



CONSTITUTION

THE FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH OF GLENARDEN, INC.

PREAMBLE

For the most certain preservation and security of the principles of our faith, and to the end that this body may be governed in an orderly manner consistent with the accepted tenets of the Christian faith as set forth in the Old and New Testaments of the Christian Holy Bible, we seek to fulfill the whole gospel principles through biblical worship and practice by the members of this Church and the governance of this Church as vested in the leadership. This Church is not subject to the control of any other ecclesiastical body, but recognizes and sustains the wisdom of mutual counsel and cooperation among other Christian Churches. We do hereby declare and establish this Constitution of the Church.

ARTICLE I.

Section 1. Nomenclature.

First Baptist Church of Glenarden, Inc. shall be known as the “Church.”

Section 2. Purpose.

It is the purpose of this Church to promote the teachings of Jesus Christ; to advance the kingdom of God through worship, Christian missions, education and fellowship; to preserve biblical values; to promote Christian enterprises consistent with New Testament teachings; to reach the unsaved and the un-churched; and to encourage the development of all of its members in Christian living and growth toward spiritual maturity and righteously impact society.

Section 3. Legal Requirement.

This Church is incorporated in accordance with the laws of the State of Maryland, governing religious bodies. The handling of the properties of this Church shall be in accordance with such laws.

ARTICLE II. COVENANT and ARTICLES of FAITH

We are guided, as we believe, by the Holy Spirit and relying on the blessings of God, we do here and now, by this act, constitute ourselves a Church of Jesus Christ to perform His service and to be governed by His will, as revealed in the New Testament and, to this end, we do hereby adopt and agree to the following Covenant and Articles of Faith.

Section 1. Church Covenant

Having been led, as we believe, 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 do now in the presence of God, angels and this assembly, most solemnly and joyfully enter into a covenant with one another, as one Body in Christ.

We engage, therefore, by the aid of the Holy Spirit, 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 sustain its worship, ordinances, discipline and doctrine; to contribute cheerfully and regularly to the support of the ministry, the expenses of the Church, the relief of the poor, and the spread of the gospel through all nations.

We also engage to maintain family and secret devotions; to religiously educate our children; to seek the salvation of our kindred and acquaintances; to walk circumspectly in the world; to be just in our dealings, faithful in our engagements, and exemplary in our deportment; to avoid all tattling, backbiting, and excessive anger; to abstain from the sale and use of intoxicating and behavior altering substances for recreation purposes; and to be zealous in our efforts to advance the Kingdom of our Savior.

We further engage to watch over one another in brotherly love; to remember each other in prayer; to aid each other in sickness and distress; to cultivate Christian sympathy in feeling and courtesy in speech; to be slow to take offense, but always ready for reconciliation, and mindful of the rules of our Savior, to secure it without delay.

We moreover engage that, when we remove from this place, we will, 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.

And now unto Him, Who brought again from the dead, our Lord Jesus Christ, be power and glory forever, Amen.

Section 2. Articles of Faith

The Articles of Faith are common to many Christian Churches and are 13 in number. The Articles listed herein are essential Christian doctrine, and their acceptance is critical to faithful participation in the ministry of this Church.

- 1. THE SCRIPTURES** - We believe the Holy Bible was written by men divinely inspired and is a perfect treasure of heavenly instruction.
- 2. THE TRUE GOD** - We believe that there is only one true God. He is revealed to us as Father, Son and Holy Spirit, each with distinct personal attributes, but without division of nature.
- 3. THE FALL OF MAN** - We believe that man was created by God in a state of holiness, but through the temptation of Satan, he transgressed the command of God by free choice and fell from his original state.

