



firstbaptistchurch

FRANKLINVILLE NEW YORK

CONSTITUTION

Adopted January 2004
Amended January 2019

TABLE OF CONTENTS

	PAGE
ARTICLE I – NAME	1
ARTICLE II – PURPOSE	1
ARTICLE III – DENOMINATIONAL AFFILIATION	1
ARTICLE IV – DECLARATION OF FAITH	1
ARTICLE V – CHURCH COVENANT	3
ARTICLE VI – BAPTISM	3
ARTICLE VII – MEMBERSHIP	3
ARTICLE VIII – LEADERSHIP BY COUNCIL OF ELDERS	5
ARTICLE IX – DEACONS AND DEACONESSES	8
ARTICLE X – BOARD OF TRUSTEES	11
ARTICLE XI – OTHER SERVANTS	11
ARTICLE XII – MINISTRIES	12
ARTICLE XIII – BOARDS AND COMMITTEES	13
ARTICLE XIV – MEETINGS	15
ARTICLE XV – CHURCH WEDDINGS	15
ARTICLE XVI – AMENDMENTS	17

CONSTITUTION

FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH FRANKLINVILLE, NEW YORK

Originally Adopted
January 15, 1953

PREAMBLE

That all things “be done decently and in order” (I Corinthians 14:40), and that we may more readily help each other in our Christian service as Members of this Church, we do declare and establish this Constitution.

ARTICLE I - NAME

The name of our Church shall be

FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH OF FRANKLINVILLE

ARTICLE II – PURPOSE

The purpose of our Church is to glorify God in worship, win people to Christ, build them to Christ-like maturity, and equip them for ministry in the Church and in the world. We will encourage one another in love and fellowship. “Finally, brethren, rejoice, be made complete, be comforted, be like minded, live in peace, and the God of love and peace shall be with you.” (II Corinthians 13:11 NAS)

ARTICLE III - DENOMINATIONAL AFFILIATION

We are currently an independent Baptist Church, but may at some future time become affiliated with an association.

ARTICLE IV - DECLARATION OF FAITH

1. **The Word of God** - We believe the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments are the inspired Word of God, inerrant in the original writings, complete as the revelation of God's will for salvation, and the supreme and final authority in all matters to which they speak. (2Timothy 3:16,17; 2 Peter 1:20,21)
2. **The Trinity** - We believe in one God, Creator and Sustainer of all things, eternally existing in three persons: Father, Son and Holy Spirit; we believe that these are equal in every divine

perfection and they execute distinct but harmonious offices in the work of creation, providence, and redemption. (Matthew 28:19)

3. **God the Father** - We believe in God the Father: an infinite, personal Spirit, perfect in holiness, wisdom, power, and love. We believe He concerns Himself mercifully in the affairs of humanity, that He hears and answers prayer, and that He saves from sin and death all who come to Him through Jesus Christ. (Genesis 1,2; Psalm 139:1-12; Malachi 3:6; James 1:17; Isaiah 5:16; Lamentations 3:22,23; 1 John 4:8)
4. **Jesus Christ** - We believe that Jesus Christ is God's eternal Son, who has precisely the same nature, attributes, and perfections as God the Father and God the Holy Spirit. We believe further that He is not only true God, but also true Man, conceived by the Holy Spirit and born of the Virgin Mary. We also believe in His sinless life, His substitutionary atonement, His bodily resurrection from the dead, His ascension into heaven, His priestly intercession on behalf of His people, and His personal, visible, return from heaven. (John 1:1-18; Luke 1:26-35; 1 Corinthians 15:3,4; Hebrews 9:22; Romans 5:8,9; Ephesians 2:8-10)
5. **Holy Spirit** - We believe in the Holy Spirit, His personality and His work in regeneration, sanctification, and preservation. His ministry is to glorify the Lord Jesus Christ, to implement Christ's work of redeeming the lost, and to empower the believer for godly living and service. (John 1:12; 1 Corinthians 6:19,20; Ephesians 1:13,14; 4:30)
6. **Man** - We believe God originally created persons, male and female, in the image of God and free from sin. We further believe all people are sinners by nature and choice and are spiritually dead. We also believe that those who repent of sin and trust Jesus Christ as Savior are regenerated by the Holy Spirit. (Romans 3:9-20; 5:12; John 3:1-21)
7. **Salvation** - We believe in salvation by grace through faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. We further believe that this salvation is based upon the sovereign grace of God, was purchased by Jesus Christ on the cross, and is received by faith, apart from any human merit, works, or ritual. We further believe that salvation is evidenced in righteous living, good works, and proper social concern. (Ephesians 2:8-10) We further believe that once a person is saved they cannot lose their salvation. (John 3:16; 5:24)
8. **The Church** - We believe that the Church is the spiritual body of which Christ is the head. We believe that the true Church is composed of all persons who have been regenerated by the Holy Spirit. We believe that this body expresses itself in local assemblies whose members have been immersed upon a credible confession of faith and have associated themselves for worship, for instruction, for evangelism, and for service. We believe the ordinances of the local church are believer's baptism by immersion and the Lord's Supper. We also believe in the interdependence of local churches and the mutual submission of believers to each other in love. (Ephesians 1:22,23; 4:11-13; 5:23-32; Acts 2:1-4; 1 Corinthians 12:12,13)
9. **Separation of Church and State** - We believe that each local church is self-governing in function and must be free from interference by any denominational or political authority. We further believe that every human being is directly responsible to God in matters of faith and life and that each one should be free to worship God according to the dictates of conscience.
10. **Christian Conduct** - We believe that the supreme task of believers is to glorify God in their life and that their conduct should be blameless before the world. We further believe that they should be faithful stewards of their possessions and time; and that they should seek to realize

