

# **Constitution & Bylaws**

## **Article I** **Name**

### Section 1:

1. The complete name of our church is as follows: First Southern Baptist Church Property Company, Inc.
2. The body shall be known as First Southern Baptist Church
3. From this point forward in this document the church will be abbreviated as FSBC

## **Article II** **Statement of Basic Beliefs**

### Section 1:

1. We affirm the Holy Bible as the inspired Word of God and the basis for our beliefs. This church subscribes to the doctrinal statement of “The Baptist Faith and Message” adopted by the Southern Baptist Convention in 2000.

## **Article III** **Membership**

### Section 1: General

1. All who desire to worship God “in spirit and in truth” are welcome at FSBC. FSBC anticipates attendees to be a combination of Members, believers who have not yet elected to become Members, and those seeking God. Recognizing this, and in order to provide unity of purpose, direction, and action, voting on issues coming before the Church is restricted to Members. FSBC reserves the exclusive right to determine and set biblical requirements for membership and the conditions of such membership.

### Section 2: Membership:

1. Membership in FSBC is attained by:
  - a. Salvation: Public profession in Jesus Christ as personal Savior and Lord followed by baptism by immersion, or
  - b. Transfer of a Letter: Transferring of membership from another church of like faith and order, or
  - c. Statement of Faith: Statement of faith in Jesus Christ and of having been baptized by immersion after conversion,

- d. All candidates for membership shall be examined by the Pastor and then be presented before the members of this church for reception during a business meeting. This will be by a voiced confirmation. A majority must vote in favor of reception
2. Each Member, 13 years and older, shall be entitled to one vote at all regular or special called business meetings of the Church when that Member is in attendance. If a Member expects to be absent from the meeting, he or she can vote by absentee ballot obtained from the Church office as long as the ballot is received prior to the business meeting.

Section 3: Termination of Membership:

1. Membership shall be terminated upon:
  - a. The death of the Member,
  - b. Transfer by letter to another church,
  - c. Request of termination by the Member,
  - d. Evidence of membership in another church,
  - e. Exclusion by disciplinary action by the Church (see Article III, Section 5)
2. All Termination of Membership matters with the exception of “Death of the Member,” must be voted on at a regular or special called business meeting. Approval of termination requires a majority vote.

Section 4: Inactive List:

1. Members who fail to support the church by regular attendance for a period of one year without good reason (e.g. shut-in, medical) will be contacted to determine if they wish to maintain their membership at FSBC and the course of conduct they must follow to do so. If they do not wish to support the Church, but wish to remain Members, they will become Inactive Members. As Inactive Members they cannot vote in Church matters until they are restored to active membership by demonstrating faithfulness through regular attendance. If they cannot be contacted after repeated efforts they will become Inactive Members. If they do not wish to maintain their membership, their membership will be terminated.
2. Being moved to the Inactive Membership list does not require a vote of the church.

Section 5: Church Discipline:

1. Members who become opposed to any doctrinal issues set by FSBC, or who engage in conduct obviously unbecoming to a Christian (1 Corinthians 5:9-10) or who spread doctrinal error (1 Timothy 1:20; 2 Timothy 2:17-18) or divisiveness (Romans 16:17) are subject to Church discipline, which could ultimately result in expulsion from membership.

2. The goal of Church discipline at each step is restoration of the offender to full fellowship and standing in the body (Galatians 6:1) The steps in the discipline process are as follows:
  - a. When such a breach of conduct or belief is brought to the attention of a fellow Church Member, this Member shall approach the person in error according to the principles of Matthew 18:15-17
  - b. If there is no change in action, the Member shall bring the situation to a Pastor and/or Deacon for investigation, action and resolution as soon as possible. If brought to a Deacon, the Deacon must also bring the situation to the Pastor.
  - c. Following the principles of Matthew 18, if not resolved, the Pastor and/or Deacon will address the situation, meeting with the offending Member if all possible, and administering whatever remedial actions deemed necessary to restore the brother or sister. These actions will be kept confidential.
  - d. If the Pastor and/or Deacon determines that the situation will not be rectified, a recommendation regarding steps to follow will be made by the Pastor and/or Deacon at a closed Church meeting, typically at the conclusion of the next available worship service.
  - e. The offending Member may be removed from membership by a majority affirmative vote of the Members eligible to vote in the meeting, and shall be so notified whether in person or by mail.
  - f. Reinstatement to membership shall occur only after repentance, restoration under Pastor and/or Deacon care, and confession in a regular Church service.