4. **THE WAY OF SALVATION** - We believe that salvation involves the redemption of the whole man and is offered to all through the Son of God, the Lord Jesus Christ. Salvation includes regeneration, sanctification and glorification.
5. **JUSTIFICATION** - We believe that justification is God's gracious and full acquittal upon principles of righteousness of all sinners who believe in Christ.
6. **THE FREENESS OF SALVATION** - We believe that the blessings of salvation are made free to all.
7. **REGENERATION** - We believe that regeneration (or the new birth) is a change of heart wrought by the Holy Spirit.
8. **REPENTANCE AND FAITH** - We believe that repentance and faith are sacred duties, wrought in our souls by the Spirit of God.
9. **SANCTIFICATION** - We believe that sanctification is the process by which we are made partakers of His holiness; that it is a progressive work; that it is begun in regeneration; and that it is carried on in the hearts of believers by the presence and power of the Holy Spirit.
10. **THE PERSEVERANCE OF SAINTS** - We believe that such only are real believers as they endure to the end. They are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation.
11. **BAPTISM AND THE LORD'S SUPPER** - We believe that Christian baptism is the immersion in water of a believer. The Lord's Supper is the commemoration of the death of the Lord Jesus, preceded by solemn self-examination.
12. **THE RESURRECTION** - We believe that Scriptures clearly teach that Jesus Christ rose from the dead. He now exists in His glorified body, seated at God's right hand. There will be a resurrection of the righteous and the wicked. The bodies of the righteous will conform to the glorious body of Jesus Christ.
13. **THE GOSPEL CHURCH** - We believe that a visible Church of Christ is a congregation of baptized believers associated by covenant in the faith and fellowship of the gospel. We observe the ordinances of Christ, are governed by His Word and exercise our gifts.

ARTICLE III. OFFICERS

The officers of the Church shall be scriptural officers, and those officers are required by law. Scriptural officers shall be the Pastor, Elders and Deacons. Officers required by law shall be the Chair (Chief Elder), Corporate Secretary and Treasurer.

Section 1. Pastor

Definition: The Pastor is the shepherd of the Church by appointment of God, and the free

and voluntary God-led act of the Church. The Pastor is, by appointment and direction of God, set in place to rule over the congregation, providing spiritual nourishment and guidance, and godly direction and management.

- A. Authority:** The Pastor has absolute charge of the pulpit and all services and functions held in the Church facilities, and in the name of First Baptist Church of Glenarden. He may perform weddings, officiate at funerals and other services; or appoint and/or approve other ministers to do so.

The Pastor shall also chair the Council of Elders. Furthermore, the Pastor may appoint committees, establish ministries and appoint individuals to serve on various committees to accomplish the work of this ministry.

- B. Duties and Responsibilities:** The Pastor is responsible for the oversight and supervision of all interests of the Church, and of all its work, both spiritual and temporal. He shall establish requirements for leadership in the Church and develop and guide the direction of the Church and its ministries. The Pastor is to gain the cooperation and involvement of Church members to attain the objectives of the ministry. Scriptural guidance shall be the final authority.

- C. How Obtained:** The Church shall secure its Pastor by God-led election, with a majority of the membership present and required voting. No individual or combination of members can appoint the Pastor, or compel the Church to accept anyone who has not been chosen by vote of the Church.

A special meeting of the general Church membership shall be set for the expressed purpose of selecting a Pastor, notice being given publicly, at least four (4) Sundays in succession before the meeting. These notices shall be given both from the pulpit and in the Church announcements. The purpose of the meeting shall be stated in the notice. The minister who receives the majority of the votes cast by eligible voters shall be called to the office of Pastor of the First Baptist Church of Glenarden.

- D. Tenure:** The call shall be indefinite and effective immediately unless otherwise stated.

E. How Terminated:

1. The Pastor may terminate his services by submitting a resignation, giving ninety (90) days' notice, unless otherwise agreed.
2. The Church may, by action of two-thirds (2/3) majority of the qualified membership at a meeting called for that purpose, declare the pulpit vacant, provided that thirty (30) days' notice has been given in writing by the Council of Elders, and that the Pastor has been notified in writing of all charges (if any) against him, and has had at least thirty (30) days in which to respond to such charges. Opportunity shall also be given for the Pastor to respond in person before the Council of Elders.

Section 2. Elders

Definition: An Elder shall be a member of the senior leadership of this Church, serving on the council of governance of this Church (the “Council of Elders”), with the Pastor being the Chief Elder of the Council (discussed below).

