



FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH (FBC) OF SHAWNEE BYLAWS

A. ORGANIZATION

- I. Beliefs:** As stated in the petitionary letter of May 2006, this church is in basic agreement with the doctrinal convictions expressed by Southern Baptists in the Baptist Faith and Message of 2000 (provided in an external document).
- II. Dissolution:** In the event of the dissolution of the corporation, the property assets of the church shall be distributed according to the vote of the majority of the membership to another SBC 501(C)(3) organization.

B. BIBLICAL LEADERSHIP

I. Elder Board

- A. The board has oversight of the ministry and mission of the church. The board will meet at least monthly to oversee the ministries, including but not limited to discipleship, missions, evangelism, worship, and fellowship.
- B. Composition: The board (all of whom are church members) will be composed of biblically qualified leaders according to 1 Timothy 3:1-7 and Titus 1:6-9. The board will include Staff Elders (financially supported) and Lay Elders (non-supported). The goal will be to maintain a majority of Lay Elders.
- C. Terms and Appointments: Members of the board are appointed by the existing board, after a poll of the church. Their appointment is indefinite, but their service may be limited. An elder may choose to be inactive for a period of time. The existing elders will determine the board's number to reflect the needs of the congregation.
- D. Board Officers: Chairman, Vice-Chair and Secretary will be Lay Elders chosen by the board. The Vice-Chair and Secretary will serve as the officers of the corporation.
- E. Responsibilities:
 - 1) Hold one another accountable.
 - 2) Incarnate the vision of the church.
 - 3) Provide leadership and oversight for the ministry in general.
 - 4) Oversee matters of church governance and discipline (see addendum on Church Discipline).
 - 5) Prepare (in coordination with the Church Administrator and the Deacons) an annual budget to present to the church for approval.
- F. Removal & Replacement: A board member may be removed from office if an accusation against them is brought to the board by two or more members and it is substantiated (1 Timothy 5:19). The board will determine by majority vote if that leader is no longer qualified to serve on the board.

II. Deacons/Deaconess

- A. All deacons, male and female, are members who assist the elders in the ministry of the church.
- B. Selection: It is the responsibility of the deacons and Elder Board to ensure candidates meet the biblical qualifications of 1 Timothy 3:8-13. Deacons will then be appointed by the elders and current deacons, following a poll of the church. The deacons shall ensure their number to be sufficient to accomplish care for the congregation. A chairman will be elected from within the deacons yearly. A chairman may only serve two consecutive years.
- C. Terms of service: Deacons will serve until respite, resignation or removal. A deacon may be removed from office if the Elder Board agrees that deacon has biblically disqualified himself or herself.
- D. Responsibilities:
 - 1) Provide care for the congregation as directed by the Elder Board.
 - 2) Serve as stewards of the church's finances under the oversight of the Elder Board.
 - 3) Be responsible for the maintenance and distribution of benevolence funds.
 - 4) Work with the Elder Board and Church Administrator in preparing an updated budget each year and present it to the congregation for approval.
 - 5) Appoint three persons from the congregation to audit the church's financial accounts and make an annual report to the congregation.
 - 6) Oversee the Property Management team for the maintenance and necessary repairs of church buildings. It will secure adequate insurance on buildings and contents and make recommendations regarding changes to church properties.

C. ADMINISTRATIVE LEADERSHIP

I. Church Clerk

The clerk shall be appointed by the Elder Board and have the following responsibilities:

- 1) Keep a complete record of minutes and transactions of all business meetings of the church body.
- 2) Keep a record of the names and addresses of members with dates and manner of admission and dismissal.
- 3) Keep an accurate record of baptisms and issue letters of transfer and other dismissal letters as acted on by the Elder Board.
- 4) Preserve on file all communications and written reports.

II. Church Administrator

The Church Administrator shall be appointed by the Elder Board and deacons. Under the oversight of the Elder Board, and with support staff as needed, the Church Administrator shall manage the business operations of the church, such as office management, financial stewardship, and building use.

D. CHURCH LIFE

I. Membership

- A. Qualifications: Members must have made a personal commitment of faith in Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior. They must have been baptized after conversion. Individuals may be received as members pending baptism.
- B. Admission process: Individuals desiring membership will have an interview with an elder and upon board approval be presented as members of the church. No one will be received into membership who is under a disciplinary process at another church.
- C. Expectations and privileges can be referenced in the attached addendum: Expectations and Privileges of Membership.
- D. Conflict resolution: Members of the church believe that the Bible commands that every effort be made to live at peace and to resolve disputes with one another in private or within the church (Matthew 7:3-5; 18:15-22).
- E. Termination: Persons will be removed from church membership for the following reasons:
 - 1) Death
 - 2) Transfer to another church
 - 3) Personal, written request of the member
 - 4) Discipline: Procedures for dismissal will be according to Matthew 18:15-17 (see addendum on Church Discipline).
 - 5) Inactivity: If, after six months, a member has shown an apparent disengagement with FBC Shawnee (see Expectations and Privileges of Membership), they may be removed from membership by the Elder Board.

