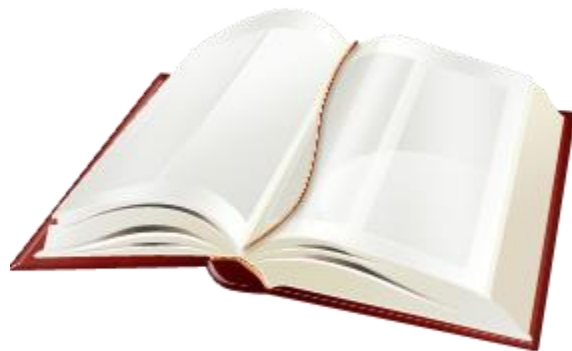


**First Baptist Church
Of
Sumrall, MS**



Constitution & By-Laws

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CONSTITUTION

I. Preamble

We, the members of First Baptist Church of Sumrall, Inc. knowing that God's Word says, "Let all things be done decently and in order," hereby adopt and implement this Constitution and Bylaws. The Constitution section delineates what we believe. The Bylaws section is our guide to how we behave in carrying out the fundamental ministries of the church.

II. Statement of Faith

The Scriptures

We believe that "all Scripture is given by inspiration of God." (II Timothy 3:16). We understand this to mean that the whole Bible is inspired in that holy men of God "were moved by the Holy Spirit" (II Peter 1:21) to write the very words of Scripture. We believe that this divine inspiration extends equally and fully to all parts of Scripture as it appeared in the original manuscripts. We believe that the whole Bible in the original is therefore without error. We believe that all the Scriptures center around the Lord Jesus Christ in His person and work, in His first and second coming, and hence that no portion, even of the Old Testament, is properly read, or understood, until it leads to Him. We also believe that all Scripture was designed for our practical instruction. (Luke 24:27, 44; John 5:39; Romans 15:4; I Corinthians 10:11; II Timothy 3:16)

The Triune God

We believe in the one true and living God, the Creator, Redeemer, Sustainer and Ruler of all things. He is infinite, eternal, unchangeable, and is revealed to us as the Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

God, as Father, reigns over His entire universe with providential care. He is all-powerful, all loving, all knowing, and all wise. He is fatherly in attitude toward all men but is Father, indeed, to those who have become children of God through Jesus Christ, Who will deliver them into the Father's hands. (Genesis 1:1; I Chronicles 29:10; Jeremiah 10:10, Matthew 6:9; Acts 1:7; Romans 8:14, 15; I Corinthians 8:6, I Corinthians 15:24; Ephesians 4:6)

We believe that the Lord Jesus Christ, the eternal son of God, became man without ceasing to be God, having been conceived of the Holy Spirit and born of a virgin, in order that He might reveal God and redeem sinful man. This redemption He accomplished by voluntarily giving Himself as a sinless, substitutionary sacrifice on the cross thereby satisfying God's righteous judgment against sin.

After substantiating the accomplishment of that redemption/justification by His bodily resurrection from the grave, He ascended to the right hand of His Father where He intercedes on behalf of those who trust Him. (Luke 1:34; John 1:1-2, 14, 18; Romans 3:24-27, 8:34)

We believe that the Holy Spirit is the Divine Person who convicts each person of sin, righteousness and judgment, that He brings new life to those who are spiritually dead; that He baptizes (or places) all

believers into the one true Church, which is the Body of Christ; that He indwells them permanently, seals them unto the day of final redemption, bestows spiritual gifts upon them, and fills (controls) those who are yielding to Him. Every believer is called to live in the power of the indwelling Spirit so that he will not fulfill the lust of the flesh but will bear fruit to the glory of God. (John 3:3-8, 14:16, 17; 16:7-11; I Corinthians 12:7-11, 13; Ephesians 4:30, 5:18)

Creation

We believe that man was created directly by and in the image of God. We believe that God created the heavens and the earth, including all life, by direct act. (Genesis 1:1, John 1:3; Colossians 1:16, 17)

The Devil – Satan

We believe that Satan is a person, the author of sin and the architect of the fall of man, and is destined to the judgment of an eternal punishment in the lake of fire. (Matthew 4:1-3; Acts 5:3; II Corinthians 4:4; Revelation 20:10)

Man

Although man was created in the image of God, he fell into sin and is lost. This is true of all men, and except a man be born again by the Holy Spirit, he cannot see the kingdom of God. (Genesis 1:26, 27; John 3:3; Romans 3:10,23)

Atonement for Sin

We believe that the Lord Jesus Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures as a substitutionary sacrifice, and that all who believe on Him are redeemed by His shed blood. We believe in the resurrection of the crucified body of our Lord Jesus Christ and in His ascension into heaven; He is our High Priest and Advocate. (John 1:1-3, 14; 3:1-7, 16; Hebrews 10:4-14, 1 John 2:2)

Salvation

We believe that salvation is the gift of God's grace. It cannot be gained or made more secure by meritorious works, but is freely bestowed upon all who put their faith in the finished work of Jesus Christ at Calvary. All who so trust the Savior are forgiven of their sins and born into the family of God by the regenerating work of the Holy Spirit. (John 1:12; Acts 16:30-33; Romans 10:9,10; Ephesians 1:7, 2:8,9)

The Christian Walk

We believe that we are called with a holy calling, to walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit, and so to live in the power of the indwelling Spirit that we will not fulfill the lust of the flesh in subjection to Jesus Christ through the power of the Holy Spirit or it will surely manifest its presence in our lives to the dishonor of our Lord. (Romans 6:11-13; 8:2, 4, 12, 13; Galatians 5:16-23; Ephesians 4:22-24; Colossians 2:1-10; I Peter 1:14-16; I John 1:4-7; 3:5-9)

