

**Our vision is to develop people into fully
devoted followers of Jesus Christ**

CONSTITUTION

AND

BYLAWS

Approved by vote of the Church on _

FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH NEVADA

301 E. Highland Avenue

Nevada, Missouri 64772

Bylaws revision team members:

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This is a draft of the Constitution and first bylaws section. Please feel free to contact the above members with any questions or comments.

CONSTITUTION

PREAMBLE

We adopt, declare, and establish this Constitution for the purpose of preserving and securing the principles of our faith, and to the end that this body of believers may be governed in an orderly manner consistent with the teachings of Holy Scripture.

ARTICLE I - Name

This body of believers shall be known as First Baptist Church Nevada, Inc., of Nevada, Missouri (referred to as the "Church").

ARTICLE II - Purpose

Desiring to glorify God the Father through His unique Son, Jesus Christ, the Head of the Church, in the power of the Holy Spirit, the purposes of First Baptist Church, Nevada are to fulfill the Great Commission (Matthew 28: 19-20) and actively live out the commandments of Matthew 22: 36-40.

ARTICLE III - Statement of Faith

We believe that the sixty-six books of the Bible were written by men divinely inspired by God, are completely trustworthy, and are the basis for our beliefs. While this Church maintains its right and responsibility to trust and accept the Bible as the sole basis of our beliefs, this Church accepts *The Baptist Faith and Message, 2000* as a general statement of our faith.

ARTICLE IV - Church Government and Affiliations

Under the Lordship of Jesus Christ, the membership retains the exclusive right of self-government of this Church. This Church is not subject to control by any other ecclesiastical body, but recognizes the obligations of Southern Baptist churches to carry out ministries for the extension of Christ's Kingdom. While maintaining its autonomy, the Church may, as the members of the Church determine, cooperate with and support the Osage River Baptist Association, the Missouri Baptist Convention, and the Southern Baptist Convention.

ARTICLE V - Adoption and Amendments

Section 1. This Constitution shall be adopted by a two-thirds ($\frac{2}{3}$) affirmative vote of the members voting in accordance with the voting provisions as set forth in the by-laws.

Section 2. Any Member may present a proposed amendment to the Constitution. Members may present proposed amendments to the Council of Stewards. The Council of Stewards will call a special business meeting for the purpose presenting and voting for the proposed amendment. The Council of Stewards shall publish the proposed amendment not less than 30 days prior to the special called business meeting. Two-thirds affirmative vote of the members voting in accordance with the voting provisions set forth in the by-laws shall be required to approve the proposed amendment.

BYLAWS

SECTION I – Church Membership

A. General

1. The members of the Church shall consist of all persons who have met the requirements for membership and are listed on the Church membership roll.
2. First Baptist Church Nevada, Inc. does not have corporate members as the term “member” is defined in RSMo Section 355.066 . Church membership does not constitute being a member of the corporate entity known as First Baptist Church Nevada, Inc., as that term is defined in RSMo Section 355.066. The right of a First Baptist Church Nevada, Inc. Church member to vote on the selection of the administrative or ministerial positions does not constitute being a “member” of First Baptist Church Nevada, Inc. as the term “member” is defined in RSMo Section 355.066.

B. Requirements for Church Membership

The requirements for Church membership are as follows:

1. A personal profession of faith in Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior; and
2. Baptism by immersion as a believer as a symbol of salvation;
3. Membership shall be granted to those following B.1 and B.2 when those requirements have not previously been accomplished in the individual’s life. Membership shall also be granted upon receipt of a letter from another Southern Baptist church declaring that the candidate for membership was member in good standing. Membership shall also be granted by a statement of faith. The candidate shall also affirm that he/she has been baptized by immersion. If the candidate has not been baptized by immersion, then the candidate shall be granted membership upon baptism by immersion.

C. Responsibilities of Church Membership

The responsibilities of membership are described in the Church Membership Covenant (“Life Together at First Baptist Church Nevada”) set forth below:

“Life Together at First Baptist Church Nevada”

We, the members of First Baptist Church Nevada, affirm that to be a member of the First Baptist family of faith is to be committed to developing a growing relationship with the Lord Jesus Christ and growing relationships with other members of the Church. In the context of these relationships, we commit to God and to one another that we will earnestly endeavor to do the following under the leadership of the Holy Spirit (all Scriptures are from the *New International Version* unless noted):