II. Church ordinances

- A. Baptism: Following the example of Jesus, baptism is by immersion in water. It is for believers in Jesus Christ to be performed by another believer in Jesus Christ.
- B. The Lord's Supper: Following the example of Jesus, the bread and juice are served to remember His death, burial, and resurrection. All believers are welcome to participate in the Lord's Supper.

III. Business Meetings

- A. The church will meet together at least once a year for business purposes.
- B. Matters of church vote require a 75% majority of voting members present. There will be no provisions for absentee or proxy balloting.
- C. Business meetings can be called by the Elder Board. Notice of any business meetings will be given at least one week in advance. The business meeting will deal only with that issue for which the meeting has been called.
- D. These bylaws may be amended at a business meeting called for that purpose. Proposed changes will be posted two weeks prior to that meeting.
- E. Business will be conducted in an orderly fashion with the Bible as our ultimate authority and guide for conduct. An elder will be the moderator for the business meeting.

ADDENDUM: EXPECTATIONS AND PRIVILEGES OF MEMBERSHIP

Expectations:

- Submit to the Lordship of Jesus Christ. (Mt 16:24-28; Jn 14:6 Phil 2:9-11; Rom 14:8-9)
- Submit to the authority of the Bible. (2 Tim. 1:13; 3:16; Psalm 119:105; 2 Peter 1:20)
- Following the model of the early church, members are expected to financially support the ministries of the church with their resources. (1 Cor. 16:1-2; 2 Cor 8-9)
- Gather together consistently for corporate worship and fellowship. (Jn 4:24; Rom 12:1-2; Heb 10:24-25)
- Serve others in Jesus' name, as all believers are gifted to serve both inside and outside the church. (Mark 10:43-45; 12:28-34; Eph 2:10; 4:11-13; 1 Pet. 4:10; Gal 5:13-14)

Privileges:

Every member of the church (16 years of age or older) may vote on these matters:

- Disposition of any fixed assets of the church
- Merger or dissolution of the church
- Acquisition of real property and related indebtedness
- Amendments to the bylaws of the church
- Approval of the yearly budget, and any subsequent overages in spending
- Any one-time expenditure above 2% of the annual church budget

Under the oversight of the Elder Board, members will be invited to express leadership and/or teaching gifts.

In order to discern the unified will of the membership, members will be polled concerning any new appointments to the deacons or the Elder Board. That feedback, alongside the wisdom of the elders, will be used in such appointments.

ADDENDUM: CHURCH DISCIPLINE

The Reasons for Church Discipline

- to restore the erring church member to a right relationship with God (Gal. 6:1-2)
- to protect the church from division (Titus 3:10-11)
- to protect the church from the spread of false teaching (Titus 1:9, 2:1)
- to protect the church from the spread of lax moral behavior (1 Cor. 5:1-4)

The Process of Church Discipline: Matthew 18:15-18

First Step: between two members. (Matt. 18:15)

“If your brother sins against you, go and rebuke him in private. If he listens to you, you have won your brother.”

Private correction and/or reconciliation sought with the offender.

Second Step: the two with advisers. (Matt. 18:16)

“But if he won’t listen, take one or two others with you, so that by the testimony of two or three witnesses every fact may be established.”

A witness or witnesses, preferably spiritual leaders, is/are included to strengthen the effect of the discipline. This is so that if it must be brought before the whole church it can be firmly proven and established (Matt. 18:16-17; 1 Tim. 5:19).

The goals are loving admonition, correction, and forgiveness. But if these first steps do not produce results, it constitutes a warning that further action will be taken and provides occasion for serious rebuke (2 Tim. 4:2; 1 Thess. 5:12-13; Titus 2:15; 3:10).

Third Step: the affirmation of the church. (Matt. 18:18)

If he doesn’t pay attention to them, tell the church. If he doesn’t pay attention even to the church, let him be like a Gentile and a tax collector to you.

If further action is necessary, it is to be taken before the whole church (2 Thess. 3:14-15; Matt. 18:17; 1 Tim. 5:20). This will result in either repentance or removal from church membership and any positions of leadership.