for themselves the full stature of maturity in Christ. (Romans 12: 1,2; 2 Corinthians 6:4-7; 1 John 2:15-17; Colossians 3:1-17)

11. **The Last Things** - We believe in the bodily resurrection of the saved and the lost, the eternal existence of all people either in heaven or hell, in divine judgment, rewards, and punishments. (Matthew 25: 41, 46; John 5:28,29; 2 Thessalonians 1:6-9; Revelation 20:4-6; 21:1-8)

ARTICLE V - CHURCH COVENANT

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

We engage, therefore, by the aid of the Holy Spirit, to seek to follow Jesus Christ's example for our lives; to love God with heart, mind, soul and strength; 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 contribute cheerfully and regularly to the support of the ministry, and the expenses of the church, the relief of the poor and the spread of the gospel through all nations.

We engage to maintain family and personal devotions; to religiously educate our children; to seek the salvation of relatives and acquaintances; and to be fervent in our efforts to advance the Kingdom of our Savior.

We further engage to give and receive admonition with gentleness and sensitivity, to watch over one another in brotherly love and remember each other in prayer. If we remove from this place, we shall as soon as possible unite with some other church where we can carry out the spirit of this covenant and the principles of God's Word.

ARTICLE VI - BAPTISM

Once a person has received Jesus Christ as his/her personal Savior, he/she will attend a series of Baptism classes administered by the Pastor/Elders. Then he/she will be personally interviewed by at least two Elders and will give his/her personal testimony. Finally, the Pastor and/or Elders will determine eligibility for Baptism and will arrange a ceremony of Baptism by immersion.

ARTICLE VII - MEMBERSHIP

1. **Qualifications for Membership** – any person who:
 - a. Is 16 years of age or older (younger persons may become members without privileges of voting and/or serving on Boards and Committees)
 - b. Has received Jesus Christ as their personal Savior
 - c. Has been baptized by immersion upon profession of their faith
 - d. Gives assurance of his desire to live a consistent Christian life
 - e. Willingly agrees to abide by the Church Covenant (Article V)
 - f. Agrees with the Declaration of Faith (Article IV)

Note: Membership transfers, handicapping conditions, and other special cases shall be considered individually

2. **Process of Becoming a Member** – each applicant must:
 - a. Attend a series of membership classes administered by the Board of Elders.
 - b. Be personally interviewed by at least two Elders and give his personal testimony concerning his relationship with Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord.
 - c. Sign the Church’s Doctrinal Statement and Covenant.
 - d. Shall receive the Right Hand of Fellowship during Sunday Morning Worship as extended by the Elders on behalf of the Church family.

3. **Responsibilities of a Member**
 - a. Personal purity: to bring to the church a submitted, Spirit-filled self.
 - b. Relational integrity: to pursue honorable and loving relationships in the family; among friends, coworkers, and neighbors; and in the Body.
 - c. Organizational loyalty: to contribute to the church time, talents, and treasure, and to be responsive to the leadership God has established.
 - d. Interpersonal Maturity: to seek to serve more than to be served.

2. **Privileges of a Member**
 - a. Eligible to serve on Boards and Committees
 - b. Eligible to vote
 - c. Mutual care and accountability

5. **Reconciliation / Discipline** – if any member of our Church, including those in leadership positions, is found to be in error, either morally or doctrinally, the Elders will follow the process outlined below.
 - a. Determination of either moral or doctrinal error will be based on the Word of God.
 - Galatians 5:19-21 – acts of sinful nature
 - 2 Thessalonians 3:6-15 – idleness
 - Romans 16:17-18 – divisiveness
 - Matthew 5:19, 7:15-16 – false teaching
 - b. The desired outcome of the reconciliation/discipline process is always reconciliation, both to God and to each other. Reconciliation brings:
 - Unity of the Body
 - Purity of the Body
 - Restoration of offender (2 Corinthians 2:5-11 and James 5:14-16)
 - Growth of the Body
 - Glory to God
 - c. The process of reconciliation/discipline will follow the Biblical model found in Matthew 18.
 - Confrontation in private (Galatians 6:1 and Matthew 18:15)
 - Arbitration (Matthew 18:16)
 - Appeal to the Body (Matthew 18:17a)
 - Excommunication (Matthew 18:17b; 1 Corinthians 5:3-13; 2 Thessalonians 3:11-15)

6. **Termination of Membership**
 - a. Termination of membership shall result only after reconciliation has been refused.
 - b. Membership is terminated when one or more of the following apply:
 - A member joins another church.
 - A member absents himself and fails to support the Church for a period of 12 months (Hebrews 10:23-25). Those physically unable will be exempt.

