baptismal robes and necessary items to observe the Ordinance of Baptism.

SECTION 6 – BENEVOLENCE COMMITTEE

The Benevolence Committee shall consist of six (6) members, with at least two (2) members being Deacons. This Committee shall be responsible for assisting those requesting financial, emotion or other aid; for recommendation of, and assistance with, such aid, including counseling services. This Committee shall look to available services from other community organizations before making recommendation for aid from the Church for a non-member. This Committee shall determine appropriate guidelines to carry out its functions.

SECTION 7 – DECORATING COMMITTEE

The Decorating Committee shall consist of three (3) members. This Committee is responsible for decorating the Church Facilities for special Church events in cooperation with active committees for appropriate seasonal and holiday Church decorations; and for the care, inventory and proper storage of decorations and decorating supplies.

SECTION 8 – MUSIC COMMITTEE

This Committee shall be composed of at least in part by the Music Director, the Pianist, an Organist and three (3) other members. Its duties shall be to provide a superior program of music for all services and other occasions as directed by the Pastor and Church Council.

SECTION 9 – WORSHIP COMMITTEE

This Committee shall be responsible for seating and maintaining order in the Worship Services and receiving the Tithes and Offerings. Additionally, under this Committee and Audio/Visual Team shall be organized and trained to provide such services as may be required by the Pastor and others.

SECTION 10 – YOUTH COMMITTEE

This Committee shall consist of six (6) members and the Youth Minister. The function of this Committee shall be:

- a) Determine the needs of Youth and Children of the Church.
- b) Work with the Youth Minister to plan and implement youth/children's events;
- c) Plan and implement the Annual Vacation Bible School with assistance from the Pastor, Youth Minister and Sunday School Director;
- d) Submit to the Finance Committee an annual budget for youth activities.

SECTION 11 – HISTORICAL COMMITTEE

The Historical Committee shall consist of four (4) members. This Committee shall be charged with maintaining a complete historical record of the events related to the church and significant events in the lives of its members.

SPECIAL COMMITTEES

Special Committees shall function for a specific purpose and shall be dissolved on completion of their purpose. Recommendations from special committees shall be made to the Church in Conference, with members being nominated by the Nominating Committee, and elected by the Church in Conference. Special committees shall include, but not be limited to, a Ministerial Search Committee.

ARTICLE XII

Reserved.

ARTICLE XIII – AMENDMENTS TO THE BY-LAWS

Following at least a one month notice by announcement at Sunday morning worship service, these By-Laws may be amended by a two-thirds (2/3) vote of the members present in Church Conference. Any amendments to the By-Laws shall be reduced to writing and attached to the By-Laws as a permanent part thereof.