1. We will prize and protect the unity of our Church family by:
 - a. Acting in love toward other members.

(1) "Let us therefore make every effort to do what leads to peace and to mutual edification."
Romans 14:19

ffort (2) "Be completely humble and gentle; be patient, bearing with one another in love. Make every e
to keep the unity of the Spirit through the bond of peace." Ephesians 4:2-3

(3) “Now that you have purified yourselves by obeying the truth so that you have sincere love for your brothers, love one another deeply, from the heart.” I Peter 1:22

ou.”
(4) “Be kind and compassionate to one another, forgiving each other, just as in Christ God forgave you.”
Ephesians 4:32

b. Refusing to gossip and stir up dissension.

ding
(1) “Do not let any unwholesome talk come out of your mouths, but only what is helpful for building others up according to their needs, that it may benefit those who listen.” Ephesians 4:29

(2) “There are six things the Lord hates . . . a man who stirs up dissension among brothers.” Proverbs 6:16, 19

(3) “A perverse man stirs up dissension, and a gossip separates close friends.” Proverbs 16:28

c. Honoring and following the leaders.

e
(1) “The elders who direct the affairs of the church well are worthy of double honor, especially those whose work is preaching and teaching.” I Timothy 5:17

give
no
(2) “Obey your leaders and submit to their authority. They keep watch over you as men who must give an account. Obey them so that their work will be a joy, not a burden, for that would be of no advantage to you.” Hebrews 13:17

d. Resolving conflicts through the scriptural, disciplinary guidelines of our Church.

tens
so
to
you
(1) “If your brother sins against you, go and show him his fault, just between the two of you. If he listens to you, you have won your brother over. But if he will not listen, take one or two others along, that every matter may be established by the testimony of two or three witnesses.” If he refuses to listen to them, tell it to the church; and if he refuses to listen even to the church, treat him as you would a pagan or a tax collector.” Matthew 18:15-17

help
If.”
(2) “If another Christian is overcome by some sin, you who are godly should gently and humbly help that person back onto the right path. And be careful not to fall into the same temptation yourselves.”
Galatians 6:1 (NLT)

2. We will participate in the ministry of our Church family by:

a. Attending faithfully and giving generously. A new member is encouraged to complete the Church Membership Orientation and affirmation of the Church Membership Covenant.

(1) “Let us not give up meeting together . . . but let us encourage one another.” Hebrews 10:25

and (2) “Every Sunday each of you must put aside some money, in proportion to what you have earned, save it up.” I Corinthians 16:2 (*TEV*)

b. Discovering our gifts and talents.

(1) “Serve one another with the particular gifts God has given each of you.” I Peter 4:10 (*Phillips*)

(2) “It was [God] Who gave some . . . to be pastors and teachers, to prepare God’s people for works of service, so that the body of Christ may be built up.” Ephesians 4:11-12

c. Being equipped to serve.

de “Each of you should look not only to your own interests, but also to the interests of others. Your attitude should be the same as that of Christ Jesus; Who . . . [took on] the very nature of a servant.”
Philippians 2:4-7

d. Developing a servant’s heart.

ur (1) “But among you it should be quite different. Whoever wants to be a leader among you must be your servant, and whoever wants to be first must become your slave. For even I, the Son of Man, came here not to be served but to serve others, and to give My life as a ransom for many.”
Matthew 20:26-28 (NLT)

ul (2) “You, my brothers, were called to be free. But do not use your freedom to indulge in the sinful nature; rather, serve one another in love.” Galatians 5:13

3. We will be a partner in the mission of our Church family by:

a. Praying for its health and growth.

„ (1) “In all my prayers for all of you, I always pray with joy because of your partnership in the gospel.
Philippians 1:4-5

of (2) “We have not stopped praying for you and asking God . . . that you may live a life worthy of the Lord and may please Him in every way; bearing fruit in every good work, growing in the knowledge of God.” Colossians 1:9-10

b. Inviting the unchurched to attend.

at “Then the master told his servant, „Go out to the roads and country lanes and make them come in, so that My house will be full.” Luke 14:23

c. Warmly welcoming those who visit.

d “So, warmly welcome each other into the church, just as Christ has warmly welcomed you; then God will be glorified.” Romans 15:7 (*Living Bible*)

d. Sharing Christ as we have opportunity both here and around the world.

ou “Always be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks you to give the reason for the hope that you have.” I Peter 3:15

4. We will commit to developing a growing relationship with Christ and growing relationships with others by:

a. understanding that much of our spiritual growth occurs in biblical community and participating in small groups/Sunday school groups. Acts 2:42-47; Romans 12:3-13

b. we are called to become disciples and disciple others. Matthew 28: 19-20

D. Voting Rights of Church Membership

Every member of the Church shall have the right to vote on all matters presented to the Church for consideration. Each member of the Church is entitled to one vote.

