

# CONSTITUTION

## ARTICLE 1 NAME AND LOCATION

This body is a corporation under Charter by the State of Texas known as FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH OF HUMBLE, TEXAS (the "Church"), d/b/a Humble Area's First Baptist Church, located at 19901 Townsen Boulevard East, Humble, Texas 77338.

## ARTICLE 2 STATEMENT OF FAITH

2.1. First Baptist Church of Humble, Texas, a sovereign, organized body of born-again believers, subscribes to the authority of God, Creator of all things, who exists as the Father, Son and Holy Spirit, as revealed in the inspired, inerrant Word of God, the Holy Bible. Acknowledging the Lordship of Jesus Christ, and being united in what He taught, we covenant to do what He commanded by living in obedience to those doctrines and by reaching other souls with the good news of salvation as directed by the Holy Spirit.

2.2. We voluntarily band ourselves together in Jesus Christ and further subscribe to the doctrinal statement of *The Baptist Faith and Message* as adopted by the Southern Baptist Convention, June 14, 2000.

## ARTICLE 3 OBJECTIVES

The objectives of the Church are as follows:

1. To maintain the public worship of God and to strengthen the Christian influence in the community;
2. To promote the study and knowledge of God's Word and to equip believers in doctrines and principles that mold Christian living;
3. To experience an increasingly deeper relationship with God and a more meaningful fellowship with fellow believers;
4. To radiate Christ in daily living, to emphasize total commitment of life, personality and possessions to the Lordship of Christ, and to minister unselfishly by word and deed to the spiritual and physical needs of the community; and
5. To be a dynamic spiritual body empowered by the Holy Spirit to share Christ with as many people as possible in the Church, community and throughout the world.

## ARTICLE 4 GOVERNMENT

4.1. Organization. The Church is organized and shall be operated for the purpose of engaging in religious worship and promoting the spiritual development and well-being of

individuals. Its assets are pledged for use in performing its religious functions. On discontinuance of this organization by dissolution or otherwise, its assets shall be transferred to a religious organization that is described in Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986, as amended, and that has purposes similar to those of the Church.

4.2. **Policy.** The government of the Church is vested in its membership and retains unto itself the exclusive right of self-determination. Being an organized body of believers, equal in rank and privileges, democratic in spirit and principles of government, absolutely sovereign in authority in administering its affairs, and subject to the control of no other ecclesiastical body, the Church thereby acknowledges the headship of Jesus Christ and strives to establish and install persons, policies and programs in accordance with the will of God and the teaching of Scripture.

4.3. **Operation.** The operations of the Church shall function by and through the officers, committees and organizations which are duly and democratically elected or called to serve in areas of responsibility and authority as further specified in the Bylaws. The Bylaws shall identify the formation, function, operation and authority of the various officers, committees and organizations.

4.4. **Relationship.** The Church is an independent, autonomous self-governing body and voluntarily chooses to cooperate with and support the Union Baptist Association, Southern Baptists of Texas and the Southern Baptist Convention.

## **ARTICLE 5** **AMENDMENT**

5.1. This Constitution and/or the Bylaws may be amended solely by a two-thirds (2/3) affirmative vote of the members present and voting at a special business meeting called by the Constitution and Bylaws Committee, a special committee appointed by the Committee on Committees. At least three weeks prior to such meeting (the "Voting Meeting"), a copy of the proposed amendment shall be made available to the members of the Church through reasonable means. Following the giving of such notice of the proposed amendment to members and prior to the Voting Meeting, the proposed amendment shall be presented for discussion in at least two question-and-answer sessions. Only the precise form of the proposed amendment recommended by the Constitution and Bylaws Committee may be voted upon at the Voting Meeting.

5.2. Should any proposed amendment be voted down at the Voting Meeting, neither it nor the substance of its content shall be proposed for a minimum of six (6) months from the date of the vote.

5.3. Each adopted amendment shall be entered into this Constitution and Bylaws.

# BYLAWS

## ARTICLE 1 MEMBERSHIP

1.1. **General.** The membership reserves the exclusive right to determine who shall be members of Humble Area's First Baptist Church (the "Church").

1.2. **Reception into Membership.** Candidates for membership who have been counseled by the pastor or someone designated by him may be received by unanimous vote at any regular business meeting. Should there be a dissent as to any candidate, such dissent shall be referred to the pastor and the deacons for investigation and the making of a recommendation to the Church at the next regular business meeting. A two-thirds (2/3) affirmative vote of those Church members present and voting shall then be required to receive such candidate for membership.