- A member no longer agrees with the Declaration of Faith or the Church Covenant, either in conduct or profession.
- c. Membership is to be reviewed every six months by the Elders. Those members liable for termination of membership shall be identified and contacted personally if possible.
- d. Membership termination will follow the outline listed in Reconciliation/Discipline process.

ARTICLE VIII – LEADERSHIP BY COUNCIL OF ELDERS

1. Biblical Qualifications for Eldership

According to the New Testament, an elder must be a spiritually mature Christian man who desires a position of leadership in the church, and is able to lead God's people and teach God's Word.

- a. THE HEAD OF THE CHURCH HAS DECLARED WHO SHOULD BE SET APART AS ELDERS (1 Timothy 3:1-7; Titus 1:5-9; 1 Peter 5:1-4)
- b. ELDERS MUST BE CHRISTIANS (Acts 20:28)
If one is going to shepherd the flock of God, one must first be part of the Church of God.
- c. ELDERS MUST BE MEN
 - 1 Timothy 2:12-14. God's order in the church requires this.
 - 1 Timothy 3:2-4. The character qualities assume male leadership.
- d. ELDERS MUST HAVE TWO ABILITIES
 - *To lead* (1 Timothy 3:4-5; Titus 1:6). If he has children, does he reflect a deep commitment to the care and discipline of his children and the smooth-running of his household? Are his children dependable and trustworthy, having a reputation of not being insubordinate or "wild" in their behavior? Do his children treat him with respect and obedience, honoring his authority as a loving father?
 - *To teach* (Titus 1:9; 1 Timothy 3:2). Does he have a grasp of the Bible and sound teaching so that he can defend his faith in a non-threatening way? Is he teachable, being open to the ministries of others? Can he, in a loving manner, confront someone whose life does not conform to scripture?
- e. ELDERS MUST BE CHARACTERIZED BY A PROPERLY MOTIVATED DESIRE. Does the man have a Spirit-given desire to shepherd God's people which is manifest in sacrificial service to the congregation currently?
 - 1 Timothy 3:1
 - 1 Peter 5:2
- f. ELDERS MUST BE MEMBERS OF THE FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH OF FRANKLINVILLE AND MANIFEST SPIRITUAL MATURITY (PROGRESSING TOWARD THE IDEALS)

HUSBAND OF ONE WIFE (1 Tim. 3:2; Titus 1:6). If the man is married, can he be considered a one-woman man? Does he nurture and cherish his wife? Is he discreet in his contacts with other women? Does he love his wife as Christ loves the church, i.e., sacrificially? Does his wife respect him and follow his leadership?

TEMPERATE (1 Tim. 3:2) Is he free from worldly excesses? Is he well-balanced and Christ-controlled?

SENSIBLE (1 Tim. 3:2; Titus 1:8) Is he wise in all his dealings? Level-headed? Prudent in the light of scripture? Does he recognize spiritual principles, which have been violated when someone encounters problems in their life? Does he make decisions prayerfully, seeking God's mind?

RESPECTABLE (1 Tim. 3:2) Is his life well-ordered? Not slipshod and disorganized? Is he responsible and able to get things done on time?

HOSPITABLE (1 Tim. 3:2; Titus 1:8) Does he readily open up his home to friends and strangers, showing generosity and love by sharing with others whatever God has given to him?

NOT ADDICTED TO WINE (1 Tim. 3:3; Titus 1:7) Does he drink alcoholic beverages frequently or in excess? Is there anything which he takes into his body which has mastery over him? Any addictive hobbies or pastimes?

NOT SELF-WILLED (Titus 1:7) Is he flexible when dealing with people and ideas, or is he stubborn and arrogant in insisting on his own way?

NOT QUICK-TEMPERED (Titus 1:7) Is he under the Spirit's control so that he does not blow up over the abuses and thoughtless words of others? Is he patient and longsuffering or does he quickly jump to defend his own rights?

NOT PUGNACIOUS (1 Tim. 3:3; Titus 1:7) Is he inclined to make peace when a conflict begins rather than welcoming a fight, even to the point of physical violence? Is he known as a fighter?

UNCONTENTIOUS (1 Tim. 3:3) Is he cooperative when working with others rather than quarrelsome and competitive? Does he seek a following for his own pet ideas even if it means dividing the Body of Christ?

GENTLE (1 Tim. 3:3) Is he sensitive to the feelings of others so that his words and actions reflect tenderness and promote healing?