E. Termination of Church Membership

A member shall be removed from the Church membership roll and his or her Church membership terminated for any one of the following reasons:

1. Death;
2. Transfer of membership to another church; or when the Church office is informed that a member has joined another church, and that church does not notify the Church to delete such person from the Church membership roll, the Church office will contact the other church for verification, and adjust the Church membership roll accordingly;
3. Personal written request by the member;
4. Exclusion by the action of the Church when the member's life and conduct are inconsistent with the Scriptures in such a way that the member hinders the ministry influence of the Church. All matters of church discipline, including exclusion, shall be guided by a concern for redemption, reformation, and reconciliation rather than punishment, and shall be first handled by the Senior Pastor and the Deacons in the spirit of Matthew 18:15-17. If it becomes necessary for the deacons and the Senior Pastor to recommend the church take action to exclude a member, a two-thirds ($\frac{2}{3}$) affirmative vote of the members present and voting in favor of such motion for church discipline is required. The Senior Pastor and Chairman of the Deacons shall notify the person of the time, date and place of the meeting at which the vote will be taken.

F. Restoration of Church Membership

Upon evidence of the excluded person's repentance and reformation, such person excluded by action of the Church shall be restored by a two-thirds ($\frac{2}{3}$) affirmative vote of the members present and voting for such motion during a Church business conference, upon the recommendation of the Senior Pastor and deacons in the spirit of II Corinthians 2:5-11.

SECTION II: CHURCH LEADERSHIP

A. SENIOR PASTOR

1. The senior pastor shall serve as the shepherd and spiritual leader of this Church. The basic qualifications for the senior pastoral office are set forth in I Timothy 3:1-7 and I Peter 5:1-3. The senior pastor shall also lead, in coordination with the Council of Stewards, the administrative functions of the church, including, but not limited to, personnel, finance and physical properties.
2. The senior pastor shall be called by the Church upon recommendation of the Pastoral Search Team, as constituted by the Council of Stewards. Calling of the senior pastor shall require no less than three-fourths (3/4) affirmative vote from voting members present.
3. The senior pastor shall serve for an indefinite period.
4. The senior pastor shall be the supervisor for all ministerial and non-ministerial staff. The Senior Pastor, in conjunction with the Personnel Team of the Council of Stewards, shall evaluate each staff member annually.
5. The senior pastor shall be a voting member of the Council of Stewards.
6. The senior pastor will be accountable to the congregation and is expected to take the necessary steps for his own accountability and personal growth, including, but not limited to, setting for himself an accountability group to ensure the he remains true to the mission of the church, principles of biblical leadership, protect his reputation and ensure personal growth.

B. REMOVAL OF SENIOR PASTOR

1. If the senior pastor has violated his spiritual and/or administrative duties, and such violation demands removal of the senior pastor, the Chairman of Deacons and President of the Council of Stewards shall present to the congregation the violations and recommendation for removal at a special called congregational meeting.
2. An affirmative vote of three-fourths (3/4) of the voting members present shall be required for removal of the senior pastor.

C. MINISTERIAL STAFF

1. Ministerial positions shall be created as needs arise. At the adoption of these bylaws, the ministerial staff positions include a Senior Adult Pastor, Education Pastor, Youth Pastor, Children's Pastor and Worship Pastor.
2. Ministerial staff shall be called in the same manner and require the same voting support as the senior pastor.
3. The Senior Pastor and the Council of Stewards shall be responsible for creating job descriptions and recommending salaries and benefits for ministerial staff. Prior to a vote on calling a ministerial staff member, the Council shall present to the congregation, in at least written form, the job description and recommended salary and benefits for the prospective ministerial staff member.

D. REMOVAL OF MINISTERIAL STAFF

1. Ministerial Staff shall be removed in the same manner as the senior pastor.
2. A vote of at least three-fourths (3/4) of voting members present in favor of removal shall be required for termination.

E. NON-MINISTERIAL STAFF

1. The Senior Pastor and Council of Stewards shall be responsible for creating non-ministerial

positions as needs arise.

2. The Senior Pastor and Council of Stewards shall create or update job descriptions and set salaries and benefits for non-ministerial staff.
3. The Senior Pastor shall supervise non-ministerial staff and said staff shall be hired by the Senior Pastor and serve at his pleasure.