## **Article IV**

### **Pastors, Deacons Trustees**

#### Section 1: Senior Pastor:

1. Qualifications: The Pastor shall meet the Scriptural qualifications as outlined in I Timothy 3:1-7, shall be a tither, and shall give evidence of having been born-again. He shall be in agreement with the views of faith and practice held by this church, as set forth in its Constitution.
2. Election: A Pastor shall be chosen and called by the church whenever a vacancy occurs. His election shall take place at a meeting called for that purpose, of which at least seven days notice shall have been given. A Pastor Search Committee shall be elected by the church to seek out a suitable Pastor, and their recommendation shall constitute a nomination. The Committee shall bring to the consideration of the church only one man at a time. Election shall be by ballot, an affirmative vote of three-fourths of the voting members in good standing present being necessary to extend a call.
3. Duties: The Pastor shall have charge of the welfare and oversight of the church. He shall preside at all meetings, except as herein provided.

4. Dismissal: The pastoral relationship may be terminated at any time by mutual consent of Pastor and church or by majority vote of the church by ballot in regular session. The resignation of the Pastor may be oral or written. Fifteen (15) days notice of such termination shall be given by the church or Pastor. In the event the church should consider the dismissal of a Pastor, the congregation shall be notified of such a meeting and its purpose two weeks in advance. A majority vote of members in good standing at such meeting shall prevail.

#### Section 2: Pastoral Staff:

1. Qualifications: The qualifications for pastoral staff shall be the same as those for the Pastor.
2. Election: The Pastoral Staff shall be called and employed as the church determines the need for such offices. The election process will be the same as that for the Senior Pastor.
3. Duties: A job description and a letter of understanding of the duties signed by the staff member will be kept on file at the church.
4. Dismissal: The conditions for termination of a staff member shall be the same as those for the Pastor.

#### Section 3: Deacons:

1. Number: There shall be as many Deacons as the church deems needful.
2. Qualifications: When elected to serve, Deacons shall meet the Scriptural qualifications outlined in Acts 6:1-7 and I Timothy 3:8-13, and shall attend and actively support all phases of the church program, be tithers of their income, and cooperate in spirit. Deacons shall:
  - a. Be men of dignity, reverent, they must be worthy of respect, serious minded, not treating serious things lightly (1 Timothy 3:8; Titus 2:2).
  - b. Not be double-tongued; not a malicious gossip (1 Timothy 3:8).
  - c. Not be addicted to much wine; they are noted for their sobriety (1 Timothy 3:8).
  - d. Not be fond of gain and greedy for money (1 Timothy 3:8; 6:9).
  - e. Hold "to the mystery of the faith with a clear conscience," must have convictions based on the knowledge of true biblical doctrine (1 Timothy 3:9).
  - f. Be men already tested and proven to be faithful (1 Timothy 3:10).
  - g. Be morally pure in every way (1 Timothy 3:10, 12).
  - h. Lead his family well and be the husband of one wife (1 Timothy 3:12).
3. Election: When the pastor and active Deacons decide there is a need for more Deacons, notice of such need shall be provided to the church body. The church shall nominate individuals and the Pastor and active Deacons shall act as a screening committee to compile a list of acceptable candidates based upon the qualifications previously stated. The Pastor and Deacons will then interview those men nominated, and who appear to be qualified, and secure a commitment from those willing to serve. Those who are willing to serve shall be voted upon during a called or regular business meeting of the church. A majority vote is needed to install a Deacon.

- a. Following the election of an unordained man to the office of Deacon, the church shall call for his ordination at the earliest possible date.
4. Duties: The Deacons are problem solvers, people servers, and Pastor helpers. The Deacons shall be zealous to guard the unity of spirit within the church in the bond of peace and harmony. They are to establish and maintain personal fraternal relations with all members of the church. In counsel with the Pastor, and by such methods as the Holy Spirit may direct in accordance with the New Testament teaching, they are to have responsibility of the discipline of the church, in administration of which they are to be guided always by the principles set forth in Matthew 18:15-17; I Corinthians 5:9-13 and I Thessalonians 5:12-14. The Deacons shall serve as a pulpit supply committee in case of absence or incapacity of the Pastor, subject to advice from and conference with him, the Chairman of Deacons and the Deacon Body shall provide for pulpit supply. In any period when the church is without a Pastor, unless the church shall otherwise provide, the Chairman of Deacons and Deacon Body will arrange the temporary pulpit ministry and take counsel with reference to securing an interim Pastor. If the church has a Pastor Search Committee, the Deacons shall in no way conflict with the work of such committee.
5. Dismissal: A Deacon may be dismissed by disciplinary action or by majority vote during a regular or special called business meeting of the church.