FREE FROM THE LOVE OF MONEY AND DISHONEST GAIN (1 Tim. 3:3; Titus 1:7; 1 Peter 5:2) Does he relate success to the development of inward qualities rather than outward gain? Does his job take precedence over his spiritual and family life? Does his handling of money reflect a desire to get and use it honestly and wisely? Is he quick to give to people in need? Is he easily duped into get-rich-quick schemes?

WELL-RESPECTED BY UNBELIEVERS (1 Tim. 3:7) Do men of the world respect him as maintaining high moral standards and impeccable ethics? Pay bills on time? Honor his promises even if unwritten? Is he under authority to his employers and to civil government? Is he consistent in his life and bold in his testimony without unnecessarily offending?

LOVING WHAT IS GOOD (Titus 1:8) Does he have a positive delight in the good things in which God finds His delight, while discarding willingly things which influence him or his family toward evil? Control of T.V.? Is he known more by the good he is for than the evils he is against?

JUST (Titus 1:8) Is he known as a fair-minded man who wisely gives counsel from a godly life? Is his life in such a shape that one could say, "There is a righteous man"?

DEVOUT (Titus 1:8) Is he so set apart for God that he is "holy" in his life, separated from habitual sins and walking with God? Do other people stop swearing in his presence as if God had entered the room? Does he pray regularly and fervently?

HUMBLE/NOT A NEW CHRISTIAN (1 Tim. 3:6; 1 Peter 5:5) Has he been saved for a long enough period of time not to become puffed up by a quick climb to leadership? Has he faced a sufficient number of spiritual tests that you have confidence in the high quality of his faith and in his submission of life and ambitions to God? Is he able to handle both praise and criticism in a humble way without calling attention to himself? Is he overly eager for positions of influence and prominence? Does he freely acknowledge when he is wrong?

2. Process of Becoming Elders

- a. An Elder candidate may be approached by any church member and encouraged to consider becoming an elder, or come forward himself, being led by the Spirit of God. (Acts 14:23; Titus 1:5)
- b. Elder candidates shall be evaluated by the following individuals concerning biblical qualifications (use qualification check list). Elders coordinate this process.
 - The candidate himself
 - Spouse of candidate (if applicable)
 - Elder Council
- c. If the candidate is affirmed by the previous process, the Elders would present the candidate to the Congregation for their evaluation. This process would take three Sundays. Signed evaluation papers would be presented to the Elders for their consideration.
- d. The Elders would review the congregational evaluations and if they also affirm the candidate then the candidate would be presented to the Congregation for an affirmational vote by paper ballot.
- e. The appointed Elder(s) shall be installed before the Church by the laying on of hands (1 Timothy 5:22)

3. Organization of the Council of Elders

- a. The Elders shall select annually from among themselves a Chairman who will preside over all meetings of the Elders and business meetings of the Church as necessary.
- b. Additional officers or positions shall be appointed as determined necessary or as required by law.

4. Responsibilities of the Elders

- a. The primary function of an Elder is to be “Shepherds of God’s flock” (1 Peter 5:1-3)
- b. The Elders are responsible to seek the mind of Christ (Who is the Head of the Church) in all matters through the guidance of the Holy Spirit and the Word of God (Colossians 1:18; Ephesians 1:22; 1 Peter 2:2)
- c. An Elder must be able to teach and to exhort the Church in sound doctrine and to refute those who contradict the truth (1 Timothy 3:2; Titus 1:9)
- d. They are to set an example of godly living for God’s people to follow (1 Peter 5:3; 1 Timothy 4:12; Hebrews 13:7)
- e. Seeking God’s leading in all things, they shall provide spiritual direction to the church, oversight of its work, and cast the vision and direction for the future. They shall communicate with the church family what God has done and is doing in and through the church body.
- f. They shall have oversight of the ordinances, baptism and the Lord’s Supper, and shall maintain order in the meetings of the Church.
- g. The Elders shall be in charge of pulpit supply when the pastor is absent – whether by arranging for guest speakers or by leading the services themselves.
- h. They shall determine personnel needs and authorize the hiring of and oversight of personnel, including but not limited to secretary, custodial staff, organist, and youth worker.
- i. The Elders shall consider all applications for church membership and termination of membership.
- j. Where there is a question, the Elders will interpret the constitution.
- k. The Elders shall provide for the maintenance of Church discipline (1 Thessalonians 5:12; 2 Thessalonians 3:14; Galatians 6:1)
- l. The Elders shall oversee all aspects of the Church and act as liaisons for all Boards and/or Committees.

- m. An Elder shall oversee the music ministry of the Church, including but not limited to the organist, choir, praise teams, special music, and audio-visual ministry.
- n. The Elders shall oversee nominations of officers/members for Boards, Committees, etc.
- o. The Elders shall approve all ministries of which the Church is involved.
- p. The Elders shall be considered the Pastoral Relations Committee.
- q. Decisions made by the Elders shall be by consensus.