The Great Commission

Until the return of Christ, it is the Christian's duty and privilege to seek the fulfillment of Christ's Great Commission and to minister in His name to a needy world. We are to be instruments of Jesus Christ as the Holy Spirit ministers redemption and reconciliation in the world. (Matthew 25:31-46; 23:18-20)

BYLAWS

I. MEMBERSHIP

Section 1 – How we receive members

The church receives members in the following ways:

- (1) By profession of faith and baptism
- (2) By promise of letter from another Baptist church
- (3) By statement that he/she has trusted Christ as his/her personal Savior and has been baptized by immersion if a record of his/her membership is not available
- (4) If coming from another denomination:
 - (a) By statement that he/she has trusted Christ as his/her personal Savior and has been baptized by immersion provided that baptism in that denomination has the same meaning as Baptists assign to it (i.e., Baptism is a symbol of salvation, not a requirement for salvation.).
 - (b) If he/she has not been baptized by immersion he/she must be baptized by immersion as a requirement for membership in the church.

Section 2 – Voting Rights of Members

Every member of the church is entitled to vote on all questions submitted to the church in conference, provided the member is present. In elections of staff, deacons, and search committees a member may be permitted to vote an absentee ballot providing it is received prior to the election.

Section 3 – Termination of Membership

Membership shall be terminated in the following ways:

- (1) Death
- (2) Transfer of letter to another Baptist Church
- (3) Erasure upon personal request of member
- (4) Proof of membership in another church

Section 4 – Withdrawal of Fellowship

- (1) There can arise circumstances where the church needs to exercise discipline upon a member who has sinned in an open defiant way (I Corinthians 5:1-13).
- (2) The principles and process for discipline are found in Matthew 18:15-17.
- (3) The purpose of church discipline is redemptive (Matthew 18:17b; I Cor. 5:5).
- (4) The member from whom fellowship has been withdrawn may be restored to fellowship upon repentance and confession (2 Cor. 2:1-8).

II. CHURCH OFFICERS

All church officers must be members of the church. The officers of this church shall be as follows:

Section 1 – Pastor

(1) Selection

A Pastor shall be chosen and called by the church whenever a vacancy occurs. His election shall take place at a meeting called for that purpose, of which at least one week's public notice has been given.

A pastor selection committee shall be elected by the church to seek out a pastor. The pastor selection committee shall be comprised of five members nominated by secret ballot at a specially called business meeting. Each member will make up to five nominations. The five individuals receiving the highest number of votes shall constitute the committee, except there will be at least one woman on the committee. Regardless of whether she is in the top five in the number of votes received, the woman with the highest number of votes will serve on the committee.

A married husband and wife cannot both serve on the committee. The one receiving the highest number of votes will serve, unless the wife is the woman with the highest number of votes. In that case, the woman will serve and the husband will not, regardless of which one received the highest number of votes. The person receiving the next highest number of votes will take the husband's place on the committee.

The deacons who are present will count all legible ballots.

The recommendations of the pastor selection committee will constitute a nomination. Any member has the privilege of making other nominations according to the policy established by the church. The committee shall bring to the consideration of the church only one name at a time. Election shall be by secret ballot, an affirmative vote of three-fourths of those voting being necessary for a choice.

The pastor, thus elected, shall serve until the relationship is terminated by his request or a request of a majority of the church. The pastor shall give at least two weeks' notice at the time of his resignation before terminating his responsibilities as a pastor.

(2) Role

The pastor is responsible for leading the church to function as a New Testament church. The pastor will lead the congregation, the organizations, and the church staff to perform their tasks. He shall preside at all meetings of the church, except as herein after provided, and will serve as an ex-officio member of all committees. The pastor is responsible to "feed the church of God" (Acts 20:28) "for the equipping of the saints

for the work of service, to the building up of the body of Christ.” (Eph. 4:12). He does this by preaching and teaching the Word of God, the Bible.

(3) Absences

The pastor shall be allowed four weeks with pay to use at his discretion (i.e., vacation, revivals, conventions, and conferences) in addition to absence because of personal illness.

Section 2 – Other Ministerial Staff

This church shall call or employ other vocational staff members as the church shall need. A job description shall be written when the need for such staff members is determined. When a ministerial staff member resigns, a minimum of two weeks’ notice shall be given.

(1) Selection

Any ministerial staff member shall be chosen and called by the church anytime a vacancy occurs or a need arises. The election shall take place at a meeting called for that purpose of which at least one week’s public notice has been given.

A Search Committee shall be elected by the church to seek out the new staff member. The Search Committee shall be comprised of five members nominated by secret ballot at a specially called business meeting. Each member will make five nominations. The five individuals receiving the highest number of votes shall constitute the committee, except there will be at least one woman on the committee. Regardless of whether she is in the top five in the number of votes received, the woman with the highest number of votes will serve on the committee.

A married husband and wife cannot both serve on the committee. The one receiving the highest number of votes will serve, unless the wife is the woman with the highest number of votes. In that case, the woman will serve and the husband will not, regardless of which one received the highest number of votes. The person receiving the next highest number of votes will take the husband’s place on the committee.

The deacons who are present will count all legible ballots.

The recommendation of the Committee will constitute a nomination. The committee shall bring to the consideration of the church only one name at a time. Election shall be by secret ballot, an affirmative vote of three-fourths of those voting being necessary for a choice.

The Staff Member shall give at least two weeks’ notice at the time of his resignation before terminating his responsibilities.