#### Section 4: Trustees:

1. Number: There shall be 3 trustees.
2. Qualifications: The members of the Trustee Board must have sound fiscal integrity and the ability to safeguard all financial information. They must contribute regularly to the support of the Church and attend on a regular basis.
3. Election: Trustees will be elected by a majority vote during a regular or special called business meeting.
4. Duties: The trustees serve as the official, legal servants in matters of business. Trustees sign legal documents in behalf of the church, particularly as property and financial contracts are involved. The trustees, serving as custodians of the church property, shall include its proper maintenance and insurance, etc., and shall act on behalf of the church in selling and acquiring property.
5. Dismissal: A Trustee may be dismissed by disciplinary action or by majority vote during a regular or special called business meeting of the church.

## **Article V**

### **Committees & Designated Positions**

#### Section 1: Changes to Committees:

1. If the pastoral staff, deacon body, committee in question or Personnel Committee feels it necessary to change the purpose, duties, membership allowance, or term limits to any section of Church Leadership and Organization Handbook, they must present the recommendations to the church at a regularly scheduled business meeting and receive a majority vote in favor of the changes.

#### Section 2: Committee Names and Details:

1. Please see the Church Leadership and Organization Handbook for detailed description of each committee and designated position.

#### Section 3: Election of Committee Members

1. All non-paid positions will be nominated by the Nomination Committee and require a majority vote at a business meeting.
2. All paid position, excluding Pastoral Staff and Janitor, will be nominated by the Personnel Committee and require a majority vote at a business meeting.

## **Article VII**

### **Meetings**

#### Section 1: Worship Service:

1. Shall be conducted mornings and evenings of each Lord's Day and on special occasions as needed, these meetings are to be under the direction of the pastor, or when without a pastor under the direction of the deacon body.

#### Section 2: Business Meetings:

1. Business Meetings shall be held as often as decided by the church.
2. Only active members 13 and over will be allowed to vote in any business meeting. Please see Article III for more information on what an active member is.
3. Any decision at a business meeting, unless otherwise spelled out in the Constitution and By-Laws or Church Leadership and Organization Handbook, requires a simple majority vote for approval.
4. A quorum for any business meeting will consist of those present at the business meeting.
5. FSBC will use standard business meeting procedures and the New Testament as its guide on how to govern said business meetings.

## **Article VIII**

### **Property**

#### Section 1:

1. Should the congregation of the FSBC at any time in the future by a majority vote affiliate itself with any other group than the present group with which the church is affiliated, that is the Southern Baptist Convention, the property shall prior to such affiliation, be conveyed to such minority group, if any, as may dissent from such new affiliation in order that a Southern Baptist Church may be maintained on the property. The minority group will assume title to the property and will conduct on the property activities beneficial to and in furtherance of the interest of the Southern Baptist Convention and the FSBC of Casper, Wyoming.

#### Section 2:

1. Should there be no dissenters from the vote to affiliate with another group than the present group, that is, the Southern Baptist Convention, then the property which may then be in the possession of the FSBC, shall be forthwith conveyed to the Southern Baptist Convention for its use in furthering, maintaining, and preserving the Southern Baptist Denomination in the city of Casper, Wyoming.

#### Section 3:

1. Nothing herein contained shall limit the power of the trustees on a proper majority vote of the congregation in a regular business meeting to dispose of all or any part of the church property to any other denomination or any other person or corporation provided due and proper provisions have been made for alternative properties to carry on as adequately as the properties to be sold would permit the activities of the FSBC of Casper, Wyoming, to be carried on.

## **Article IX**

### **Amendments**

#### Section 1: Amendment Procedure:

1. This Constitution and By-Laws may be amended at any business meeting of FSBC, by a majority vote of the members of said church present and voting, provided, however, that prior notice that a proposal to amend the Constitution and By-Laws, specifying in what particulars the By-Laws are proposed to be amended, shall be given by announcement at one of the regular Sunday meetings of said church, except that Article VIII shall not be amendable.

2. FSBC shall elect a Constitution and By-Laws committee at any time it deems necessary to study the Constitution and By-Laws. There shall be a period of at least thirty days to study the proposed changes regarding any future amendments.