



FIRST BAPTIST
- O P E L I K A -

CONSTITUTION & BYLAWS

First Baptist Church Opelika
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Opelika, AL 36801
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Constitution and Bylaws
First Baptist Church
Opelika, Alabama

CHURCH COVENANT

Having been led by the Spirit of God to receive the Lord Jesus Christ as our Savior, and by the influence of His Spirit, we most solemnly covenant to come together as a church believing the church is a legal, physical, and spiritual entity. We believe the Holy Bible is the inerrant and infallible Word of God and therefore provides direction, counsel, and protection for First Baptist Church of Opelika. All Scripture referenced herein is quoted from the Authorized King James Version of the Holy Bible.

That, God enabling us,

- we will walk together in brotherly love;
Romans 12:10 Be kindly affectioned one to another with brotherly love; in honour preferring one another.
1 Thessalonians 4:9 But as touching brotherly love ye need not that I write unto you: for ye yourselves are taught of God to love one another.
Hebrews 13:1 Let brotherly love continue.
- we will exercise a Christian care and watchfulness over each other, and faithfully warn, rebuke, and admonish one another as dictated by the Scriptures;
Colossians 3:16 Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom; teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord.
1 Thessalonians 5:12 And we beseech you, brethren, to know them which labour among you, and are over you in the Lord, and admonish you.
2 Thessalonians 3:15 Yet count him not as an enemy, but admonish him as a brother.
- we will not forsake the assembling of ourselves together, nor omit the great duty of prayer, both for ourselves and others;
Hebrews 10:25 Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is; but exhorting one another: and so much the more, as ye see the day approaching.
- we will participate in each other's joys, and endeavor with tenderness and sympathy to bear one another's burdens and sorrows;
Galatians 6:2 Bear ye one another's burdens, and so fulfil the law of Christ.

- we will earnestly endeavor to bring up such as are or may be under our care in the nurture and admonition of the Lord;
Ephesians 6:4 And, ye fathers, provoke not your children to wrath: but bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord.
- we will seek divine guidance from God;
Colossians 3:1-2 If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God. ² Set your affection on things above, not on things on the earth.
Matthew 6:33 But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you.
- we will walk circumspectly and watchfully in the world, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts;
Ephesians 5:15 See then that ye walk circumspectly, not as fools, but as wise.
- we will support a faithful evangelical ministry among us;
Romans 12:3-8 For by the grace given to me I say to everyone among you not to think of himself more highly than he ought to think, but to think with sober judgment, each according to the measure of faith that God has assigned. ⁴ For as in one body we have many members, and the members do not all have the same function, ⁵ so we, though many, are one body in Christ, and individually members one of another. ⁶ Having gifts that differ according to the grace given to us, let us use them: if prophecy, in proportion to our faith; ⁷ if service, in our serving; the one who teaches, in his teaching; ⁸ the one who exhorts, in his exhortation; the one who contributes, in generosity; the one who leads, with zeal; the one who does acts of mercy, with cheerfulness.
1 Corinthians 12:27-28 Now you are the body of Christ and individually members of it. ²⁸ And God has appointed in the church first apostles, second prophets, third teachers, then miracles, then gifts of healing, helping, administrating, and various kinds of tongues.
Mark 16:15 And he said unto them, Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature.
- we will endeavor by both example and effort to win souls to Christ; and
Matthew 28:19-20 Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: ²⁰ Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world. Amen.
- through life, amidst evil report and good report, we will seek to live to the glory of Him Who hath called us out of darkness into His marvelous light.

1 Peter 2:9 But ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should shew forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvellous light.

DEACON'S COVENANT

The Deacons of First Baptist Church of Opelika shall:

- enter into covenant with one another in fellowship and love to serve this Church;
- engage to serve together prayerfully, seeking the guidance of the Holy Spirit with an attitude of Christian love;
- cultivate and use their God-given talents to the furtherance of God's Kingdom;
- strengthen each other in their commitment to Jesus Christ;
- engage to strive for the advancement of this Church;
- study and promote its doctrines;
- adhere to its Constitution and Bylaws;
- attend regularly its worship services and assist in the observance of its ordinances; and
- support cheerfully through their tithes and gifts the total ministry of the Church and to uphold the Church to all who may inquire about the Church and its ministry.