F. LAY LEADERSHIP

Deacons: Performing, alongside Staff and the Congregation, the ministries of the church in care, proclamation and leadership.

1. The Deacons shall serve from January-December and may renew each year without congregational vote so long as they desire to serve and meet biblical qualifications.
2. When deacon positions need to be filled, the congregation shall provide names to a team made up of the senior pastor, deacon chairman and past three deacon Chairmen. Said leaders shall interview prospective deacons and make recommendations to the church.
3. The church shall approve the prospective deacons at a special or annual congregational meeting. A deacon must have three-fourths (3/4) affirmative approval from number of ballots cast.
4. Deacon body will nominate candidates for Chairman of the Deacons. The candidates shall be voted on by the Deacon body. The candidate to be named Chairman will be the nominee receiving three-fourths (3/4) of the affirmative votes of voting Deacons. The Deacon chair term shall be two years. A deacon may serve multiple terms but each term must be separated by at least one term.

G. COUNCIL OF STEWARDS

1. The Council of Stewards shall be responsible for the financial, physical properties and personnel needs of the Church.
2. The Council of Stewards will be composed of eight members, plus the Senior Pastor. Each member, including senior pastor, will have a vote on the Council. An interim, transitional, or other named pastor temporarily filling the position of senior pastor, shall have the same rights and responsibilities on the Council as if he were the senior pastor. If there is no one filling the role of Senior Pastor, the ministerial staff shall select a ministerial staff member to fill that position on the Council. The ministerial staff member shall have the right to vote on the Council.
3. The Council should be organized according to the following protocol, unless another protocol meets ministerial and administrative requirements more effectively:
 - A. Finance Team: Three members of the Council will propose the annual budget, subject to full Council and Church approval, and facilitate the management and accountability of the budget.
 - B. Personnel Team: Three members of the Council will be responsible evaluating personnel needs, proposing salaries and benefits, and creating necessary positions.
 - C. Building and Grounds Team: Two members of the Council will be responsible for protecting the physical properties of the Church.
4. Council members will serve four year terms. Council members can serve two consecutive terms, but must rotate off for at least one year before serving additional terms. A member may serve two consecutive terms after each one year off of the Council.
5. Nominations for prospective Council members will be taken from the congregation. The Senior Pastor, Chairman of Deacons and past three Chairmen of the Deacons will interview the prospective candidates. The nominee shall be presented first to the Deacons for approval. An affirmative vote of $\frac{3}{4}$ of the Deacons attending shall be required for further presentation to the congregation. An affirmative vote of $\frac{3}{4}$ of the congregation attending shall be required for final

selection.

6. Council members should be dedicated to the mission of the church. Council members should be committed to Christ, loyal to the Church body and supportive of ministerial staff.
7. The Council of Stewards shall elect a President, Vice-President and Secretary at the January meeting each year. The selected individuals will be those considered for the purposes of reporting to the Missouri Secretary of State. The Church financial secretary will be considered the Treasurer of the church for purposes of reporting to the Missouri Secretary of State.
8. The Council shall hold legal title to the church property.
9. The Council shall have the sole right and obligation to execute instruments and documents creating debts and obligations binding on the church. The Council may not, without Church approval, approve debts which exceeds 5% of the Church's annual operating budget. The 5% limit is for the entire budgetary year and is meant to include all potential debts in sum total. This is not to mean that the Council may approve multiple debts so long as each individual debt is less than the 5% limit.
10. If it becomes necessary to remove a Steward or a Steward can no longer act, the Steward may be dismissed by a 2/3 vote of the all of the other Stewards.
11. Anything voted on by the Council requires affirmative vote of no less than six (6) Council members.
12. The Council shall not, without Church approval, call pastoral staff, sell Church real property purchased with members' donations, change denominational affiliation, change Articles of Incorporation, Church Constitution and By-laws.
13. The Council may appoint, as necessary, various teams to investigate, study or otherwise make recommendations to the Council on issues falling within the purview of the Council's duties as stated in paragraph G.3 of this section.
14. The Council shall meet monthly and may call special meetings as deemed necessary. Any member wishing to address the Council at its monthly meeting should contact the Council no later than two weeks prior the regularly scheduled meeting. The minutes from each meeting will be posted within 10 days following the meeting.
15. Ministerial and non-ministerial staff, other than the Senior Pastor, may not serve on the Council. Family members related by blood or marriage of ministerial and non-ministerial staff may not serve on the Council. This provision shall not apply to any Council member serving prior to the adoption of these bylaws.