- A. Qualifications:** An Elder shall be a mature Christian, recognized as being in good standing with the Church, as demonstrated by a full embrace of the teachings of this ministry through tithes and offerings, faithful support of the ministry and through regular participation in the teachings of the ministry.
- B. Authority:** Elders serve as members of the Council of Elders of this Church.
- C. Duties and Responsibilities:** Duties are to provide full and faithful participation in the Council of Elders in providing leadership in the operation of this Church and the Pastor’s ministry.
- D. Tenure:** Elders serve one-year terms with no limit on the number of terms, at the pleasure of the Pastor and Council.
- E. How Obtained:** Elders shall be named by the Chief Elder in consultation with the Council of Elders and affirmed by the Church.
- F. How Terminated:** An Elder’s term may be ended by resignation, death, by recommendation of the Pastor or by recommendation and action of the Council. Reasons may include being out of Christian fellowship, non-participation, and non-support of the ministry. Termination of any Elder must be with a two thirds (2/3) majority vote of the membership of the Council of Elders.
- G. Quorum:** No action or decision shall be made by the Elders without a quorum consisting of a simple majority of the members of the Council.
- H. Actions by Elders:** Any actions or decisions by the Elders will be by simple majority of the members present and voting.

Section 3. Council of Elders

Definition: The Council of Elders shall be comprised of the Elders of the Church, as the senior leadership, governing body and legal representative of the Church, with the Pastor being the Chief Elder and Chair of the Council.

- A. Qualifications:** Elders shall be appointed to the Council according to qualifications in Article III, Section 2, Subsection A.
- B. Authority:** The Council shall sit as a council of governance with Church oversight operations, making decisions as they pertain to Church matters, both spiritual and temporal, giving policy direction and governance in all aspects of the Church operations.

- C. Responsibilities:** The Council shall act as the board of directors and trustees of the Church in all legal matters, and shall perform such duties as required by civil law. The Council shall act as the legal representative of the Church, and hold title to all Church property. The Council shall also act on behalf of the Church in making purchases or securing loans to accomplish the business of the Church.

In counsel with the Pastor, and by such methods as the Holy Spirit may direct, and in accordance with New Testament teachings, the Council is to have oversight of the discipline of the Church, guided by the principles set forth in Matthew 18:15-17, 1 Corinthians 5:9-14 and 1 Thessalonians 5:12-14.

The Council shall give a report to the Church during scheduled Church meetings. The Vice Chair of the Council shall moderate all Church business meetings in the absence of the Pastor, unless otherwise directed.

- D. Number:** The Council of Elders shall have no less than five (5) members. The initial number shall be five (5), and may be increased, as needed, by the Council.

Section 4. Vice Chair of the Council

The Vice Chair of the Council shall be appointed by the Chair of the Council of Elders and confirmed by the majority vote of the Elders.

- A. Qualifications** – The Vice Chair of the Council must be an Elder prior to being appointed and confirmed to the position of Vice Chair of the Council and remain an Elder while serving as Vice Chair of the Council. In addition, the candidate for Vice Chair shall be a mature Christian, recognized as being in good standing with the Church, as demonstrated by a full embrace of the teachings of this ministry through tithes and offerings, faithful support of the ministry and through regular participation in the teachings of the ministry.

B. Duties and Responsibilities:

The Vice Chair of the Council shall temporarily assume the duties and responsibilities of the Chair when designated by the Chair or when the Chair is unable to perform the required duties and responsibilities.

- C. Tenure:** The Vice Chair shall serve at the pleasure of the Council.

Section 5. Deacons

Definition: Deacons assist the Pastor by serving the needs of the congregation. (Acts 6:1-3)

- A. Authority:** Deacons are servants of the Church and are selected by the Council of Elders to assist the Pastor and serve the congregation. (Acts 6:1-7)
- B. Qualifications:** The qualifications for Deacon shall be as set forth in the Scriptures. (1 Timothy 3:8-13)

C. Duties and Responsibilities: The Deacons shall assist the Pastor in his pastoral responsibilities to ensure the spiritual well-being of the Church and Pastor. With the Pastor, they are to consider and formulate plans for the constant effort and progress of the Church in all things pertaining to the saving of souls, the development of Christians to maturity and the extension and growth of the Kingdom of God.