(2) Role

Each ministerial staff member shall fulfill the responsibilities as outlined in the job description for that area of ministry. This job description shall have been approved by the church and discussed with the staff member prior to the call to the church.

(3) Absences

The staff member shall be allowed four weeks with pay to use at his discretion (i.e., vacation, revivals, conventions, and conferences) in addition to absences because of person illness.

Section 3 – Non-Ministerial Staff

The personnel Committee shall be responsible for hiring and overseeing the work of non-ministerial staff i.e., secretary, maintenance, grounds, custodial, etc.

Section 4 – Deacons

(1) Number

The number of active deacons will be fifteen (15).

(2) Selection

The deacon election will take place on the 3rd Sunday in August each year. The procedure will be as follows:

- (a) Ordained inactive deacons who are qualified according to the biblical guidelines in Acts 6:1-8 and I Timothy 3:3-13 will be contacted by the active deacons to see if they are willing to serve if elected. Those who are so willing will be placed on the ballot.
- (b) During the month of May the church family will have opportunity to submit the names of other men for the office of deacon. There will be forms provided for this, and a box will be placed in the auditorium in which these forms may be placed.

These names will be screened by the deacons for the purpose of determining if they are qualified according to the biblical guidelines for deacons as found in Acts 6:1-8 and I Timothy 3:8-13. This will be done strictly in confidence. Those who meet the qualifications will be contacted to see if they are willing to serve if elected. Those who are so willing will be placed on the ballot.

- (c) When the ballots are counted, the men receiving the most votes will fill the vacant deacon positions.

(3) Qualifications

- (a) The qualifications for deaconship are to be found in the New Testament in Acts 6:1-8 and I Timothy 3:8-13.
- (b) To be eligible to become a deacon, a man must be 25 years old and have been a member of the church not less than one year.

(4) Term of Office

Each deacon shall be elected to a three year term of active service, except when elected to fill an unexpired term of one year or more, such vacancy shall be filled by utilizing the most recent deacon election results, the individual having the next highest number of votes being selected. It shall also be required that each deacon, after having served a three year term on the active body, be rotated to the inactive list for at least one year before he will be eligible to return to the active body. A deacon who has filled out an unexpired term shall be eligible for election to a full three-year term in his own right without being rotated to the inactive list.

It shall be the policy of the church to promote to the status of deacon emeritus any deacon who by reason of infirmity shall be no longer able to render active service.

(5) Duties

In accordance with the meaning of the work and practice of the New Testament, deacons are to be servants of the church. The task of the deacon is to serve with the pastor and staff in performing pastoral ministries tasks: proclaim the gospel to believers and unbelievers; care for church members and other persons in the community; lead the church to engage in a fellowship of worship, witness, education, ministry, and application; and lead the church in performing its tasks.

(6) Meetings

Regular meetings shall be held one time each month. Special meetings will be called when needed.

During the first regular meeting in the church calendar year, a vice-chairman and secretary will be elected. The vice-chairman of the previous year will rotate to the office of chairman. No deacon will serve consecutive terms of office as chairman.

Section 5 – Moderator

The pastor shall serve as moderator. In the absence of the moderator the chairman of the deacons shall preside; or in the absence of both, the clerk shall call the church to order and an acting moderator shall be elected.

Section 6 – Clerk

The clerk shall keep minutes of all business meetings of the church and deliver them to the secretary to be printed for the next business meeting. When the church shall receive requests for transfer of letters to other churches, the clerk is responsible for bringing those requests to the church in business session.

Section 7 – Treasurer

The church shall elect annually a church treasurer. It shall be the duty of the treasurer to receive, preserve, and pay out all monies given to the church, keeping at all times an itemized account of all receipts and disbursements.

It shall be the duty of the treasurer to render to the church at each regular business meeting an itemized report of the receipts and disbursements for the preceding month. The treasurer's report shall be audited at any time deemed necessary by the Stewardship Committee.

Upon rendering the annual account at the end of each fiscal year, and its acceptance and approval by the church, the records shall be delivered by the treasurer to the church secretary, who shall keep and preserve the account as a part of the permanent records of the church. The fiscal year of this church runs from January 1 through December 31.

Section 8 – Trustees

Three trustees, one-third of whom shall be elected at the first regular business meeting of the church calendar year upon recommendation of the church council, shall serve for three years or as long as they are re-elected. The trustees will hold in trust the church property. They have no power to buy, sell, mortgage, lease, or transfer any property without a specific vote of the church authorizing each action. It shall be the function of the trustees to affix their signatures to legal documents involving the sale, mortgage, purchase, or rental of property or other legal documents where the signatures of trustees are required.

III. CHURCH COMMITTEES

All church committee members shall be recommended by the Nominating Committee and elected by the church unless otherwise stated in these by-laws. At the regular monthly business meeting in February the names of three members selected by the Church Council to serve as members of the Nominating Committee shall be presented to the church for approval. At the March meeting, recommendations for Discipleship Training director and Sunday School director shall be submitted by this committee. Upon approval by the church these shall be added to the previous three to complete the Nominating Committee's personnel. The Minister of Education shall be an ex-officio member of this committee and shall attend and advise as needed.

Section 1 – The Baptism Committee

The Baptism Committee shall be composed of the Vice-Chairman of Deacons and his wife.

(1) Purpose

To assist the pastor in preparing for and administering the ordinance of baptism.