The Deacons shall further engage to assist the Senior Pastor and Church Staff and to accept their individual responsibilities as co-laborers with them, to pray for them and with them, to counsel them when difficulties may occur, and to uphold them in ministries.

1 Timothy 3:8-12 Likewise must the deacons be grave, not double-tongued, not given to much wine, not greedy of filthy lucre; ⁹ Holding the mystery of the faith in a pure conscience. ¹⁰ And let these also first be proved; then let them use the office of a deacon, being found blameless.

¹¹ Even so must their wives be grave, not slanderers, sober, faithful in all things. ¹² Let the deacons be the husbands of one wife, ruling their children and their own houses well.

CONSTITUTION

We, the members of the First Baptist Church of Opelika, Alabama, in order to more effectively promote the Gospel of Jesus Christ and recognize Jesus Christ as the only begotten Son of God, do hereby adopt the following Constitution.

ARTICLE I

This congregation shall be known and designated as the First Baptist Church of Opelika, Alabama (herein after referred to as "FBCO"). It is a congregation of believers, united by covenant for the worship of God and associated in faith and the fellowship of the Gospel to:

- a) practice its precepts;
- b) recognize and receive Jesus Christ as the Son of God and the Supreme Law Giver; and
- c) recognize the Holy Bible as the sole standard by which all matters of belief and conduct are to be measured.

ARTICLE II

The First Baptist Church of Opelika, Alabama, is a body corporate, its Certificate of Incorporation being of record in Corporation Record Book 153, at page 440, in the Office of the Judge of Probate of Lee County, Alabama, having been filed in that office on March 17, 1942.

ARTICLE III

The governance of FBCO is vested in its Members, as a body of believers, who comprise it. While acknowledging and recognizing cooperation with other churches of the Tuskegee-Lee Baptist Association, the Alabama Baptist State Convention, and the Southern Baptist Convention, we are an independent ecclesiastical body.

BYLAWS

In order to carry out and make effective the principles and declarations contained in this Constitution as heretofore set forth, FBCO does hereby enact the following Bylaws for governance of this body:

ARTICLE I MEMBERSHIP

Section 1. Qualifications: The membership of FBCO shall consist of persons who:

- a) confess Jesus Christ to be their Savior and Lord, have been examined by a member of the ministerial staff as to the validity of their Christian experience and have been scripturally baptized after the validity of their Christian experience; and
- b) have been accepted by a majority vote of the Deacons.

Section 2. Duties: Members are expected to be faithful in all the duties essential to the Christian life, to attend the services of FBCO, to give for its support and its causes, and to share in its organized work.

Section 3. Rights: All members may act and vote in transacting the business of FBCO. Any matter to be voted upon may require each person casting a ballot to verify that he or she is a member of FBCO. The decision to require voters to verify their membership shall be at the discretion of the Senior Pastor and the Deacons. Only members of FBCO may teach, serve as a Deacon, serve on committees or hold offices within FBCO.

Section 4. Quorum: The members present at a regular worship service, a called business meeting, or other called special meeting shall constitute a quorum.

Section 5. Membership Status: Regarding a member's status within FBCO

- a) A letter of transfer may be granted for any member desiring to unite with another church.
- b) Should a member become an offense to the Church, the Church may terminate his or her membership, but only after due notice and hearing as stated below and after faithful efforts have been made to bring such member to repentance and reconciliation.
 - 1. All requests for termination of membership or action leading thereto, except by letter, shall be considered by the Deacons at the next scheduled Deacons' meeting.
 - 2. Memberships shall be terminated by a two-third (2/3) vote of the Deacons, followed by a 2/3 vote of FBCO acknowledging and in accordance with Matthew 18:15-18, *Moreover if thy brother shall trespass against thee, go and tell him his fault between thee and him alone: if he shall hear thee, thou hast gained thy*

