

# CHURCH CONSTITUTION

## **FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH OF COUNCIL GROVE, KANSAS**

(A Corporation Under the Laws of Kansas)

Adopted April 7, 1976

Amended April 9, 2000: See Article III, IV, V, VI, VII, IX, X

Amended February 10, 2008: See Article IX

Amended March 13, 2011----See: Article V, VI:Sec.2,3,4,5,6,7,8,9,10,11,13,14,15,16,17, & IX

### **ARTICLE I**

This organization shall be known as “The First Baptist Church, Council Grove, Kansas”.

### **ARTICLE II**

This Church, believing in the Bible as the inspired word of God, and acknowledging its adherence to all the teaching of Jesus Christ, declares its purposes to be:

- Sec. 1. To maintain regular services for public worship of God, the preaching of the gospel message and to urge its personal acceptance and practice in our daily living, personal evangelism, missionary endeavor and Christian education.
- Sec. 2. This church will promote the enactment of Christian laws, relief for the needy and underprivileged, and the advancement of our Christian witness in the world.

### **ARTICLE III**

#### Affiliation and Cooperation

This Church shall be affiliated with the American Baptist Churches U.S.A., the American Baptist Churches of the Central Region, and the Flint Hills Cluster of American Baptist Churches.

### **ARTICLE IV**

#### Membership

- Sec. 1. Reception of members  
Any person professing faith in the Lord Jesus, giving evidence of a change of heart and accepting the faith and practice of this Church, may be received into membership by:
  - (a) Baptism by immersion upon a profession of faith.
  - (b) By letter from another church of like faith and order.

- (c) A statement of Christian experience provided the candidate has been previously baptized by immersion.
- (d) By restoration of membership. Any and all persons who have withdrawn from this fellowship because of a special creed, ism, or practice must first satisfy the Pastor and Board of Deacons that they will accept and adhere to the principles set forth in Article II of this constitution and subscribe to the Church Covenant.
- (e) Every person presenting himself/herself for membership in this Church must do so at a regular service or business meeting and be accepted by a vote of the Church.

A school of instruction of new members shall be given in the meaning of the Christian life and Church membership. Such a course shall be given at least once yearly.

Sec. 2. Duties of members

All members of this church shall subscribe to the Baptist Church covenant, both in letter and in spirit.

Sec. 3. Dismissal of members:

- (a) Members in good standing, upon their request, shall be granted letters of dismissal by vote of the Church to unite with another Baptist Church. Letters of dismissal shall be sent directly to the receiving Church or its pastor. Membership in this church shall terminate when this Church has evidence that they have united with another Baptist Church.
- (b) Any member in good standing wishing to unite with an evangelical Church not of this same faith and order may receive a letter of Christian standing, thus terminating their relationship with this Church.
- (c) A Church member's name is automatically dropped when he/she unites with any other Church.

Sec. 4. Discipline of members:

- (a) Any member who voluntarily absents himself/herself from the service of this Church for a period of two years and during that same period fails to contribute to the financial support of the Church, shall be considered a member not in good standing; unless reasons satisfactory to the Board of Deacons is known, or given after formal notice has been sent by the Board of Deacons to the member's last known address, and unless his/her positive interest is immediately shown in

maintaining his/her church membership, his/her name shall be placed on the "Inactive List", which shall not be regarded as part of the Church membership.

## **ARTICLE V**

### **Elected Officers, Boards and Committees**

Sec. 1. The elected officers shall be:

- |                         |                                  |
|-------------------------|----------------------------------|
| 1. Pastor               | 9. Board of Trustees             |
| 2. Moderator            | 10. Board of Christian Education |
| 3. Clerk                | 11. Music Committee              |
| 4. Treasurer            | 12. Evangelism Committee         |
| 5. Assistant Treasurer  | 13. Corresponding Secretary      |
| 6. Head Usher           | 14. Nominating Committee         |
| 7. Board of Deacons     | 15. Finance Committee            |
| 8. Board of Deaconesses | 16. Greeter                      |
|                         | 17. Missions Committee           |

Any elected officer that misses 3 consecutive meetings without notification to the chairman will be contacted by the chairman of said committee to see if that position needs to be replaced.

## **ARTICLE VI**

### **Duties of Elected Officers**

Sec. 1. Pastor

- (a) The Pastor shall be the spiritual leader of the church. The duties and responsibilities of this office shall include preaching the gospel, administering the ordinances of the Church, counseling and pastoral visitation, attend meetings of boards and committees as an ex-officio member.
- (b) The Pastor shall be elected for an indefinite term. A Pastor may be called at a regular business meeting or a special business meeting called for the purpose. However, three days must elapse from the time of his appearance before the church as a Pastoral Candidate before such a meeting or election may be held.
- (c) The Pastor shall give the Church thirty days notice before leaving the field, unless this provision shall be waived by a vote of the Church.
- (d) The Church may terminate the services of a pastor by the following procedure: The Board of Deacons shall first meet with the Pastor in an effort to settle any differences. Witnesses may be heard by the board. Should these methods fail in reaching a settlement, or should

the Pastor be found to be at fault by the board, the Pastor shall be requested to resign. Should he refuse to comply with this request, a statement of charges shall be prepared by the Board of Deacons and the charges presented in an open meeting of the church. These charges shall be presented to the Church by the Chairman of the board of Deacons. Such a meeting must be announced at two regular church services and the resident members shall be notified by mail of such a meeting at least one week before the date of the meeting. The voting shall be by secret ballot. A majority of two-thirds of the members present and voting shall be necessary to dismiss a pastor.