5. Length of Term

- a. The Bible states that the positions are for life as long as the person is biblically qualified and continues to desire to serve in that capacity.
- b. Every year Elders shall review themselves and each other individually to determine his desire, qualifications and ability to meet the demands and responsibilities of the office (1 Timothy 3:1-7).
- c. If a candidate becomes disqualified, the Church's process of discipline would be exercised on this Elder.
- d. An Elder may take sabbatical at any time for any length of time. He must be re-affirmed in order to be reinstated.

6. The Pastor

- a. The Pastor shall subscribe fully to the doctrinal convictions stated in this Constitution.
- b. The Pastor shall be called for an indefinite period. The Pastor (Teaching Elder) shall preach and teach the Scriptures, proclaim the gospel and, earnestly seeking God's leading, with the assistance of the Council of Elders, direct the Church's life and ministry. He will be one of the Elders, a member of the Finance Committee and an *ex officio* member and counselor of all Boards and Committees. He and his wife shall be members of the church by transfer.
- c. Other staff in positions of leadership may be called by the recommendation of the Elders and a three-quarters vote of Church members voting. They shall come under the authority of the Senior Pastor for supervision and direction.
- d. The Pastor(s) are to labor to edify and equip God's people toward ministry and maturity according to their spiritual gifts and calling (Ephesians 4:11-13).
- e. Should a member of the pastoral staff feel led to another position, he shall give the church three months notice of his intention to leave. Should the church ask him to leave, they shall provide him sufficient notice with a minimum of 3 months severance pay. To remove a Pastor, the Council of Elders shall present a recommendation to the Church at a special business meeting called for this action. A three-fourths vote of the members present and voting is required.

ARTICLE IX – DEACONS AND DEACONESSES

- 1. **Definition:** The Deacons and Deaconesses are servants of the church who facilitate the care for physical needs and temporal concerns of the people (Acts 6:1-6). I Timothy 3:8-13 and Romans 16:1-2 point to both men and women serving as "church servants". They shall be members of the First Baptist Church.
- 2. **Process of Becoming a Deacon or Deaconess**
 - a. Deacons and Deaconesses candidates may be approached by any church member and encouraged to consider becoming an elder, or come forward himself, being led by the Spirit of God. (Acts 14:23; Titus 1:5)

- b. Deacons and Deaconesses candidates shall be evaluated by the following individuals concerning biblical qualifications (use qualification check list). Elders coordinate this process.
 - The candidate himself
 - Spouse of candidate (if applicable)
 - Elder Council
- c. If the candidate is affirmed by the previous process, the Elders would present the candidate to the Congregation for their evaluation. This process would take three Sundays. Signed evaluation papers would be presented to the Elders for their consideration.
- d. The Elders would review the congregational evaluations and if they also affirm the candidate then the candidate would be presented to the Congregation for an affirmational vote by paper ballot.
- e. The appointed Deacon(s) and/or Deaconess(es) shall be installed before the Church by the laying on of hands (1 Timothy 5:22)

3. Length of Term

- a. The Bible states that the positions are for as long as the person is Biblically qualified and continues to desire to serve in that capacity.
- b. Every year Elders shall review the Deacons and Deaconesses. The Deacons and Deaconesses shall review themselves and each other individually to determine their desire, qualifications and ability to meet the demands and responsibilities of the office (1 Timothy 3:1-7).
- c. If a candidate becomes disqualified, the Church's process of discipline would be exercised on this Deacon or Deaconess.
- d. A Deacon or Deaconess may take sabbatical at any time for any length of time. He/she must be re-affirmed in order to be reinstated.

4. Qualities of a Deacon (Acts 6:3 and 1 Tim. 3:8-13a)

IN RELATIONSHIP TO PERSONAL FAITH IN THE LORD JESUS CHRIST

- Full of the Spirit – prepared for servant hood and helping others, as the Spirit comes alongside to help
- Holding to mystery of faith/clear conscience – having a conscience void of offense toward God and man

IN RELATIONSHIP TO PERSONAL MORAL/ETHICAL CHARACTER

- Full of wisdom – skilled in living out life with moral, intellectual and spiritual virtue and values.
- Gravity, dignity – seriousness of mind and character, propriety in behavior
- Not addicted to wine – not obsessed with drinking, moderation in all things

IN RELATIONSHIP TO THOSE IN THE COMMUNITY AND OUTSIDE

- Of good reputation – not attack due to a long term weakness
- Not double-tongued – not a gossip or talebearer
- Not fond of sordid gain – not materialistic, greedy, covetous
- Tested beyond reproach – evidence of faithfulness and dependability of character and ministry

IN RELATIONSHIP TO MARRIAGE, CHILDREN, FAMILY AND HOME

- Husband of one wife – devoted to his wife, giving her priority, loving her as Christ does the Church.
- Good manager of children and household – respected and obeyed by his children, cares for and maintains home