brother. ¹⁶ But if he will not hear thee, then take with thee one or two more, that in the mouth of two or three witnesses every word may be established. ¹⁷ And if he shall neglect to hear them, tell it unto the church: but if he neglect to hear the church, let him be unto thee as an heathen man and a publican. ¹⁸ Verily I say unto you, Whatsoever ye shall bind on earth shall be bound in heaven: and whatsoever ye shall loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven.
and 2 Corinthians 2:5-8 But if any have caused grief, he hath not grieved me, but in part: that I may not overcharge you all. ⁶ Sufficient to such a man is this punishment, which was inflicted of many. ⁷ So that contrariwise ye ought rather to forgive him, and comfort him, lest perhaps such a one should be swallowed up with overmuch sorrow. ⁸ Wherefore I beseech you that ye would confirm your love toward him.

ARTICLE II FBCO OFFICIALS

The officers of FBCO shall be:

Section 1: Senior Pastor: His duties are threefold: to preach the gospel, to shepherd the flock, and to superintend the work of FBCO. The Senior Pastor is to promote and extend the Kingdom of God everywhere in the winning of the lost and edifying the children of God.

The Senior Pastor shall be responsible for the general direction of the entire FBCO program. All FBCO Staff shall be responsible to him for the performance of their duties. The Senior Pastor shall be called by a 2/3 affirmative vote of FBCO during a business meeting at each of the regular Sunday-morning worship services, acting upon the concurrent recommendation of the Pulpit Committee and the Deacons. Compensation of the Senior Pastor shall be set by the Deacons. Termination, other than by the Senior Pastor's resignation, shall be by 2/3 vote of the Deacons, followed by 2/3 vote of FBCO.

Section 2: Deacons: The business affairs of FBCO shall be under the direction of the Deacons. The Deacon Body, by majority vote, has the authority to require independent assurance services (audit, review, or agreed upon procedures) performed by an independent certified public accounting firm. The number of active Deacons shall be no less than forty-eight (48) men. Any increase or decrease of active Deacons must be approved by 2/3 vote of the Deacon Body, followed by 2/3 vote of FBCO. Each Deacon shall be elected to a 3-year term, with a mandatory leave of one (1) year after completion of a full term of service. The current Chairman of the Deacons shall appoint a Deacon Officer Nominating Committee of fellow active Deacons. This Committee shall recommend nominees for the following positions to be served during the upcoming Deacon term:

- a) Chairman,
- b) Vice-Chairman, and
- c) Secretary.

The officer nominations shall be approved by majority vote of the Deacon Body.

For the positions of Chairman and Vice Chairman, Deacons shall hold fast to the faithful word as he hath been taught, that he may be able by sound doctrine both to exhort and to convince the gainsayers. Titus 1:6-9 *If any be blameless, the husband of one wife, having faithful children not accused of riot or unruly. ⁷ For a bishop must be blameless, as the steward of God; not self-willed, not soon angry, not given to wine, no striker, not given to filthy lucre; ⁸ But a lover of hospitality, a lover of good men, sober, just, holy, temperate; ⁹ Holding fast the faithful word as he hath been taught, that he may be able by sound doctrine both to exhort and to convince the gainsayers.*

The Chairman of the Deacons shall preside as moderator at FBCO meetings, but at his discretion, the Vice-Chairman of Deacons or Senior Pastor may preside. The Chairman of the Deacons shall be responsible for leadership of FBCO during periods of vacancy in the office of Senior Pastor and shall assume the governance duties of the Senior Pastor hereunder (which specifically do not include pulpit or similar activities).

Election Procedure: FBCO shall elect annually one-third (1/3) of the active Deacons. Each June, an information packet containing Deacon qualifications, eligibility criteria, and a description of the nominating process shall be provided to all FBCO members. FBCO members may then submit nominations consistent with the nominating process for prospective Deacon candidates whom they believe meet the qualifications and eligibility requirements listed in the information packet. After the closure of the nominating period, an active Deacon shall contact all nominees to confirm his eligibility and willingness to be listed as a candidate on the election ballot. A ballot list of all confirmed candidates shall be published on or around September 1, and voting by FBCO membership shall take place during the last two weeks of September.