(2) Duties

- (a) See that all necessary baptismal equipment and facilities are available and in order prior to each baptismal service.
- (b) Meet the candidates at the appointed time and show them to their dressing rooms.
- (c) Assist pastor in designating the proper order when there are a number of people to be baptized.
- (d) Check the pool for proper water-filling and temperature.
- (e) Assist the candidates into and out of the pool and to their dressing rooms. Seek to give each candidate as much privacy as possible.
- (f) Remain until all candidates are dressed and ready to leave for the worship service or for home if the service is held at the close of worship.

Section 2 – The Benevolence Committee

This committee will have the authority to disburse in a responsible manner the appropriate funds allocated by the church. The committee will consist of the pastor and at least two other church members. This committee will meet as necessary.

Section 3 – The Building Use Committee

This committee is responsible for overseeing the use of church facilities and equipment for wedding activities and non-member usage. Each member of the committee in turn will be on site as the Building Supervisor for weddings and for use of the building by non-members. The committee shall consist of at least five (5) members. For the responsibilities of the Building Supervisor related to weddings see Section X of the church wedding policies (pp. 28-29). For responsibilities related to non-member usage see page 22 under a (2) Administrative Procedures (b) For Non-Church Members.

Section 4 – Campus Security

(1) Purpose

The Campus Security Committee is responsible for determining the security needs of the church and implementing programs and strategies with a pro-active approach to safety and security to prevent perpetrators from attacking our church while at the same

time maintaining an open, receptive, loving atmosphere for the preaching and teaching of God's word.

(2) Duties

- (a) Guide the Church Security Team, which was established in accordance with Mississippi House Bill 786, the Mississippi Church Protection Act. All Security Team members have an enhanced carry firearms permit and are armed while on duty. The Campus Security Committee will set forth guidelines to ensure that the Security Team is in compliance with state law and church policy.
- (b) The Campus Security Committee will prepare and keep updated a Security Team Manual with specific instructions for the guidance of Security Team members who will be scheduled during all church services.
- (c) The Campus Security Committee will determine training needs for the church Security Team and schedule training as needed.
- (d) The Campus Security Committee will prepare and submit an annual budget for equipment and training.

Section 5 - The Cemetery Committee

This committee will be responsible for overseeing the use of the cemetery. Such duties include the sale and placement of plots and the care and upkeep of the grounds.

Section 6 – The Children's Committee

The Children's Committee is responsible for assisting the Children's Minister in planning and implementing ministry to families with children, ages birth to twelve, throughout the church year.

Section 7 – The Constitution & By-laws Committee

The duties of the committee shall be:

- (1) To take under consideration any recommended changes to the bylaws.
- (2) To formulate and recommend changes to the bylaws
- (3) To disseminate copies of the bylaws among church members.

Section 8 – The Church Council

The Church Council shall function as follows:

- (1) Review and evaluate past church program work.
- (2) Plan and coordinate future church program work.
- (3) Recommend to the church family programs and mission offering goals.

(4) Recommend to the church family the members of the Nominating Committee and the Trustees.

The council, unless otherwise determined by vote of the church, shall have as regular members the pastor, vocational staff members, Sunday School director, Discipleship Training director, Woman's Missionary Union director, Baptist Men's director, chairman of the deacons, church clerk, church treasurer, and the chairperson of each church committee.

Section 9 – The Disaster Relief Committee

This committee is responsible for preparing our church facility for use as a shelter and/or distribution center in the event of a natural disaster. They shall also be responsible for coordinating and supervising the work of this ministry when it is needed.

Section 10 – The Flower Committee

This committee is to see that appropriate flowers are in place in each worship and special service of the church. The committee will also be responsible for sending flowers to funerals of church members and immediate family of church members.

Section 11 - The Food Committee

This committee shall be responsible for planning and providing meals when death occurs in our church family.

Section 12 – The Historical Committee

This committee shall be responsible for the collection and preservation of documents and other materials that pertain to the history of the church. The committee shall also communicate to the church family timely reminders of God's work in and through our church family.

Section 13 – Home Bound Media Committee

This committee has the ministry of delivering media copies of worship service to church members who are home bound and/or in nursing facilities.

Section 14 – The Insurance Committee

This committee shall be responsible for evaluation of the insurance needs of our church and for making needed adjustments. They shall also be responsible for dealing with the claims process. If and when the committee is of the opinion that a change of insurance companies is necessary, they will recommend such change to the church.

Section 15 – The Ladies’ Ministry Committee

This committee shall be responsible for planning and coordinating activities and programs to minister to the ladies of our church and the surrounding community.

Section 16 – The Long Range Planning Committee

This committee shall be responsible for seeking to determine future trends and developments in the community and for recommending to the church steps to take in order for the church to minister more effectively in those circumstances.

Section 17 – The Lord’s Supper Committee

(1) Purpose

To assist the pastor and deacons in preparing for and administering the ordinance of the Lord’s Supper.

(2) Duties

- (a) See that all necessary Lord’s Supper equipment and materials are available and in place prior to each observance of the ordinance.
- (b) Recommend to the church property committee additional or different equipment needed.
- (c) Work with pastor and deacons in developing dates when the ordinance will be observed throughout the year. This will also include a decision as to whether it will be conducted in morning or evening services.
- (d) See that all equipment is gathered, cleaned and stored after each observance of the ordinance.
- (e) Help the pastor and deacons arrange for special approaches to the observance through use of candles, etc.

Section 18 – Medical Emergency Committee

This committee will oversee the placement and maintenance of health emergency equipment/items on church premises. Member of the committee will also respond to medical emergencies occurring during church services.

Section 19 – The Mission Partnership Committee

This committee shall serve as a liaison group between the church and any new work sponsored by the church. They shall serve as an advisory group to assist the mission church to carry out its ministries. This committee shall be activated as deemed necessary by the church.