5. Work and Service of a Deacon

MINISTERING TO AND SERVING OTHERS

- *People* – ministering to their personal, social, emotional and physical needs, especially those distressed by circumstances
- *Practical* – distributing food, money, clothes, services and counsel

6. Qualities of a Deaconess (1 Timothy 3:11; 1 Timothy 5:9,10,14; Titus 2:3,4,5)

RELATIONSHIP TO THE LORD JESUS CHRIST

- Reverent in behavior – conduct reflects holiness and sacredness of respect and fear of God
- Pure – single-minded direction and holiness of character in her heart, mind and conduct

RELATIONSHIP TO PERSONAL MORALS/ETHICS/CHARACTER

- Dignified – worthy of respect, serious in her purpose, admired for her conduct
- Temperate – desires and impulses are self-controlled, clear minded
- Sensible – prudence and common sense, careful decision maker
- Faithful in all things – trustworthy in everything, dependable
- Kind – benevolent and caring, not irritable or harsh, gentle and quiet spirit

RELATIONSHIP TO MARRIAGE, CHILDREN, FAMILY AND HOME

- Wife of one man – If she is married, she is completely committed to her husband, devoted
- Lover of husband – devoted friend to her husband, demonstrates affection and commitment
- Subjected to husband – equal in essence but submissive in her functions as a woman and wife
- Bringing up children – raising her own children well, shepherding
- Lover of her children – friend to her children, loving them with affection, and ministering to their needs and concerns
- Home worker – willingly accepts her homemaking duties, skillful in her various tasks

RELATIONSHIP TO THE CHURCH, COMMUNITY, AND OTHERS

- No malicious gossip – no slander, false accusations or tale bearing
- Reputation for good works – well known for work done by His standard, toward His glory
- Washing the saints' feet – serves the household of faith
- Assists those in distress – helps those in trouble, others-focused ministry
- Devoted to good works – passion for service, devotion to doing good
- Teacher of goodness – able to pass on qualities of goodness to other women
- Encourager of younger women – help other women become sane and sober minded, call them to their senses

- Hospitable – welcomes strangers into her home, shares unselfishly

8. Responsibilities of a Deaconess (1 Timothy 5:9, 10)

- Good Works – Set up communion, assist with Baptism, manage the Memorial Fund, be a contact person for the church kitchen.
- Hospitality to strangers – Welcome visitors at the Church, create a visitors packet, specifically look out for visitors, follow-up with visitors.
- Wash the Saints' feet – practical caring for the needs of believers
- Assist those in distress – help manage the Benevolent fund, be a contact person for the Clothes Closet and Food Pantry, look out for people who have needs and help meet their needs.

ARTICLE X – BOARD OF TRUSTEES

There shall be a Board of Trustees with of a minimum of five members consisting of both men and women with a majority of men. They shall be members of the Church, or active attendees, as approved by the Council of Elders. Their term of office shall be a term of three years. They may succeed themselves in office. The Trustees shall hold in trust all property of the Church and shall be responsible for the upkeep and management of the same. The Board of Trustees shall be in charge of purchases and services rendered to the First Baptist Church of Franklinville, only to the extent that such expenditures have been previously authorized by the action of the church at its Annual Meeting and are in the adopted budget for said year. They shall not sell or encumber the real estate or other property of the church unless authorized to do so by a two-thirds vote of the membership present at a meeting of the Church called for the purpose of considering such a transaction. Such a meeting of the Church must be called in accordance with the provisions of the laws of the State of New York, which govern the selling, and encumbering of church property.

The trustees shall report to the Church Council and the Church at regular meetings.

ARTICLE XI – OTHER SERVANTS

All officers shall be members, or active attendees, as approved by the Council of Elders. All officers are under the oversight and authority of the Council of Elders. The Church shall elect them for a one-year term at the Annual Meeting. They may succeed themselves in office.

1. Church Clerk and Assistant

The Church Clerk shall keep a correct and permanent record of all the business meetings of the church, sign all letters of dismissal, take charge of all church records including baptisms and the membership record. The clerk shall enter upon the records of the Church current events in the life of the Church that are likely to be of historical value thus making the church records a continuous story of the history of the church. There will be an Assistant Church Clerk who will work directly with the Church Clerk and who will assume the Clerk's duties upon the event of a vacancy.

2. Financial Secretary and Assistant

The Financial Secretary shall receive all money given to the Church through the regular offerings and special offerings. He/she shall keep a complete and detailed record of all individual giving. As early as possible in the week he/she shall turn over all the money on hand to the designated bank. He/she shall submit yearly financial statements to all contributing members showing their individual giving. He/she shall present yearly financial statements to be included in the annual report presented at the annual meeting. He /she shall present the book to be audited at the close of the fiscal year or more often if so requested by the Finance Committee. There will be an Assistant Financial Secretary who will work directly with the Financial Secretary and who will assume the Financial Secretary's duties upon the event of a vacancy.