Each FBCO member may cast a vote for no more than the maximum number of new active Deacons to be elected from the ballot list. The candidates receiving the highest vote count shall be elected. Final election results shall be announced in October and all newly elected Deacons shall begin their service term on November 1. Any newly elected man who has not served as a Deacon, either at FBCO or at another church that is part of the Southern Baptist Convention, shall be ordained prior to beginning his service term.

Vacancies: Within sixty (60) days after the occurrence of a vacancy among active Deacons, the Deacon Chairman shall nominate a successor from Deacons who are inactive due to the mandatory one (1) year leave requirement. Upon approval by a 2/3 vote of the active Deacons and subsequent election by a majority vote of FBCO, the replacement Deacon so elected will take office and serve for the remainder of the unexpired term.

Section 3: FBCO Staff: The term FBCO Staff shall mean all employees of FBCO. When the term FBCO Staff is used herein it shall apply to all FBCO employees unless superseded by another, more specific provision of these Bylaws.

- a) **Staff Classification:** The classification of a member of the FBCO Staff shall be determined by the Personnel Committee and such classification may not be changed without the approval of the Personnel Committee.

The Personnel Committee is responsible for determining all FBCO Staff compensation, excluding the Senior Pastor, First Baptist Academy, and Bright Beginnings. For new positions and new hires, compensation shall be recommended by the Personnel Committee and approved by the Finance Committee to ensure Budget availability in advance of the interview process.

FBCO employment policies, including hiring and terms and conditions of employment, shall apply to all FBCO Staff and shall conform to the Scriptural requirements of one-man and one-woman relationships.

The Senior Pastor and Personnel Committee, by 2/3 vote, may suspend without pay any FBCO Staff member for a period of not more than 15 days.

- b) **Staff Categories:** FBCO Staff shall be divided into three (3) categories consisting of the Senior Pastor, the Ministerial Staff, and the Support Staff.

1. Senior Pastor

Refer to Section 1 of Article II and Section 3 of Article III.

2. Ministerial Staff

Any and all Ministerial Staff, other than the Senior Pastor, after recommendation by the requisite search committee as promulgated in Section 3 of Article III hereof, shall be called by 2/3 affirmative vote of FBCO in a regular worship service, acting on the concurrent recommendation of the Senior Pastor, the Personnel Committee, and the Deacons.

Each newly created position of the Ministerial Staff shall be approved by the Personnel Committee, after recommendation and approval for budget availability by the Finance Committee, then approved by 2/3 vote of the Deacons.

Termination of a member of the Ministerial Staff, other than the Senior Pastor, shall be by 2/3 vote of the Personnel Committee and 2/3 vote of the active Deacons.

3. **Support Staff:** Each newly created position of the Support Staff shall be approved by the Personnel Committee, after recommendation and approval for budget availability by the Finance Committee. The duties and responsibilities for any newly created positions shall be outlined in a job description approved by the

Personnel Committee. The Senior Pastor and the Personnel Committee, by a 2/3 vote, may terminate a member of the Support Staff.

Section 4: Trustees: The Trustees shall be the Corporate Officers of FBCO and shall serve as the proper legal authority through which FBCO shall act in the exercise of the powers conferred upon it by the Articles of Incorporation with respect to acquiring, holding, and disposing of FBCO property. The Trustees shall confirm that all FBCO property is adequately insured and maintained for the corporate welfare of FBCO. There shall be six (6) Trustees of FBCO, as provided in the Articles of Incorporation, who serve ten (10) year terms. The nominee for a trustee vacancy is presented by the Trustees to the Deacon Body. The Trustee nominee shall be approved by 2/3 vote of the Deacon Body, followed by majority vote of FBCO.

Section 5: Clerk: The FBCO Clerk shall be a member of FBCO and shall be elected each year by FBCO upon recommendation of the Nominating Committee. It shall be the duty of the FBCO Clerk to keep a careful and accurate record of FBCO called business meetings which shall be typed and filed in the permanent records of FBCO.