Candidates for membership may be received by meeting one of the following conditions:

- a. By profession of faith in Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior and baptism by immersion;
- b. By promise of a church letter of recommendation from another duly recognized church of like faith and order which adheres to the fundamental doctrines as accepted by the Church;
- c. By statement of Christian faith and experience, including baptism by immersion in a church of like teaching;
- d. By statements of faith, of baptism by immersion and of church membership when for some unavoidable reason a church letter cannot be obtained;
- e. By profession of faith when baptism might prove physically harmful; or
- f. By restoration where evidence of repentance and reformation has been presented.

1.3. **Discipline.** It is the intent of the Church to take every reasonable measure to assist members who are struggling with temptation or sin in their lives. The pastor, ministerial staff, deacons and other church leaders are available for counsel, prayer and guidance. All members are expected to recognize their accountability to the Church. The Church shall have the right to discipline, reprove or withdraw fellowship if a member becomes a liability to the welfare of the Church.

- a. The intent of church discipline shall be for the preservation of church harmony and the repentance and restoration of the individual(s) involved. All proceedings shall be pervaded by a spirit of Christian kindness and forbearance.
- b. In all personal offenses the member(s) shall be guided in their conduct by the provisions of Matthew 18:15-17. In all public offenses the member(s) shall be counseled according to Galatians 6:1.

- c. While every member has the right to present disciplinary matters directly to the Church, one is urged in the interest of harmony to first bring the matter to the attention of the pastor and deacons for counsel and guidance.
- d. If it becomes necessary for the Church to take action to withdraw fellowship from a member(s), a two-thirds (2/3) vote of the members present and voting in a duly constituted business meeting is required. The member(s) involved shall have at least ten (10) days' prior notice of the proposed church action in writing and shall have an opportunity to be present and respond.

1.4. **Termination.** Termination of membership shall be made in any of the following ways:

- a. Death of the member;
- b. Request by the member for a transfer of letter to another Baptist church;
- c. Request by the member to be released from the obligations of membership;
- d. Upon request or uniting with a church of another denomination; or
- e. Withdrawing fellowship by action of the Church.

**ARTICLE 2**  
**CHURCH OFFICERS AND ORGANIZATION**

2.1. **General.** The officers of the Church shall consist of a pastor, deacons serving as members of the deacon body, the ministerial staff, a church clerk, a treasurer, trustees and a moderator.

- a. **Pastor.** The pastor of the Church shall be a man called of God to the preaching of the Word, ordained by a Baptist church, and responsible for leading the Church in functioning as a New Testament church.

(1) ***Responsibilities and Authority:***

- (a) The major responsibilities of the pastor shall be to lead in worship, proclamation, education, administration and pastoral ministry.
- (b) The pastor will be accountable to the Church through the deacon body. In a spirit of respect and love, the pastor and the deacon officers will meet regularly for mutual support, encouragement and counsel.
- (c) The pastor will be evaluated as a cooperative effort by the deacon chairman and the Personnel Committee chairman, with input from the Personnel Committee.
- (d) The pastor is the spiritual leader and primary administrative officer of the church pertaining to the spiritual ministry, programs, business and secular affairs of the Church consistent with policies, budgets and long-term plans approved by the Church.

- (e) The pastor is given the primary responsibility to make staffing selection and salary administration decisions necessary to realize the ministry priorities established by the Church under his leadership. Those decisions must be made in consultation with and with the approval of the Personnel Committee and must be consistent with the budget approved by the Church.
- (f) The pastor has the right to call upon and expect to receive the wisest counsel and sincere prayerful support from the Church staff, deacon body, organizational leaders, employees and general membership of the Church in formulating and carrying out the spiritual program of the Church.

(2) ***Selection:***

- (a) The pastor will be chosen and called by the Church whenever a vacancy occurs. The Church will be provided an opportunity to nominate candidates for service on the Pastor Search Committee. From these nominations, the deacon body, after soliciting the nonbinding counsel of senior ministerial staff, will recommend a slate of fifteen (15) candidates qualified to serve on a Pastor Search Committee. The Pastor Search Committee shall be composed of seven (7) regular members and three (3) alternates to be elected by the Church. The seven (7) candidates receiving the highest number of votes shall be regular members, and the three (3) candidates receiving the highest number of votes among the remaining candidates shall be alternates. Alternates may serve as regular members of the committee upon the affirmative vote of a majority of the elected regular members. The committee shall represent a reasonable cross-section of the church membership.
- (b) The Pastor Search Committee will seek a pastor, and their recommendation shall constitute a nomination. Only one nomination at a time may be brought to the Church for consideration.
- (c) Election shall be by secret ballot. A two-thirds (2/3) affirmative vote of the members present and voting shall be necessary for extending a call. Written and public notice shall be given to the resident membership at least one (1) week prior to meeting for election. The deacon chairman shall designate a committee to count and report the vote.