SECTION III: GOVERNMENT

A. CHURCH BUSINESS MEETING

1. A church business meeting will be scheduled annually, usually in the fourth quarter. An agenda for the meeting will be developed by the Senior Pastor, Ministerial Staff and Council of Stewards. The date of the annual business meeting shall be published no later than four weeks prior to the proposed date of the annual business meeting. The agenda will be published no later than two weeks prior to the annual business meeting. The proposed budget will be presented to the church ahead of time for review, along with any reports necessary to an agenda item. This meeting will provide a forum for handling the business of the church not otherwise reserved for an administrative or ministerial body. Agenda items may be presented to the Council of Stewards by any member of the Church. A member who desires an issue to be included on the agenda must present such request to the Council of Stewards during the two week period between the time business meeting date is announced and the agenda is published. Motions or issues presented from

the floor not pertaining to the published agenda will be referred to the Council of Stewards. The Council of Stewards will provide a written response regarding the disposition of any proposed motion or resolution. A quorum for the annual business meeting will be the greater of 10% of resident members or 25% of the average worship attendance the prior church year. The Council of Stewards will appoint a moderator for all church business meetings.

2. A special business meeting shall be announced two weeks prior to the scheduled date, unless a time sensitive issue requires immediate congregational action. The topic of the special business meeting will be stated when the meeting date is announced. No other agenda items will be considered during a special called business meeting.
3. Notice of any called or annual business meeting shall be announced at regularly scheduled worship service. Efforts to provide notice by other reasonable means (email, Mainspring, etc) shall be made.
4. The Council of Stewards shall be responsible for determining the manner of voting for the issues presented, including the possibility of absentee voting.

B. AMENDING THE BYLAWS

Any Member may present a proposed amendment to the bylaws. Members may present proposed amendments to the Council of Stewards. The Council of Stewards will call a special business meeting for the purpose presenting and voting for the proposed amendment. The Council of Stewards shall publish the proposed amendment not less than 30 days prior to the special called business meeting. Two-thirds affirmative vote of the members present shall be required to approve the proposed amendment. No anonymous requests to amend the bylaws shall be considered.

C. PARLIAMENTARY PROCEDURE

All proceedings of the church shall be conducted in conformity with the usual parliamentary procedure set forth in *Robert's Rules of Order*, Newly Revised, unless inconsistent with the rules set forth in the Constitution and Bylaws.

D. MESSENGERS

The Council of Stewards, after receiving nominations from the Senior Pastor and Ministerial Staff, may send messengers to serve at any association or convention meeting.

E. COOPERATION

First Baptist Church Nevada may cooperate with the Osage River Baptist Association, the Missouri Baptist Convention, the Southern Baptist Convention and the Baptist World Alliance as long as such cooperation does not violate the autonomy of First Baptist Church, Nevada, Missouri.

SECTION IV: FISCAL POLICY

A. FISCAL YEAR

The church year shall be from September through August. However, for fiscal purposes, the year shall be January 1 through December 31.

B. GIFTS AND DISBURSEMENTS

All tithes and offerings shall be deposited into the church treasury, and all disbursements from the church treasury shall be made only in accordance with the authorized procedures of the church.

C. BUDGET

The budget shall be developed by the Council of Stewards in consultation with the ministerial staff. The Council of Stewards shall present the budget to the congregation at the annual business meeting after 2/3 of the sitting Council members approve of the budget. An affirmative vote of 2/3 of the quorum of congregation members shall be necessary to approve the budget. The Church shall operate on the budget determined and adopted by the Church.

D. ACCOUNTING

All financial records and accounts shall be reviewed internally on an annual basis by an individual or firm chosen by the Council of Stewards. The Council of Stewards shall cause a forensic audit to be conducted no less than every five years by an individual or firm selected by the Council of Stewards.

SECTION V: ORDINANCES

A. BAPTISM

The ordinance of baptism shall be by immersion of the believer in water in obedience to the command of Christ.

B. LORD'S SUPPER (COMMUNION)

The Lord's Supper is a symbolic act of obedience through which believers remember the sacrifice of Christ, recognize His presence among believers and anticipate His final coming.

SECTION VI: MARRIAGE SERVICES

- A. The Church building shall be open to members and non-members for the conducting of marriage ceremonies and receptions, subject to the rights and responsibilities set forth in the wedding handbook, incorporated herein by reference.
- B. At no time may a wedding ceremony or reception be allowed in or on Church owned property between couples of the same sex. This provision applies no matter the legal availability of such ceremonies in the State of Missouri.