Section 6: Treasurer: The FBCO Treasurer and the FBCO Assistant Treasurer shall be members of FBCO and shall be elected each year by FBCO upon recommendation of the Nominating Committee. The Treasurer shall oversee the receipt and disbursement of all the funds of FBCO in accordance with the approved FBCO budget unless the Finance Committee specifically authorizes a non-budgetary disbursement. The Treasurer/Assistant Treasurer shall serve as non-voting members of the Finance Committee.

ARTICLE III COMMITTEES

All committees of FBCO shall consist of at least nine (9) members but not to exceed fifteen (15) unless otherwise noted herein. Committees are to operate consistently, adhering to the FBCO Constitution and Bylaws. In the event there is a discrepancy between the Constitution and any Committee or Employment Handbook, the Constitution will supersede the internal document unless it violates updated State or Federal laws. Each Committee Member shall be elected to a three (3) year term, with a mandatory leave of one (1) year after completion of a full term of service.

Section 1: Nominating Committee: Members shall be nominated by the Senior Pastor and Chairman of the Deacons and elected by majority vote of the active Deacons and FBCO. The Nominating Committee shall be responsible for recommending candidates for the Missions, Finance, Academy, and Personnel Committees, as well as Treasurer, Assistant Treasurer, and Clerk. Membership terms on the Nominating Committee shall be for 3 years, with 1/3 of the committee's membership being elected annually and active service will begin each January. The committee shall include at least one active Deacon member.

Section 2: Regular Committees: Regular Committees of FBCO shall be organized and staffed on a continuing basis to execute that portion of the work appropriate to them. Membership terms on a Regular Committee shall be for 3 years, with 1/3 of a committee's membership being elected annually and active service will begin each January . Each regular committee shall include at least one active Deacon member.

A new regular committee may be formed, or an existing committee changed or terminated, by majority vote of FBCO, but only after recommendation by the Nominating Committee and majority approval by the Deacons.

a) Missions Committee

The purpose of the Missions Committee is to work with FBCO Staff and FBCO members to promote participation in missions and to provide training, leadership, and resources for such purposes.

b) Finance Committee

The purpose of the Finance Committee is to work with the FBCO Staff and ministries of FBCO to prepare and present the annual budget to the Deacons and FBCO for approval and to provide oversight to ensure FBCO operates within its approved budget. In addition, the Finance Committee shall oversee the overall financial health of FBCO, including, without limitation, review of the actual results with the approved budget on a monthly basis and determination if changes in spending should be made as a result of the evaluation of such monthly review.

c) Personnel Committee

The purpose of the Personnel Committee is to:

1. Oversee hiring, reviews, and termination of FBCO Staff, excluding Bright Beginnings and the First Baptist Academy;
2. Provide personnel policies and procedures for the effective and efficient operation of FBCO, including any and all employment handbooks, all of which cannot be revised without two-thirds approval of Personnel Committee; and
3. Recommend salary and budget needs to the Finance Committee.

Any member of the Personnel Committee may bring a personnel issue to the Committee for discussion.

d) Academy Committee (First Baptist Academy Auxiliary Advisory Board of Directors)

FBCO, in the exercise of its religious, educational, and charitable purposes has established a Christian Academy as an extension of its educational ministry. Under the direction of the Deacons, the Academy shall establish a committee, known as the First Baptist Academy Auxiliary Advisory Board of Directors, which shall adopt Bylaws to govern its affairs so long as these Bylaws are consistent with the Constitution and Bylaws of FBCO.

First Baptist Academy is dedicated to the foundational, preparational, and spiritual education of children. The Academy's curriculum provides a traditional Christian education founded on the principles of the Scriptures. These principles are incorporated into each subject throughout every class and by all instructors, to develop within each student a Christian philosophy of life and a biblical world view.