- (3) ***Service:*** The pastor shall serve indefinitely until the relationship is terminated by his request or the Church requests his resignation by a two-thirds (2/3) secret ballot affirmative vote of members present and voting in a duly constituted business meeting. Written and public notice shall be given to the resident church membership at least one (1) week prior to the meeting.

- b. **Deacons.** In accordance with the meaning of the word and the New Testament, deacons are to recognize their roles as ministering servants of the Church. They

are to be members of the Church whose character and qualifications shall be as specified in 1 Timothy 3:8-12 and Acts 6:1-6.

(1) **Responsibilities:** The deacon body shall serve under the leadership of the pastor and assist him in performing pastoral duties in order to free him for prayer and the ministry of the Word. The deacons will support and work with the pastor as follows:

- (a) To lead the Church in the achievement of its mission;
- (b) To minister the Gospel to believers and unbelievers;
- (c) To care for the Church's members and others in the community;
- (d) To be an example in stewardship by committing at least the tithe in support of the financial program of the Church;
- (e) To demonstrate Christian consecration, loyalty, prayer support and faithfulness to the total church program;
- (f) To visit the sick, needy and indifferent of the Church;
- (g) To encourage and strengthen new converts and the spiritually weak; and
- (h) To attend deacons' meetings regularly.

(2) **Relationships:**

- (a) To the membership at large: The deacons are to be active in ministry to the Church family, and promote peace, harmony and a spirit of cooperation and unity among the membership.
- (b) To committees: The deacons give counsel to, but do not have control of, all major committee actions. Out of courtesy, the committees report to the deacon body concerning actions or recommendations so that they may be informed.

(3) **Selection:** Deacons shall be elected by affirmative vote in a regular business meeting according to the policies established by the deacon body. The number of deacons shall be determined by the deacon body according to the needs of the Church. The following provisions shall serve as guidelines for nominations for election:

- (a) Each candidate must have been a member of the Church for a minimum of one year;
- (b) Any member who was previously an active deacon in the Church may be reinstated to active service by a two-thirds (2/3) vote of the deacon body and affirmative vote of the Church in a duly constituted business meeting.

- (4) **Service:** A deacon shall remain in active status indefinitely as long as he is regular in attendance at the deacons' meetings and participates in the ministries of the deacon body. If a deacon ceases to be actively involved in the ministry of the Church or absents himself from six (6) consecutive deacons' meetings without acceptable explanation, he will be declared inactive, and a replacement will be sought.
  - (5) **Deacon Emeritus:** When a deacon is unable to regularly participate in the meetings and activities of deacon service due to age or health restrictions, he may be classified as "Deacon Emeritus" without affecting his participation and voting privileges in deacons' meetings.
  - (6) **Meetings:** The meetings of the deacon body shall be restricted to active deacons of the Church, those classified as "Deacon Emeritus" and church staff, unless otherwise requested by the deacon body, and to other individuals specifically invited by the deacon body.
- c. **Ministerial Staff.** The ministerial staff consists of vocational personnel who function under the leadership of the pastor in a specific area of ministry. All ministerial staff positions will be approved by the Church as the need is determined.
- (1) **Responsibilities:** All ministerial staff shall be responsible to the pastor either directly or through one's immediate supervisor. They shall be expected to meet the Church's standards of employment and performance as outlined in the Personnel Policies of the Church and as interpreted by the pastor and the Personnel Committee. Job descriptions and duties shall be defined by the pastor and the Personnel Committee.
  - (2) **Selection and Service:** The pastor shall have the primary responsibility of selecting his staff. He will consult and obtain the approval of the Personnel Committee in the recruiting and calling of any ministerial staff member. The call to a ministerial staff member shall be extended by the Church. The ministerial staff member shall serve indefinitely until the relationship is terminated at the staff member's request or at the request of the pastor and Personnel Committee. Termination of ministerial staff, with the pastor taking the initiative, shall be only after full counseling between the staff member, Personnel Committee, deacon officers and the pastor. Dismissal of a ministerial staff member for any reason other than gross misconduct shall be preceded by a reasonable period of notice not to exceed three (3) months.
- d. **Church Clerk.** A church clerk shall be elected annually prior to the beginning of the church year.
- (1) **Selection and Service:** The Committee on Committees shall nominate the prospective clerk. Service shall be for a term of one year; however, the clerk may serve successive terms.
  - (2) **Responsibilities:** The clerk is responsible for establishing, processing and maintaining accurate records of all formal and official actions of the church, including the making of changes to these Bylaws in accordance with

Article 5. A church roll reflecting changes in membership will be maintained in the church office.