Section 20 – The Music Committee

This is an advisory committee to work with the Minister of Music in planning and promoting a worthwhile music education program for the church.

Section 21 – The New Member Committee

This committee will provide new members with pertinent information about our church and its programs. They will work with the social committee in recognizing new members annually.

Section 22 – The Nominating Committee

(1) Purpose

The nominating committee coordinates the staffing of all leadership positions filled by volunteers. This committee recommends persons for all volunteer positions to be elected by the church.

(2) Duties

- (a) Select and enlist church program organizational leaders, workers, church committee chairpersons and committee members; and general church officers and submit nominations to the church for election.
- (b) Enlist persons to fill vacancies in above positions that may occur during church year.
- (c) Nominate special committees as assigned by church.
- (d) After the WMU director is elected by the church, she, along with the WMU Leadership Committee, shall have the responsibility for recommending WMU officers and leaders to the Nominating Committee for presentation to the church.

Section 23 – Operation Christmas Child Committee

This committee is responsible for overseeing the disbursement of OCC materials, collection of OCC items, publicity pertaining to OCC, and scheduling volunteers as needed for OCC events.

Section 24 – The Personnel Committee

(1) Purpose

The responsibilities of this committee shall fall into three major areas: employment, salaries, and employee benefits. The personnel committee shall be composed of at least three members elected to one year terms.

(2) Duties

- (a) Develop and keep current all positions' descriptions for staff personnel.
- (b) Prepare and recommend to the church a salary and staff benefit plan. Keep plan current.
- (c) In consultation with the church committee and staff member directly affected by each personnel position, this committee shall have the authority to employ and discharge all personnel except vocational staff members.

Section 25 – The Properties Committee

(1) Purpose

The Properties Committee is responsible to see to the care and maintenance of all properties and buildings. They should work with the staff and leadership of the church to make sure the facilities of the church are being used wisely and effectively.

(2) Duties

- (a) Develop and recommend policies and procedures about maintenance, and use of buildings, properties, and space.
- (b) Assist the church in recommending and maintaining proper and adequate furnishings for church programs and activities.
- (c) Assist other church committees in responsibilities relating to church property and space.
- (d) Review duties periodically and recommend appropriate changes.

Section 26 – The Recreation Committee

This committee shall be responsible for planning and implementing a program of Christian recreation – first of all for the purpose of evangelistic outreach and then for the benefit of the church family. The Minister to Students shall be an ex-officio member of this committee. This committee shall be activated as deemed necessary by the church.

Section 27 – The Revival Preparation Committee

This committee will assist the pastor in revival planning, promotion, publicity, and prayer support.

Section 28 – The Scholarship Committee

This committee shall be responsible for administering the fund set up by the church for the purpose of giving financial assistance to those who have surrendered to ministry. This committee shall be activated as deemed necessary by the church.

Section 29 – The Senior Adult Committee

This committee shall be responsible for planning and coordinating activities and programs to minister to the senior adults of our church and the surrounding community.

Section 30 – The Singles Action Ministry Committee

This committee shall be responsible for planning and coordinating activities and programs to minister to the singles of our church and the surrounding community. This committee shall be activated as deemed necessary by the church.

Section 31 – The Social Committee

The purpose of this committee is to plan and promote any church-wide recreational activity and fellowship suppers.

Section 32 – The Sound/Media/Technology Committee

This committee is responsible for maintenance and operations of audio visual and computer equipment belonging to the church.

Section 33 – The Stewardship Committee

(1) Purpose

To help church members grow as Christian stewards by developing an understanding of a commitment to biblical teachings of stewardship, and to administer the gifts of church members using sound principles of financial management.

(2) Duties

- (a) Develop and recommend methods for using the appropriate channels of the church to introduce biblical stewardship concepts.
- (b) Discover ways to plan and support church ministries through budget development, promotion and commitment.
- (c) Develop and recommend a church budget to the church.
- (d) Review expenditures periodically in terms of budget allocations and recommend adjustments to the church as necessary.
- (e) Take steps to insure that sound procedures are used for receiving, counting, safeguarding, and disbursing funds.

Section 34 – The Transportation Committee

This Transportation Committee is responsible for the maintenance and upkeep of the church vehicles. They recommend to the church policies concerning the use of the vehicles and advise and recommend concerning the purchase of new or additional vehicles in consultation with the Stewardship Committee.

Section 35 – Upward Committee

This committee assists the Upward commissioner in operation of the Upward program (enlisting volunteers, scheduling, equipment, officiating...etc.).

Section 36 – The Ushers Committee

(1) Purpose

To assist leaders and participants before, during, and following worship and special congregational services.

(2) Duties

- (a) Work closely with pastor or leader of the congregational service to assist as needed.
- (b) Provide information and assistance to persons attending as needed.
- (c) Make certain that the auditorium is orderly before and after the service in order to enhance the spirit of worship.
- (d) Assist in receiving offering as required.
- (e) Greet people as they enter the worship center for the service.
- (f) Introduce visitors to leaders and members nearby.
- (g) Escort late arrivals to available seating.

Section 37 – The Veterans Committee

This committee is responsible for coordinating activities for veterans including special recognition on related holidays such as Memorial Day, Veteran's Day and the Fourth of July.

Section 38 - World Missions Committee

This committee will assist the pastor in promoting mission trips and aiding in fundraising for mission trips sponsored by the church.

Section 39 – The Youth Committee

(1) Purpose

To serve as an advisory committee to the Minister to Students and to help plan all programs and ministries for the youth of the church.