By proper organization and methods among themselves, Deacons are to establish and maintain fellowship relations with, and inspiring oversight of all of the members of the Church. They are specifically to seek to know the physical needs, and the moral and spiritual struggles of the members; to serve the whole Church in relief, encouragement and development of all who are in need.

Deacons shall be free to call upon any member(s) of the Church to aid in matters of reconciliation.

D. How Obtained: Deacons shall first be recommended by the Church and appointed by the Council of Elders. The Chair of the Deacons Ministry shall be named by the Pastor. He will provide the leadership of the Deacons in their duties as specified.

E. Tenure: Tenure shall be indefinite.

F. How Terminated: Deacons may resign their office, or they may be subject to removal upon action by the Pastor and the Council of Elders.

Section 6. Corporate Secretary

The Corporate Secretary shall be a member of the Council of Elders who is appointed by the Chair and affirmed by the Council.

A. Qualifications: The Corporate Secretary shall be a mature Christian, recognized as being in good standing with the Church, as demonstrated by a full embrace of the teachings of this ministry through tithes and offerings, faithful support of the ministry and through regular participation in the teachings of the ministry.

B. Duties and Responsibilities: The Corporate Secretary shall:

1. Be responsible for recording and maintaining the official corporate minutes and records of the Church;
2. Preserve on file all communications and written official reports, and give legal notice where such notice is required;
3. Maintain the corporate seal; and
4. Handle such other matters as directed by the Chair.

C. Tenure: The Corporate Secretary shall serve at the pleasure of the Council of Elders.

Section 7. Treasurer

The Treasurer shall be recommended by the Pastor and elected annually by the Council of Elders.

A. Bond: The Treasurer shall be bonded during his or her tenure as Treasurer.

B. Qualifications: The Treasurer shall be a mature Christian, recognized as being in good standing with the Church, as demonstrated by a full embrace of the teachings of this ministry through tithes and offerings, faithful support of the ministry and through regular participation in the teachings of the ministry.

C. Duties and Responsibilities: The Treasurer shall:

1. Manage and be responsible for the accounting, audit, oversight, revenue, disbursements and integrity of the financial management of the Church, including but not limited to recording and reporting the revenue of the Church and depositing all monies in financial accounts approved by the Council of Elders.
2. Serve as a member of the Finance Committee, and maintain a close working relationship with the Council of Elders.
3. Maintain the financial records of the Church which shall be subject to annual review, compilation or audit.
4. Give a written financial report to the Church at each regularly scheduled Church business meeting.

D. Tenure: The Treasurer shall serve at the pleasure of the Council.

ARTICLE IV. COMMITTEES

Section 1. All Committees

A. Chair: The chair of all committees shall be appointed by and serve at the pleasure of the Chief Elder.

B. Tenure: Appointments of non-standing members shall at the pleasure of the Chief Elder, except as otherwise provided herein for standing committee members.

C. Number of Members: The number of members shall be as required and determined by the Chief Elder.

Section 2. Finance Committee

Definition: The Finance Committee shall consist of persons appointed by the Chief Elder.

- A. Duties and Responsibilities:** The Finance Committee shall assist the Treasurer in the performance of his or her duties and responsibilities under the direction of the Council.
- B. Standing Members:** Standing members of the Finance Committee include the Vice Chair of the Council of Elders, Chairman of the Budget Committee and Treasurer.

Section 3. Budget Committee

Definition: The Budget Committee shall consist of members recommended by the Pastor and affirmed by the Council of Elders. The Committee, in consultation with the Pastor and Council shall assist in the preparation of the annual budget, including but not limited to budget modifications or amendments.

- A. Chair:** As defined above in Article IV, Section 1, above.
- B. Tenure:** As defined above in Article IV, Section 1, above.
- C. Number of Members:** The number of members shall be as required and determined by the Chief Elder.