The Academy functions as an extension of the education ministry of FBCO, led by the Minister of Education (Education Pastor). An Academy Headmaster, reporting to the Minister of Education and responsible and answerable to the Chair of the Board of Directors, shall oversee the coordination and administration of all Academy personnel, finances, departments, and programs, including curricular and extracurricular affairs, as well as other duties prescribed by the Board.

Section 3: Special Committees:

A Pulpit Committee shall be nominated by the Deacon officers for election by majority vote of FBCO within thirty (30) days of a vacancy in the office of Senior Pastor. The Pulpit Committee shall conduct a search for a Senior Pastor, negotiate with prospects on behalf of FBCO, recommend a prospect to the Deacons, and upon approval by the Deacons, present said prospect to FBCO concerning the call to fill the vacancy.

An Interim Committee shall be nominated by the Deacon officers for election by majority vote of FBCO members within thirty (30) days of a vacancy in the office of Senior Pastor. The Interim Committee shall be responsible for filling the pulpit during the interim period, until the new Senior Pastor assumes his duties.

All Ministerial Staff appointments, other than the Senior Pastor, shall require a Search Committee whose members shall be nominated by the Chairman of Deacons, Senior Pastor, and the Personnel Committee within thirty (30) days after the occurrence of either a Ministerial Staff vacancy or the creation of a new Ministerial Staff position. Ministerial Staff appointments shall include, without limitation, either filling a newly created Ministerial Staff position or a vacant Ministerial Staff position with a current member of the Ministerial Staff already employed by FBCO.

Any other Ad Hoc Committee shall be nominated by the Senior Pastor and Deacon Officers and then approved by majority of the Deacons.

Section 4: Church Council

The purpose of the Church Council is to guide FBCO in the planning, coordination, and implementation of its programs and ministries. This Council is primarily a platform for communicating direction between various committees and ministries and is not a policy making group. This Council is to include the Senior Pastor, Chairman of the Deacons, Church Treasurer,

Chair of all Regular Committees, Chair of the Nominating Committee, Chairman of the Trustees and such members of the Church Staff as deemed necessary. The Council shall meet regularly, but no less than four times per year.

ARTICLE IV MEETINGS AND WORSHIP

Worship services shall be held every Sunday for public worship, preaching, instruction and evangelism. Such worship services shall be under the direction of the Senior Pastor, FBCO Staff, and Chairman of the Deacons. There shall be Sunday School, and there shall be such other services, ministries, activities, and organizations as may be deemed appropriate by FBCO.

Business meetings may be called by the Senior Pastor or by the Chairman of the Deacons. All business meetings shall be held in conjunction with a regular service of FBCO. Notice of business meetings shall be given by churchwide communications at least one week prior to the date of the meeting.

A quorum for the transaction of business at any meeting shall be the membership present at such meeting. A majority vote of a quorum shall determine any matter voted upon, unless otherwise required by the Bylaws.

In all questions of parliamentary procedure at any business meeting, FBCO shall be governed by the current edition of Roberts Rules of Order, Newly Revised 12th Edition, as the same may be modified or amended in the future.

ARTICLE V ADOPTION AND AMENDMENTS OF CONSTITUTION AND BYLAWS

Section 1: The rules set forth and promulgated by this Constitution and Bylaws shall be considered adopted by a vote of 2/3 of the membership present at any regular worship service. However, prior to the vote thereon, notice of such presentation shall be given by churchwide communications for two (2) consecutive weeks prior to the date of such vote.

Section 2: This Constitution and Bylaws may be amended, or any provision thereof repealed, by 2/3 vote of the members present at any regular worship service. However, prior to the vote thereon, notice of such proposal shall be given by churchwide communications for two (2) consecutive weeks prior to the date of such vote.

Section 3: The adoption of this Constitution and Bylaws shall act to repeal any existing bylaw or other provision under which FBCO operates which conflicts with this newly adopted Constitution and Bylaws.

Section 4: The Constitution and Bylaws of First Baptist Church of Opelika, Alabama, shall be reviewed by a committee appointed for such purpose no less than once every five (5) years.