3. Church Treasurer and Assistant

The Treasurer shall keep detailed reports of all receipts and disbursements. All disbursements shall be authorized by the Church Budget and the payment of all bills shall be by check. He/she shall present a monthly report of all church financial transactions to the Trustees. At the close of the fiscal year, or more often if so requested, a report of transactions will be submitted to the Finance Committee of which he/she is a member.

4. Head Usher and Assistants

The Head Usher and Assistant(s) shall attend to the seating of the congregation, provide for its comfort, and receive the offering, except as otherwise provided. They shall also keep a record of the number of persons attending the services of the Church.

ARTICLE XII – MINISTRIES

All Board and Committee members shall be members of the Church, or active attendees, as approved by the Council of Elders. All Board and Committee members are under the oversight and authority of the Council of Elders. Their terms may vary according to their position. They may succeed themselves in office.

1. Board of Christian Education

“Teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you” (Matthew 28:19). The Board of Education shall unify and promote Christian education in the Church with the goal of Christian maturity. The Board shall encourage and enable education ministries in the Church. The Board shall actively engage in the operation of the Sunday School.

A. MEMBERSHIP

- There shall be a Board of Christian Education consisting of six members. Two shall be elected each year for a period of three years.

B. RESPONSIBILITIES

- The Board of Christian Education shall seek leadership for Vacation Bible School and other ministries deemed appropriate by the Elders (“Rainbow Club”, “Seekers in Sneakers”, Youth Group, Christmas Program). These groups may turn to the Board for help and guidance as needed.

- The Board of Christian Education shall appoint a librarian to operate the Church's lending library.
- Secure teachers for Sunday School. Teachers shall be members of the Church unless approved by the Elders.
- The Board of Christian Education shall administer an education budget and shall present the budget annually to be included in the Annual Report.

2. Camp JYC Ministry Team

Camp JYC will strive to:

- Evangelize ... bring area youth to experience a fun Christian atmosphere.
- Edify ... teach people how to know Jesus Christ as their personal savior.
- Equip ... prepare youth to become Christian leaders.
- Encourage ... invite other community groups to use the facilities that God has blessed us with.

A. MEMBERSHIP

- The Camp Ministry Team shall consist of a minimum of 9 members. Term of office shall be arranged so that 3 members are elected each year to serve a term of 3 years. They may succeed themselves in office.

B. RESPONSIBILITIES

- Choosing a Camp Director
- Setting dates for Camp
- Keeping a schedule for all events at Camp
- Corresponding with other groups who use Camp
- Enlarging the ministry of Camp
- Overseeing and maintaining Camp property and buildings
- Setting goals and guidelines for growth and development of Camp JYC
- Present a budget annually to be included in the Annual Report.

The Camp Director shall be approved by the Team with guidance from the Elders if necessary. He or she shall subscribe fully to the doctrinal convictions of the Church as stated in this Constitution.

ARTICLE XIII – BOARDS AND COMMITTEES

All Board and Committee members shall be members of the Church, or active attendees, as approved by the Council Elders. All Board and Committee members are under the oversight and authority of the Council of Elders. Their terms may vary according to their position. They may succeed themselves in office.

1. The Church Council

There shall be a Church Council composed of the Pastor, Elders, Deacons, Deaconesses and the elected officers of the Church, all members of all boards, the heads of the men's, women's and young

peoples' organizations and the chairman of all standing committees responsible to the church thus forming a group representing the entire scope of the church program and activities. Other interested Church attendees are encouraged to attend the meeting. The Pastor shall preside over the meetings of the Council. Boards and Committees shall give an update of their plans and activities. The Council Meeting shall provide communication and coordination of all Boards and Committees. The Council shall meet bi-annually in the Spring and Fall.

Special meetings may be called by the Pastor or by the Chairperson of the Elders, Deacons or Trustees.

2. Pulpit Committee

When the Church is in need of a Pastor, a Pulpit Committee shall be elected from the Church membership at a duly called Church meeting for the purpose of recommending to the Church a qualified candidate for the Pulpit. The Pulpit Committee shall consist of seven members and at least two representatives of the Elder Council. The Chairman of the Pulpit Committee shall be an Elder. The Church shall not consider any candidate who is not first recommended by the Pulpit Committee.

3. Finance Committee

A Finance Committee shall consist of a minimum of the Pastor, the Church Treasurer, and a minimum of seven other members representing the following: Council of Elders, Deacons, Deaconess, Board of Christian Education, Trustees, Camp JYC Team, and Missions. Any vacancies shall be filled by the Nominating Committee. Their term of office shall be one year. It shall be the duty of the Committee to recommend the proposed budget to the Church at its Annual Meeting. This budget shall list anticipated receipts and expenditures for the coming year. It shall also report the financial status and standing of the Church, including actual receipts and expenditures.

This Committee shall audit the books of the Financial Secretary and Treasurer as deemed necessary, and report such to the Church.