(2) Duties

- (a) Supervise and provide chaperones for youth functions as requested.
- (b) Promote and publicize the youth activities of the church
- (c) Work in cooperation and consultation with the Minister to Students to prepare an annual budget and recommend the budget to the Stewardship Committee.

IV. PROGRAM ORGANIZATIONS

Section 1 – General

All organizations of the church shall be under church control, all officers being elected by the church and reporting regularly to the church.

Section 2 – Sunday School

There shall be a Sunday School, divided into departments and classes for all ages and conducted under the direction of the Sunday School director for the study of God's Word.

The tasks of the Sunday School shall be to teach the biblical revelation, reach persons for Christ and church membership, perform the functions of the church within its constituency, and provide and interpret information regarding the work of the church and denomination.

Section 3 – Discipleship Training

There shall be a Discipleship Training program, divided into departments for all ages and conducted under the direction of a general director. The Discipleship Training program shall serve as the training organization of the church.

The tasks of the Discipleship Training program shall be to orient new church members; train church members to perform the functions of the church; train church leaders; teach Christian theology, Christian ethics, Christian history, and church policy and organization, and provide and interpret information regarding the work of the church and denomination.

Section 4 – Woman's Missionary Union

There shall be a Woman's Missionary Union with such officers and organizations as needed. This program shall be led by a director who shall be elected by the church.

The tasks of the Woman's Missionary Union shall be to teach missions, engage in mission action, support world missions through praying and giving, and provide and interpret information regarding the work of the church and denomination.

Section 5 – Brotherhood

There shall be a Brotherhood with such organization as needed. This program shall be led by a director who shall be elected by the church.

The tasks of the Brotherhood are to teach missions, engage in mission action, support world missions through praying and giving, and provide and interpret information regarding the work of the church and denomination.

Section 6 – Church Music Program

There shall be a Church Music program under the direction of the minister of music or appropriate person. Such officers and/or organizations shall be included as needed. The music tasks shall be to teach music; train persons to lead, sing, and play music; provide music in the church and community; and provide and interpret information regarding the work of the church and denomination.

Section 7 – Church Media-Library Service

The Church Media-Library will serve as the resource center for the church. The church librarian and assistants will seek to provide and promote the use of printed and audio-visual resources.

V. ORDINANCES

Section 1 – Baptism

A person who receives Jesus Christ as Savior by personal faith, who professes Him publicly at any worship service, and who indicates a commitment to follow Christ as Lord, shall be received for baptism.

- (1) Baptism shall be by immersion in water
- (2) Baptism shall be administered by the pastor or whomever the church shall authorize
- (3) Baptism shall be administered as an act of worship during any worship service
- (4) A person professing Christ and failing to be baptized after a reasonable length of time shall be counseled by the pastor and/or staff and deacons. If negative interest is ascertained, he/she shall be deleted from those awaiting baptism.

Section 2 – Lord’s Supper

- (1) The Lord’s Supper shall be observed at least quarterly.
- (2) The pastor and deacons shall be responsible for the administration of the Lord’s Supper.

VI. CHURCH MEETINGS

Section 1 – Worship Services

The church shall meet regularly each Sunday morning, Sunday evening, and Wednesday evening for preaching, instruction, evangelism, and for the worship of Almighty God unless providentially hindered or by a vote of the church. These meetings will be open for the entire membership of the church and for all people and shall be conducted under the direction of the pastor.

Section 2 – Special Services

Revival services and any other church meetings which will be essential in the promotion of the objectives of the church shall be placed on the church calendar.

Section 3 – Regular Business Meetings

Regular business meetings shall be held monthly on a designated Sunday night. All motions that are presented from a committee must be in writing with a copy being supplied to the church clerk.

Section 4 – Special Business Meetings

A specially called business meeting may be held to consider special matters of significant nature. A one-week notice of the subject, date, time, and location must be given for the specially called business meeting unless extreme urgency renders such notice impractical.

Section 5 – Quorum

The quorum consists of those who attend the business meeting, provided it is a stated meeting or one that has been properly called.

Section 6 – Parliamentary Rules

Robert’s Rules of Order, the latest revision, is the authority for parliamentary rules of procedure of all business meetings of the church.

VII. GENERAL CHURCH POLICIES

Section 1 – Memorial Gift Policy

- (1) All memorial gifts in the form of cash contributions will be placed in a Church Memorial Fund. Disbursements of these gifts will be determined by church action.
- (2) The contributor agrees that the church may dispose of the gift in a manner so desired if and when in the opinion of the church the gift no longer serves its purpose and is no longer useful to the church.
- (3) An accurate record shall be kept of all memorial gifts including the name and address of the contributor, the name of the person(s) to be memorialized, a description of the gift, the date given and other pertinent information of this nature.
- (4) All memorial gifts shall be properly acknowledged.

Section 2 – Special Offerings

Consideration of any special offering will be the responsibility of the church Council. All special offerings will be recommended to the church by the Church Council for church approval.

Section 3 – Policies Governing the Use of Church Property

(1) General Policies

- (a) Any consideration of special use of the property of this church will be guided by the fact that it has been dedicated to worship, teaching the Bible, evangelism, character building, and related activities;
- (b) The policy of our church shall be to use the total church facilities to the best advantage of the church in carrying out the best purpose and spirit of the church. As long as policies are kept we shall endeavor to bring as many people as possible inside the church buildings in order to in some way influence them toward Christ.
- (c) Regularly scheduled meetings and services shall have prior claim to space, facilities, and equipment ordinarily used by them.

