

# **BYLAWS OF FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH KOSCIUSKO, MISSISSIPPI**

Presented to the Church on the \_\_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_, 2021.

Approved by the Church on the \_\_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_, 2021.

**Committee Members:**

**RONNIE ABLES**

**ROB BURNHAM**

**TERRY COX**

**JUSTIN DEVELIN**

**BILL GRACE**

**JOHN SHAW**

**DR. JAMES WITHERS**

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**DR. GRAY WALLACE: CHAIRMAN OF DEACONS**

## INTRODUCTION

Members of First Baptist Church believe that the Bible is the final authority for matters of belief and conduct. The Baptist Faith and Message 2000 does not exhaust the extent of those beliefs. The Bible itself, as the inspired and infallible Word of God that speaks with final authority concerning truth, morality, and the proper conduct of mankind, is the sole and final source of all that we believe. For purposes of First Baptist Church Kosciusko (faith, doctrine, practice, policy, and discipline) the church, collectively, is the final interpretive authority on the Bible's meaning and application.

Concerning marriage, we believe that marriage is the union of one man and one woman in covenant commitment for a lifetime. It is God's unique gift to reveal the union between Christ and His church. This church believes that the gender of the man is the gender since birth and that the gender of the woman is the gender since birth. The Bible teaches that legitimate sexual relations are exercised solely within marriage. Hence, this church opposes all forms of sexual immorality including, but not limited to, adultery, homosexuality, and pornography.

Concerning the sanctity of human life, we believe that human beings are created in the image of God and that life, from the moment of conception until natural death, is sacred.

Concerning ordinances, First Baptist Church observes the ordinances of Baptism by immersion and the Lord's Supper.

## ARTICLE 1

### MEMBERSHIP

- I. **Qualifications and Admission of Members:** First Baptist Church of Kosciusko is a sovereign and democratic Baptist church under the Lordship of Jesus Christ. The membership retains unto itself the exclusive right of self-government in all phases of the spiritual and temporal life of the Church. The membership reserves the exclusive right to determine who shall be voting members of this Church and the conditions of membership.
  
- II. **Candidacy:** Candidates for membership shall consist of people who have professed faith in the Lord Jesus Christ and who have committed their lives to Him as Lord and Savior. Candidates must agree with the statement(s) of introduction at the beginning of this document. Candidates will be required to participate in the Church's new member discovery process as developed and implemented by the Church. Upon recommendation by the Pastoral staff, candidates will be presented to the Church for approval of membership in any of the following ways:

- A. By profession of faith in Jesus Christ followed by Scriptural baptism.
- B. By the promise of a letter of recommendation from another Baptist church of like doctrines and beliefs.
- C. Upon a statement of prior conversion experience and baptism in a Baptist church when no letter is obtainable.
- D. By statement of prior conversion experience and baptism from a church other than that of the Baptist denomination if it is determined that a previous baptism by immersion was undergone and administered in accordance with scripture.
- E. Upon recommendation by the pastoral staff on behalf of a person requesting membership in circumstances requiring special consideration, such as but not limited to a physical handicap, illness, or other special need.
- F. By Watch Care. Watch Care applies to those who want to actively participate in First Baptist Church but want to retain membership in their home church. While those under Watch Care will be encouraged to participate in the ministries of the Church, they will not be entitled to vote on matters concerning the Church or hold an elected position in the Church. Watch Care includes, but is not limited to, those individuals with a temporary job assignment or other similar circumstance.

**III. Termination of membership:** Membership, other than by death of a member, can be terminated in the following ways:

- A. Dismissal to another church. No letter will be granted to an individual.
- B. Erasure upon becoming affiliated with another faith or denomination.
- C. Exclusion by an action of this Church. Should a member become offensive to the Church and its good name because of unchristian conduct, the Church may terminate their membership by a three-fourths (3/4) majority vote of members present and voting. A two-week notice shall be provided to announce a hearing and only after faithful efforts have been made to bring the member to repentance according to Matthew 18: 15-17. Investigation of the alleged offense(s) shall be conducted by the pastor and the deacons.