4. Nominating Committee

The Nominating Committee shall consist of the Council of Elders. The Council of Elders may appoint other members as necessary. It shall be their duty to select and place in nomination names for offices to be filled. The committee's report shall be announced at one or more public meetings of the church at least two weeks in advance of the Annual Meeting.

Nominations may also be made from the floor at the Annual Meeting. The nominees shall be voted for by secret ballot and the candidate receiving the largest number of votes shall be declared elected.

5. Mission Committee

The Mission Committee will consist of 6 elected members serving a 3 year term with 2 members elected each year. The Committee will be responsible for the Missions' budget, disbursement of funds, recommendations of new missions/missionaries for the Church to support, and the education of the Church regarding missions (bulletin inserts, mission speakers, mission conferences, etc.).

ARTICLE XIV - MEETINGS

1. **Worship Service**

The Church shall meet regularly every Sunday for public worship.

The Church shall observe the ordinance of the Lord's Supper once each month, served by an ordained minister or by a person approved by the Council of Elders.

2. **Council Meeting**

The Church Council shall meet bi-annually in the spring and fall. The meeting shall provide communication and coordination of all Boards and Committees. The Pastor shall preside over the meetings. Special meetings may be called by the Pastor or by the Chairperson of the Elders, Deacons or Trustees.

All matters or questions shall be decided by a majority of qualified voters present.

3. **Annual Meeting**

The annual meeting of the Church shall occur on the 3rd Sunday afternoon of January after the morning worship. The Council of Elders, Boards, Committees, Servants, and other organizations shall present written annual reports. Officers shall be elected, the Annual Budget shall be approved and transaction of other business shall occur as necessary. One-third of the current membership plus one member shall constitute a quorum.

All matters or questions shall be decided by a majority of qualified voters present.

4. **Business Meeting**

A special meeting for business may be called at any time providing the announcement of the meeting has been made at the Worship Service for two consecutive weeks preceding such a meeting. Announcements shall also appear in the bulletin for two weeks prior.

All matters or questions shall be decided by a majority of qualified voters present.

ARTICLE XV – CHURCH WEDDINGS

Marriage is an institution given to mankind by God and is therefore subject to the design of God. When one man and one woman desire a church wedding, the following positions apply:

1. Two professing non-Christians will not be provided a church wedding. Rationale: If professing to be a non-Christian, they cannot honestly express Christian vows.
2. A couple living together will not be provided a church wedding unless they agree to separate and live apart during the time of pre-marital counseling through the date of their wedding. Rationale:

- (A) Couples living together are openly living in sin. The church does not condone “living together”. (Ephesians 5:3; I Thessalonians 4:3-8)
- (B) Getting married is a correction, but does not “make right” the time of living together. Only the sincere confession of sin to Jesus offers forgiveness. (1 John 1:9)
- (C) Having a Christian wedding while still living together would be inconsistent. Knowingly sinning and not removing oneself from that sin is not the power context to come before God in marriage. On the one hand, this would be asking God’s blessing upon the marriage, while on the other hand willfully rebelling against Him. Double-mindedness, when it comes to sin and obedience, is unacceptable.
- (D) Couples should not expect the church to “bend” in order to accommodate improper lifestyles. If Christian marriage within the church is truly valued, the couple would desire to properly prepare for the wedding. As part of this preparation they would forsake the sin of living together.

3. A Christian desiring to marry a non-Christian will not be provided a church wedding.

Rationale:

- (A) The Old Testament made it clear that the people of God were not to marry those outside of the faith because it would lead to apostasy and unfaithfulness (Deuteronomy 7:1-4); Joshua 23:12,13; Judges 3:8; Ezra 9:10; Nehemiah 13:25-27).
- (B) The New Testament likewise teaches that we should marry a “believing” spouse who “belongs to the Lord” (I Corinthians 7:39; 9-5). We are not to be “yoked together with unbelievers” (II Corinthians 6:14-18).

Choosing a marriage partner is the second most important decision we will ever make. If we desire a Church wedding it should be with the intent of having a Christian marriage, whereby both partners are becoming “one” in order to harmoniously honor and serve God.

4. The purpose for the Church wedding is to maintain the meaning and integrity of the Church wedding ceremony at the covenantal commitment for Christian marriage.

Couples seeking a wedding in the Church will be counseled by the Pastor in a spirit of love. If a couple fits any of the three categories mentioned in this Article, pastoral counsel will be offered, but with the expressed knowledge that a wedding date not be set until adherence to the Church guidelines can be satisfied.

ARTICLE XVI – AMENDMENTS

1. The foregoing rules may be amended by two-thirds vote on any regular meeting of the Church providing that the proposed amendment shall be submitted in writing to the Elders and approved by the Elders. The amendment shall be read at the Worship Service on two successive Sundays before the business meeting at which time the proposed amendment is to be submitted for final action.
2. The rules and regulations adopted in this Constitution shall be constructed as setting aside and making null and void all former acts, rules and regulations for the government of this Church.