Section 4. Audit Committee.

Definition: The Audit Committee shall consist of at least three (3) members appointed by the Pastor. The committee shall conduct or cause to be conducted, regular reviews, compilations, or audits of the financial records of the Church.

- A. Chair:** As defined above in Article IV, Section 1, above.
- B. Tenure:** As defined above in Article IV, Section 1, above.
- D. Number of Members:** The number of members shall be as required and determined by the Chief Elder, except as otherwise provided herein for Standing Committees.

ARTICLE V. MEMBERSHIP

Section 1. Qualifications: The membership of this Church shall consist of such persons who confess Jesus Christ to be their Savior and Lord, and who:

- A.** After due examination by the Church as to their Christian experience,
- B.** After being baptized and upon completion of all other requirements,
- E.** After entering into covenant with the Church, and,
- F.** Being faithful in all the duties essential to the Christian faith, regularly attending the

services of the Church, giving regularly in tithes and offerings in support of the Church and its vision, being actively involved in a ministry and participating in some ministry that teaches the tenets of the faith in this Church.

- G. Qualified members may be certified by the official Church membership roll and the official Church giving records.

Section 2. Duties and Responsibilities: All members should be responsive to the wishes of the Pastor for the betterment of the Church, and

- A. Strive to maintain godly conduct;
- B. Be prayerful in all things;
- C. Resolve any dilemma or problem according to Matthew 18:15-17; and
- D. Support the Church with time, talents and treasures.

Section 3. Ministries: All Ministries are responsible to the Pastor and Elders and shall support vision of the Church. Heads of each ministry shall participate as a member of an advisory council and meet at the discretion of the Pastor.

Section 4. Right to Act and Vote: The right to act and vote in the transactions of the Church shall be limited to persons who meet all qualifications for membership.

Section 5. Termination: Termination of membership shall be subject to the following principles:

- A. Any member in good standing who desires a letter of reference is entitled to receive it upon request.
- B. Termination for any reason other than at the request of the member shall be by action of the Council of Elders after all due diligence to bring the member into restoration.

Section 6. Restoration: Any person whose membership has been terminated for any offense may be restored upon action by the Council of Elders.

ARTICLE VI. CHURCH MEETINGS

Section 1. Worship Services. The Church shall meet regularly each Sunday and other such times as may be announced.

Section 2. Regular Business Meetings.

- A. Regular Church Business meetings shall be held twice a year, in January and July, to receive reports on the state of the Church and to approve Church budget.

- B. All meetings should be well planned with an agenda, and conducted in a prayerful, orderly and democratic manner.
- C. Members with items to be considered for the meeting agenda must present them in writing to the Pastor or Council of Elders at least 30 days before the meeting.

Section 3. Special Business Meetings.

- A. Special business meetings may be called by the Chief Elder or the Vice Chair of the Council of Elders, in conjunction with the Council of Elders, provided that notice is given four (4) Sundays in advance.
- B. The meeting notice must specify the purpose of the meeting and no other business may be transacted.
- C. When the meeting is concerned with calling a Pastor or declaring the pulpit vacant, the Vice Chair of the Council of Elders shall preside.

Section 4. Quorum for Meetings: For all Church business meetings, the moderator may declare a quorum of members present at the meeting if at least one hundred (100) members in good standing are in attendance. All actions and decisions will be approved by simple majority, except in matters as described in Article III, Section 1, Subsection E, above, and in Article VII, below.

ARTICLE VII. AMENDMENTS

Section 1. This Constitution may be amended by a two-thirds (2/3) vote of the members present and voting at any business or special meeting at which there is a quorum. All amendments must be made available in writing to members of the Church not less than thirty (30) days before the time of the proposed action.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I hereby affirm under the penalties of perjury that the contents of the foregoing Constitution of The First Baptist Church of Glenarden, Inc. are true to the best of my knowledge, information and belief, and that this Constitution was amended and duly adopted by a majority of the members of the Church attending the general membership meeting held on the 29th day of July, 2020.

William O. Jones, Corporate Secretary
Council of Elders