(2) Administrative Procedures

(a) For Church Members [*groups or organizations affiliated with the church*]

- (i) Before scheduling an activity requiring a meeting room or other space assignment, a request for such space shall be made to the church office, so

that all assignments may be coordinated and recorded on the church calendar of activities.

(ii) Those using the facility are responsible for clean-up and for seeing that equipment used is returned to its proper place.

(b) For Non-Church Members [*groups or organizations not affiliated-with the church*]

(i) When a request is made the deacons will have the responsibility of making the decision and will do so as soon as possible.

(ii) The organization requesting use of the buildings shall be responsible for any damage to the building and clean-up of the facility.

(iii) A building supervisor will be on site to oversee the use of facilities and equipment.

(3) Use of Church Buildings

(a) The use of decorations, the changing of furniture, attachment of materials to walls and items of similar nature shall be done only with the advice and consent of the pastor or Church Property Committee chairman.

(b) No temporary structure will be built anywhere on the premises without the consent and supervision of the pastor or Church Property Committee chairman.

(c) No flash pictures shall be made during any regular scheduled church service in the Worship Center except by prior arrangement with the pastor.

(d) No alcoholic beverages are allowed on church properties.

(e) The use of tobacco in any form is not allowed in the buildings.

(4) Equipment

(a) Audio-visual equipment shall be loaned out only if approved by the chairman of the Sound/Media/Technology Committee and then only when accompanied and operated by a church member qualified to operate the equipment.

(b) Lending of equipment other than audio-visual such as tables and chairs must be approved by the pastor, minister of education or Properties Committee Chairman. A check-out form must be filled out in the church office with the name and contact information of the one borrowing the equipment. When the equipment is returned it will be noted on the form.

(c) Use of musical instruments by unauthorized persons must be approved by the Minister of Music.

Section 4 – Licensing and Ordaining

(1) Any male member, who in the judgment of the church, gives evidence of his devotion, zeal and aptness to teach, and says he is called of God to the work of the ministry, may be licensed to preach the Gospel of Jesus Christ, provided three-

fourths of the members present at any regular, or called meeting for that purpose, shall agree thereto.

- (2) If the church decides that one of its licensed Ministers possesses the scriptural qualifications for full ordination, and an ordination request is made by a Southern Baptist Church to which he has been called, an Ordination Counsel shall examine the candidate and report their findings to the church. The Ordination Counsel shall consist of the pastor and deacons assisted by other pastors and deacons at the invitation of the church. If the church decides by a vote of three-fourths of the members present that he should be ordained, it shall proceed with the ordination.
- (3) The ordination of a deacon of this church shall be held at a regularly scheduled worship service following his election by the church. An invitation will be given to other pastors and deacons to attend the ordination service.

Section 5 – Resolutions

Resolutions must be submitted in writing. At least one week's notice shall be given before voting on any resolution.

Section 6 – Annual Budget Adoption Policy

- (1) The Stewardship committee shall have the proposed budget prepared and available to the church family by the third Sunday in November. A copy of the proposed budget will be mailed to the church family the week prior to the third Sunday of November. This will give ample opportunity for anyone who has a concern about any budget item to meet with the committee and discuss that concern prior to the church-wide discussion of the proposed budget.
- (2) On the first Sunday night in December, a special business meeting will be held to present the proposed budget for the new year. Any questions or discussion will be addressed at this time. If any amendments are proposed, these will be mailed to all church members for review prior to the second Sunday of December. Proposed amendments will be discussed and voted on by secret ballot during another special business meeting the second Sunday night in December. If there are no proposed amendments, no meeting will be held on the second Sunday night.
- (3) Vote on the final budget will be the third Sunday of December at the morning service by secret ballot without discussion.

Section 7 – Amendments

Changes in this constitution and bylaws may be made at any regular business meeting of the church, provided each amendment shall have been presented in writing at a previous meeting, and copies of the proposed amendment be furnished to each member present. Amendments to the constitution shall be by a two-thirds vote of all members of the church present and entitled

to vote. Amendments to the bylaws shall have a concurrence of majority of the members present and voting.

Section 8 – Wedding Policies

Marriage is the first institution of the human race, established by God Himself in the Garden of Eden. It is not a relationship to be entered into lightly or carelessly. We, at First Baptist Church Sumrall, wish to do what we can to help couples have a positive experience on the occasion of the ceremony and to encourage them as they begin the journey of a lifetime together. True marriage is that between a man and a woman as illustrated in that first marriage between Adam and Eve. Therefore, no marriage shall be performed uniting same sex partners.

Serious study and careful judgment have gone into the preparation of the church's wedding policies. These official wedding policies and suggested procedures related to wedding receptions have been adopted by the church. Please read the following material carefully.

It must be remembered that a wedding ceremony in the church is a service of worship. In all your planning from the order of the ceremony to the selection of music, please keep that guiding factor in mind. Also, a consultation with the wedding hostess is mandatory.

(1) Scheduling

- (a) A wedding may be scheduled by contacting the church secretary. As soon as possible, the family must pick up a copy of the church wedding policy from the church office. The wedding policy is to be read, and a list of the wedding hostesses will be provided.
- (b) The date will be confirmed when the signed sheet and the security deposit of \$200.00 are returned to the church office. Weddings must be scheduled at least 60 days in advance. The wedding date is considered tentative until the security deposit is received.
- (c) Christmas – Only members may schedule weddings, rehearsals, or receptions from December 15 through January 2. These will be scheduled only if the decorations in the worship center are left in place and a wedding hostess is available for the event.
- (d) Easter – No weddings, rehearsal, or receptions may be scheduled from the Friday prior to Palm Sunday through Easter Sunday.
- (e) Other holidays – Weddings, rehearsals, or receptions may be scheduled on other holidays only if a hostess is available.
- (f) The couple must consult with the wedding hostess before any change is made in the dates or times.
- (g) As soon as possible after the wedding and rehearsal dates are set, the bride and groom should make an appointment for a conference with the pastor. If a minister other than the pastor of First Baptist Church Sumrall will be conducting the service, the appointment should be made with him.