ARTICLE VI ORDINANCES AND CEREMONIES

Section 1: Marriage Ceremony: Marriage is the sacred union under God between one biological male at birth and one biological female at birth. Therefore, the doctrines and ministries of FBCO shall only recognize the sanctity of marriage between one male and one female as indicated in Genesis 1:27. *So God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him; male and female created he them.*

In accordance with this doctrine:

- a) No employee of FBCO, including, without limitation, the Senior Pastor or a member of the Ministerial Staff, shall lead, officiate, or sign, notarize, or otherwise execute any instrument which is in conflict with this doctrine.
- b) FBCO facilities used for any part of a marriage ceremony shall only be used in compliance with this doctrine.

Section 2: Lord's Supper: The Lord's Supper is FBCO's remembrance of the death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus Christ which shall be observed as scheduled by the Deacons and Senior Pastor. The Lord's Supper shall be observed at the direction of the Senior Pastor and/or Deacon Body periodically and regularly.

Section 3: Baptism: Baptism is the public expression of personal faith in Jesus Christ as the Son of God and shall be observed through immersion.

Section 4: Pastoral Ordination: Ordination is the setting apart of a man to serve in the office of Pastor. The Ordination Council (OC) of FBCO consists of three ordained men (Senior Pastor, Deacon Chair, and Deacon Vice Chair).

- a) The pastoral candidate writes both personal testimony and thoughts and commentary on the Baptist Faith and Message. The candidate then submits both to the OC for review.
- b) The OC meeting is scheduled with the pastoral candidate:
 - 1. The OC asks the candidate to explain the gospel.
 - 2. The OC verifies that the pastoral candidate meets the qualifications in 1 Timothy 3:1-7 *This is a true saying, if a man desire the office of a bishop, he desireth a good work. ²A bishop then must be blameless, the husband of one wife, vigilant, sober, of good behaviour, given to hospitality, apt to teach; ³Not given to wine, no striker, not greedy of filthy lucre; but patient, not a brawler, not covetous; ⁴One that ruleth well his own house, having his children in subjection with all gravity; ⁵(For if a man know not how to rule his own house, how shall he take care of the church of God?) ⁶Not a novice, lest being lifted up with pride he fall into the condemnation of the devil. ⁷Moreover he must have a good report of*

them which are without; lest he fall into reproach and the snare of the devil. and Titus 1:5-9 For this cause left I thee in Crete, that thou shouldest set in order the things that are wanting, and ordain elders in every city, as I had appointed thee: ⁶ If any be blameless, the husband of one wife, having faithful children not accused of riot or unruly. ⁷ For a bishop must be blameless, as the steward of God; not selfwilled, not soon angry, not given to wine, no striker, not given to filthy lucre; ⁸ But a lover of hospitality, a lover of good men, sober, just, holy, temperate; ⁹ Holding fast the faithful word as he hath been taught, that he may be able by sound doctrine both to exhort and to convince the gainsayers.

- c) His written testimony is sent to the Deacon body for review.
- d) The Pastoral candidate teaches the gospel from a text of scripture to the Deacon body addressing the following three (3) points:
 - 1. Explanation of the Gospel,
 - 2. How the Gospel message / Jesus Christ has saved and transformed himself, and
 - 3. Brief explanation of “calling” to preach/teach/minister the Gospel.
- e) The Deacon body affirms ordination of the pastoral candidate and signs the back of his ordination certificate.
- f) The Ordination service is scheduled.

(Acts 13:1-3) Now there were in the church that was at Antioch certain prophets and teachers; as Barnabas, and Simeon that was called Niger, and Lucius of Cyrene, and Manaen, which had been brought up with Herod the tetrarch, and Saul. ² As they ministered to the Lord, and fasted, the Holy Ghost said, Separate me Barnabas and Saul for the work whereunto I have called them. ³ And when they had fasted and prayed, and laid their hands on them, they sent them away.

The Constitution and these Bylaws of the First Baptist Church of Opelika, Alabama, were adopted by vote on the 13th day of November 2024, and replace the Constitution and Bylaws dated June 28, 2020.