- e. **Treasurer.** A treasurer shall be elected annually by the Church prior to the beginning of the church year.
  - (1) ***Selection and Service:*** The nomination for treasurer shall come from the Committee on Committees. The treasurer may serve no more than three (3) consecutive terms.
  - (2) ***Responsibilities:*** The treasurer shall be responsible for the following:
    - (a) Reviewing and approving the accuracy of the monthly bank statements and financial reports to the Church; and
    - (b) Serving as a regular voting member of the Stewardship Committee.
- f. **Trustees.**
  - (1) ***Selection and Service:*** Three (3) trustees, one-third (1/3) of whom shall be elected annually, shall serve for three (3) years and may be reelected. When vacancies occur, the Church shall elect the number of members required from nominations supplied by the Committee on Committees.
  - (2) ***Responsibilities:***
    - (a) The trustees shall serve as legal representatives in all transactions related to the Church, real or personal, and are empowered to sign all legal instruments as directed by the Church.
    - (b) The trustees will have no power to buy, sell, mortgage, lease or transfer any property without specific vote of the Church authorizing such action.
    - (c) The trustees shall direct the maintenance of all legal documents in conjunction with the church clerk.
- g. **Moderator.** The pastor shall serve as moderator of all church meetings. He may also designate an alternate moderator as required. In the event the Church is without a pastor the chairman of deacons, or someone assigned by him, shall serve as moderator.

2.2. **Employees.** All employees, salaried or hourly, are expected to meet the Church's standards of employment and performance as outlined in the Personnel Policies of the Church and as interpreted by the pastor and the Personnel Committee.

- a. **Selection and Service.** All employment positions shall be authorized by the Church, and persons will be employed under the direction of the pastor and shall serve according to the Personnel Policies of the Church.
- b. **Responsibilities.** Job descriptions will be determined by the pastor in consultation with the Personnel Committee.

2.3. Organization. All organizations for teaching and training shall be maintained at the will of the Church. Primary leaders, such as teachers, directors and coordinators of various ministries, shall be church members.

### **ARTICLE 3 CHURCH MEETINGS**

3.1. Worship Service. The Church shall meet regularly for the worship of Almighty God. Prayer, praise, preaching, instruction and evangelism shall be among the ingredients of these services. These meetings will be open for all members of the Church and others who choose to attend. The pastor, or someone designated by him, shall give direction to these services.

3.2. Special Services. Revival services and other church meetings for the advancement of the objectives of the Church shall be placed on the church calendar.

3.3. Regular Business Meetings. The Church shall hold regular business meetings quarterly on a Wednesday or Sunday. Only items that have been recommended for a church vote by a committee, the deacon body, or the ministerial staff may be presented for action at a regular business meeting.

3.4. Special Business Meetings. The church may conduct called business meetings to consider matters of special nature and significance at any regular worship service. Announcement of such meeting shall be made at two (2) regular worship services preceding the special business meeting. The notice shall include the subject, date, time and place of the called meeting. No other business shall be transacted except that which is specified. Only items that have been recommended for a church vote by a committee, the deacon body, or the ministerial staff may be presented for action at a special business meeting.

3.5. Quorum. The quorum shall consist of those members in attendance and voting.

3.6. Parliamentary Rules. *Robert's Rules of Order: Revised* shall be used for the procedure of all business meetings of the Church. Notwithstanding the foregoing, the presentation of items for consideration may be made only in the manner specified in Article 3, Sections 3.3 and 3.4, of these Bylaws.

3.7. Fiscal Year. The fiscal year of the Church shall run concurrently with the calendar year, January 1-December 31.

### **ARTICLE 4 ORDINANCES**

4.1. Baptism. Anyone who personally receives Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord by faith and who professes Him publicly at any worship service shall be received for baptism.

- a. Baptism shall be by immersion in water.
- b. Baptism shall be administered during any Church-sponsored worship service by an ordained minister of the Church or by another minister approved by the pastor.