The services of the Pastor shall be terminated immediately following an affirmative vote to dismiss the Pastor in accordance with the provisions of this section.

A special committee, appointed by the Moderator, shall meet with the dismissed Pastor to work out a settlement of any claims such as salary due and the vacating of Church property.

Sec. 2. Moderator

The Moderator shall preside at all business meetings of the Church. If they are unable to preside, the Chairman of Deacons, or the Pastor, respectively, shall preside.

Sec. 3. Clerk

The Clerk shall perform the duties that usually fall to that office and shall be the custodian of the records of the Church.

Sec. 4. Treasurer

The Treasurer shall be a member of the Board of Trustees as provided in Section 9 and shall be a member of the Finance Committee as provided in Section 15. They shall be responsible for the funds received by the Church.

Sec. 5. Assistant Treasurer

The Assistant Treasurer shall assist the Church Treasurer in the keeping of records and in the efficient conduct of that office as directed by the Board of Trustees. They shall serve as a non-voting member of the Finance Committee and Board of Trustees. They will move into the position of Church Treasurer when that position is vacated.

Sec. 6. Head Usher

The Head Usher shall appoint and have on hand at all services a sufficient number of capable ushers. The Ushers shall serve not only in the taking of the offering and seating of the congregation, but also as Greeters of

members and friends as they arrive for the services of the Church.

Sec. 7. Board of Deacons

The Church shall maintain a board of Deacons composed of five or seven members who shall be associated with the Pastor in promoting the spiritual welfare of the Church, of all matters of discipline, of administration of the Ordinances, and shall act as spiritual leaders of the Church. In the absence of the Pastor, this Board shall provide for the leadership of the mid-week services and supply preachers for the pulpit. They shall plan and observe regular visitation programs.

Sec. 8. Board of Deaconesses

The Church shall maintain a Board of Deaconesses composed of at least three members who shall cooperate with the Board of Deacons in the preparation for the Ordinances of Baptism and the Lord's Supper. They shall, like the Board of Deacons, seek to promote good fellowship and give special attention to visitation of sick and shut-in members of the congregation and prospective members in the community.

Sec. 9. Board of Trustees

The Board of Trustees shall be composed of five or seven members, one of whom shall be the Church Treasurer. The Assistant Treasurer shall be a non-voting member of this Board. This Board shall represent the Church in the conduct of its business and legal affairs and have oversight of all Church property, according to the laws of the State of Kansas. The Trustees Board shall have full powers to take and receive title to property of every kind, both personal and real, by deed, gift, bequest or devise; and shall sell, pledge, mortgage, bond, convey or otherwise dispose of and encumber the same as authorized by the Church.

The Board of Trustees and the Church Treasurer shall constitute the Board of Directors of the Church Corporation.

The Chairman of the Board of Trustees and the Church Treasurer shall serve as President and Treasurer of the Church Corporation.

Sec. 10. Board of Christian Education

The Church shall maintain a Board of Christian Education of not less than five members, one of whom shall be the church School Superintendent. The members of this Board shall be chosen to represent the various departments of the Church; one to represent the Church School, the Youth Group, the American Baptist Women, and one chosen from the Church at large.

This Board shall supervise the entire education program of the Church and

recommended by the denomination. It shall appoint teachers for the children's classes and youth classes; select a superintendent and workers, and make plans for the Vacation Bible School; formulate and execute plans for boys and girls weekday club programs and other weekday activities for youth.

All teachers not appointed by this Board must have approval of the Board.

This Board shall plan for annual leadership training classes and mission study courses, encourage attendance at summer camps and conferences and in every way encourage the training of leaders for Christian work and witnessing.

Sec. 11. Music Committee

The Church shall maintain a Music Committee of at least three members. They shall have broad discretionary powers in organizing the music program of the church. Their duties shall include the organization of a Church Choir, Youth Choir, and supervision of the music portion of the Church services.

Sec. 12. Evangelism Committee

The Church shall have an Evangelism Committee of at least three members elected annually. The three members shall represent the men, women, and youth groups of the Church. They shall coordinate their program with that of the Pastor and Board of Deacons.

Sec. 13. Corresponding Secretary

The Corresponding Secretary shall be elected annually and shall make periodic reports to the Executive Minister of the American Baptist churches of the Central Region and the Northeast Area Minister on the activities of the church and shall also make special reports and perform other duties as directed by the Moderator. In the absence of an elected Corresponding Secretary these duties shall be fulfilled by the church Secretary and/or the Pastor.