- (h) The church announces weddings in the bulletin if it is requested (Deadline for bulletin is before noon on Wednesday).

(2) Member/Non-Member

- (a) A couple may marry under the status of a member only if the bride, groom, or the parent/guardian of the bride or groom is a member of First Baptist Church Sumrall at the time the church reservation is confirmed.
- (b) Members and non-members must pay a refundable \$200.00 security deposit. Other non-refundable fees will also be required.

(3) Music

- (a) Your selection of music for the wedding should be discussed with the wedding hostess. It is most important to keep in mind that a church wedding is a service of the church, and the music should be in keeping with the attitude of worship
- (b) The minister of music must approve use of any church musical instruments.

(4) Attire of the Pastor

The pastor will wear a dark suit for the ceremony. If it is the desire of the couple that the pastor wear a tuxedo or other attire that must be rented, the wedding party is expected to cover that expense.

(5) Decorations

- (a) Florists are required to schedule with the wedding hostess prior to decorations for any ceremony, reception, or rehearsal dinner. Decorating may be done and decorations removed only during times when the wedding hostess is on duty. Otherwise, the cost for special custodial help will be charged to the wedding party. See section (10) for wedding hostess.
- (b) Only dripless candles may be used and must be placed in candelabras to prevent dripping on the floor. Drop cloths must be placed on floor under candles.
- (c) The church's greenery may be used only by church members with prior approval. If used, the greenery must not be altered in any way.
- (d) The florists must place all potted plants on material which will not allow moisture to get on the floor.
- (e) All decorations must be removed promptly following the ceremony/reception. However, if any decorations remain, the wedding hostess will designate an area for temporary storage. **IT IS THE RESPONSIBILITY OF THE WEDDING PARTY TO PLACE THESE ARTICLES IN THE DESIGNATED AREA.** First Baptist Church Sumrall is not responsible for damage to such objects. All articles **MUST** be removed within three working days.
- (f) Arrangements should be made in advance with the chairman of the Flower Committee if floral arrangements are to be used in the church for regular services. The floral arrangements are to be removed the following Monday.

- (g) Nothing which damages the building or furnishings is permitted (no pinning, stapling, gluing, nailing, etc., to church property). Only artificial flower petals are to be thrown on the carpet. No decorations, arrangements, etc., may be placed on the piano or the organ.
- (h) If the church building is used for weddings on Sunday, no decorations are to be placed in the church prior to the morning service and must be removed prior to the regularly scheduled evening service.

(6) Photography

- (a) During the actual ceremony, no flash pictures will be taken. The photographer may take a picture of the bride and her father as she starts down the aisle and the bride and groom as they leave the worship center. All photographers are requested to use no flash or wait until the ceremony is over to take pictures. Members of the bridal party should discourage friends and relatives from taking pictures during the ceremony and ask the ushers to inform wedding guests with cameras of this request.
- (b) Video cameras may be used in the balcony or in a stationary position on the lower floor. The photographer must not move around during the ceremony.

(7) Conduct

- (a) The use of tobacco in any form is not permitted in the buildings.
- (b) No alcoholic beverages are allowed on church property, and no person is permitted to attend church for any wedding activities while drinking or having consumed any kind of alcoholic beverage.
- (c) No dancing is allowed on any church premises.
- (d) All persons must refrain from the use of irreverent language and discourteous actions on church property.
- (e) Bird seed and bubbles can be used in lieu of rice outside the church buildings. Rice is prohibited.
- (f) No animals will be allowed in any building except when assisting the impaired.

(8) Punctuality

Remember to be on time for the rehearsal and the wedding. The time of the members of the wedding party is valuable, and the pastor frequently has other engagements. Feel free to invite the pastor to the rehearsal dinner and reception, but do not require his attendance.

(9) Sound System

The church sound system may be used for the wedding but must be operated only by a member of the Audio-Visual Committee.

(10) Use of Buildings

- (a) The wedding hostess is responsible for having someone on site to guide the wedding party in the proper use of the buildings.
- (b) The wedding hostess will be responsible for unlocking and locking the buildings prior to and after the rehearsal and the ceremony.
- (c) The wedding hostess will oversee the moving of the pulpit, pulpit chairs, and altar table prior to rehearsal and the replacing of them following the service. Members of the wedding party are expected to do the actual moving. If any other items are desired to be removed from the sanctuary, it must be done under the supervision of the wedding hostess.
- (d) The placing of tables and chairs for the reception in the Family Life Center shall be done by members of the wedding party under the supervision of the wedding hostess. Immediately after the reception, the caterer/wedding party will be responsible for removing all food and serving utensils. Also, the wedding party will be responsible for seeing that the tables and chairs are moved back to their original positions.
- (e) The families of the bride and groom are responsible for custodial cleaning of the church facilities, including sidewalks and entrances, immediately after the ceremony/reception. This includes picking up and removing trash, sweeping, mopping and vacuuming.
- (f) The bride, groom, and wedding party will have designated areas in which to dress.
- (g) Since the buildings are available for rehearsal, wedding and reception, the air/heat will be turned on only at a reasonable time before any scheduled event.
- (h) No temporary structure will be built anywhere on the premises without the consent and supervision of the pastor or church Properties Committee chairman.