- c. Candidates for baptism shall be properly instructed as to the meaning, method and manner of baptism.

4.2. Lord's Supper. The Lord's Supper is a symbolic act of worship whereby Christians commemorate the sacrificial death of Jesus Christ and anticipate His second coming.

- a. The Lord's Supper shall be administered by an ordained minister of the Church and deacons in a worship service every quarter. The deacons shall be responsible for preparing the elements of the Lord's Supper.
- b. Any additional requests for conducting the Lord's Supper on behalf of the Church must be approved by the pastor.

## ARTICLE 5 CHURCH COMMITTEES AND TEAMS

5.1. General. Church committees are established and exist to support the mission, ministry and operation of the Church.

- a. Church committees are defined as those committees that are elected by the Church and which have a responsibility to the general work and welfare of the Church.
- b. Church committees shall be distinguished by title and designated as either a standing committee or a special committee. Standing committees function on a continuing basis. Special committees are formed to effect short-range goals, frequently existing less than one year. Committees can be created, changed or discontinued at any time as determined by the membership.
- c. All committee members shall be members of the Church, supporting the Church in every way, including through attending, giving and serving. Members who are asked to be considered for a position on a committee, and are interested, shall be informed as to the purpose, scope and activity of the committee, and of the personnel with whom they will interact. The prospective committee member should prayerfully examine his or her qualifications in conjunction with God's will for the position and, if nominated and elected, faithfully fulfill the commitment.
- d. Each committee shall be identified in the Church's Committee Manual by title and defined by purpose, organization and operation. The content of the manual may be changed as required provided approval is obtained from the membership voting in a business meeting, having said proposals of changes provided in writing to every member present and voting.
- e. The pastor is an *ex officio*, nonvoting member of all church committees and may designate staff representation to the various committees.
- f. Notwithstanding anything herein to the contrary, the chairman of deacons or his designee appointed from the deacon body is an *ex officio*, voting member of all committees.

5.2. Committee on Committees. The Committee on Committees, a standing committee, shall assist in the creation, coordination and support of the Church committees.

a. *Selection and Service:*

- (1) The Committee on Committees shall be composed of six (6) members, each elected to serve a term of three (3) years. Each calendar year two (2) members shall be elected to replace two (2) members who have completed their term.
- (2) Persons having served on the Committee on Committees for one (1) term, or for a part of a term greater than one (1) year, shall not be eligible for reelection for a period of one (1) term (three years).
- (3) Persons to serve on the Committee on Committees shall be nominated in the following manner: The Education Ministerial Staff and the deacon body each shall annually submit a slate of names of three persons to be considered for replacing the two members of the Committee on Committees whose terms will expire that year. The current members of the Committee on Committees will then select one person from each slate of names to serve on the Committee.
- (4) In the event of untimely vacancies that occur on the committee, the Committee on Committees shall fill the vacancies as they occur in accordance with the process specified in Article 5, paragraph 5.2a(3) of these Bylaws.
- (5) No staff member, employee of the Church, or family member of either shall serve as a voting member of the Committee on Committees.

b. *Responsibilities:*

- (1) To formulate, maintain and review annually the Committee Manual;
- (2) To present to the Church for approval any proposals concerning additions, deletions or changes in the Committee Manual;
- (3) To nominate persons to the various committees;
- (4) To present nominations to the membership in regular business meetings for election. Election shall be accomplished by a majority affirmative vote of the members present and voting;
- (5) To define the title, organization and operation of each committee;
- (6) To maintain a close supportive relationship with each committee to assure its effectiveness;
- (7) To continually monitor the needs and affairs of the Church for potential relevance to a committee.

c. *Organization:*

- (1) The Committee on Committees shall elect its own chairman annually from its two (2) senior members.
- (2) The Committee on Committees shall be responsible to coordinate with the pastor or staff member designated by him.
- (3) The Committee on Committees shall bring all nominations to the deacon body for counsel and review before presenting to the Church for election.

5.3. Personnel Committee. The Personnel Committee, a standing committee, shall serve the Church in developing and implementing a program of personnel administration and management as further specified in the Church's Committee Manual.

5.4. Stewardship Committee. The Stewardship Committee, a standing committee, shall serve the Church in developing and implementing a program for the financial management of the Church, as further specified in the Church's Committee Manual.

5.5. Ministry Teams. The Church may utilize ministry teams to assist in the ministries of the Church. All ministry teams must report to a ministerial staff member for oversight. Ministry team leaders must be members of the Church but need not be approved by the Committee on Committees or elected by the Church.