Sec. 14. Nominating Committee

The Nominating Committee shall be composed of 6 members who shall prepare a slate of candidates to fill all elective offices and will present such slate at the Annual Business Meeting for election. They shall secure the consent of each candidate in all cases. Any time a vacancy occurs among the elected officers, the Nominating Committee shall convene to nominate and present to the Church a candidate to fill such vacancy.

Sec. 15 Finance Committee

The Finance Committee shall be composed of 7 members with the Church Treasurer being the 7<sup>th</sup> member. The Assistant Treasurer shall serve as a non-voting member of the committee. The Finance Committee shall prepare a tentative budget for the consideration of the church at the Annual Business Meeting. They shall also function at any time the church budget needs to be adjusted.

Sec. 16. Greeter

The Greeter shall be responsible for greeting members, visitors and friends as they arrive for the services of the Church and to encourage visitors to sign the registration book.

Sec. 17 Mission Committee

The Missions Committee shall be composed of 3 members who shall promote, educate, and encourage missions and the special missions offerings.

## **ARTICLE VII**

### Special Committees

Sec. 1. Pastoral Committee

The Pastoral Committee shall consist of the Pastor, the Moderator and the Chairman of the Board of Deacons. Their duties are to enhance the communication between the Pastor and the Church, to evaluate the Pastor's performance and salary, to evaluate the functioning of the church, to deal with financial crises of the Church, and to serve as a planning committee to avoid financial crises.

Sec. 2. Pulpit Committee

When the Church becomes pastorless, the Church shall elect a pulpit committee of five members. The Pulpit Committee may be elected at a regular business meeting or a special business meeting called for the purpose. The members of this committee shall represent these groups within the Church: Board of Deacons, the American Baptist Women, the Youth Group, the Board of Christian Education. This committee shall cooperate with the Area Minister and the Executive Minister of the American Baptist Churches of the Central Region in seeking a suitable candidate for the pastorate. The church shall extend a call to a candidate only after the pulpit committee has made a careful investigation of his qualifications and he has the recommendation of the pulpit committee.

A quorum of twenty-five percent of the resident members is required to be present and voting at such a meeting and an affirmative vote of three-fourths of the members present and voting at this meeting shall be required for calling a pastor.

Sec. 3. Other Committees

The Moderator shall appoint from time to time as the need arises, special committees for any specific purpose deemed necessary to the proper functioning of the Church, or to meet any special situation which may arise.

**ARTICLE VIII**

The Church Year

The fiscal year of the Church shall be the calendar year.

**ARTICLE IX**

Terms of Officers, etc.

Offices of Head Usher, Music Committee, Evangelism Committee, Corresponding Secretary, Greeter, and Missions Committee shall be elected annually with no term limitations.

Offices of Moderator, Church Clerk, Church Treasurer, and Assistant Church Treasurer shall be elected for a one year term and can serve no more than two consecutive terms. They can be eligible for re-nomination to the same position after a minimum of one year off.

Offices of Board of Deacons, Board of Deaconesses, Board of Trustees, Board of Christian Education, Finance Committee, and Nominating Committee shall be elected for a three year term and can serve no more than two consecutive terms. They can be eligible for re-nomination to the same position after a minimum of one year off.

All elected officers shall assume the duties of the office to which elected at the beginning of the Church fiscal year.

In the event there is a vacated office, a candidate shall be appointed by the Nominating Committee and approved by the Church to finish the open term. This same person can be nominated for two additional terms after filling the original vacated term.

**ARTICLE X**

Business Meetings

Sec. 1. Regular Business Meetings

The Church shall hold a Business Meeting on the second Sunday of each month. The January meeting shall be held in conjunction with the Annual Business Meeting. The Annual Business Meeting shall include the annual election, the adoption of the budget, and all necessary business.



Sec. 2. Annual Business Meeting

The Annual Business Meeting shall be held on the second Sunday of January, at which time the annual election shall be held, the budget adopted, and all necessary business conducted.

Sec. 3. Special Business Meeting

The Pastor, Moderator, or Chairman of the Board of Deacons may call a special business meeting provided it is announced at two regular services of the Church.

Sec. 4. Rules of Order

Roberts Rules of Order shall be observed at all business meetings.

**ARTICLE XI**

Quorum

A quorum to transact business shall consist of at least twenty-five percent of the resident voting membership.

**ARTICLE XII**

Amendments

This Constitution may be amended at a regular business meeting of the Church by an affirmative vote of two-thirds of the members present and voting; provided that the proposed amendment has been submitted in writing at a regular business meeting at least four weeks prior to the time the vote is to be taken.

**ARTICLE XIII**

The voting age

The voting age of members shall be that a member must have passed his or her sixteenth birthday in order to cast a vote in a business meeting of the Church.

**ARTICLE XIV**

Buying and selling of Church property

The purchase or selling of real estate, church property or other expenses over the amount of \$1,000.00 by the Church shall be voted on at a regular or special business meeting, provided the purpose of the meeting has been announced at two Sunday morning services both orally and in writing.