**IV. Restoration of membership:** A person who has been dismissed from the Church may petition the Church for readmission. The Church, through its pastor and deacons, shall investigate the sincerity of the applicant for restoration and make a report to the Church within one month of petition. Upon favorable report by the investigating committee, the applicant will be restored by a three-fourths (3/4) favorable vote of the membership present at a regular or called meeting.

**ARTICLE 2**  
**GOVERNANCE**

- I. We believe that The Holy Spirit abides in every born-again believer in our congregation. We are all priests, and every member should be actively ministering in the area they have been called to serve. We are to be a kingdom of priests so that all the families of Kosciusko will be blessed through us. We are governed by the congregation as members of the body of Christ in the place God has placed us to serve. We insist that Christ, as the Head of the Body, is in charge of His Church and that the membership of our congregation is the final authority in all matters.
  
- II. The Pastor is the Overseer of the Church. His calling is different from anyone else in the Church. He is the shepherd, the overseer, the spiritual leader. The Pastor receives the Lord's vision for the Church. His main focus is teaching, training, equipping, and challenging members to fulfill that vision. The Bible indicates that the Pastor is to exercise strong leadership, not dictatorship (1 Peter 5:1-5). The Bible also indicates that pastors have heavy responsibilities, and Church members should respect their servant leader roles and relate to them in such a way that their work will be a joy and not a burden (Hebrews 13:17).
  
- III. The ministerial staff supports the pastor in accomplishing his vision and tasks. Their every effort should be focused on modeling ministry and training Church members for ministry.
  
- IV. The Deacons have been called to serve the congregation and to provide leadership and service as the lay leaders of the Church. The Bible sets high standards for Deacons (1 Timothy 3:8-13) however, Deacons are not to be viewed as a governing body but rather as servants. As servant leaders, the Deacons accept the responsibility to support the mission of the Church, to advise the congregation in practical matters of business, finance, and function, and to represent the Lord and the Church in the community they serve. Deacons lead in service both inside the walls of the Church when the congregation is gathered and outside the walls of the Church in service to our congregation and community.
  
- V. The church functions under a committee structure that allows for members to become involved in a committee or ministry that allows them to exercise their spiritual gifts and to grow in maturity as members of the Body of Christ. Each committee shall adhere to the purpose and duties set forth by its committee description approved by the Church.

- VI.** Deacons should be actively involved in serving on committees and should regularly report on committee activities to the Deacon Council. Otherwise, each committee should function independently of the Deacon Council as long as they function within their area of focus and budget. Should a committee need additional funds or desire to take a direction outside the purpose and duties approved by the church for that committee, it should present recommendations to the Deacons for approval before taking a matter to the Church for action. Deacons may approve a committee's plans or make suggestions regarding a committee's plans but may not amend the committee's proposal. However, a recommendation from a Deacon appointed ad-hoc committee may be revised as the Deacon Council determines necessary before presenting the matter to the Church for approval.
- VII.** Ministers and committees are organized into three categories: Ministry Committees, Standing Committees, and Ad Hoc Committees.
- A. Ministry Committees:** To provide consistent and ongoing service to a specific area of service (e.g. Broadcast Ministry, Sound, Security, etc.), members of the congregation may be elected to a permanent place of service. While the Committee on Committees will be responsible for filling open positions, once established, a member of a Ministry Committee will continue to serve on that committee until they resign from the committee or until a recommendation is received from the committee to the Committee on Committees that they be removed and/or replaced.
- B. Standing Committees:** The congregation is organized into committees responsible for specific areas of service (e.g. House and Grounds, Nominating, etc.). Each Church member who is willing to serve on a committee will be nominated by the Committee on Committees and approved by the Church to serve a 3-year term.
- C. Ad Hoc Committees:** From time to time, a committee can be organized to serve a specific function for a limited time. Other than a Pastor Search Committee, such committees will be appointed by the Deacon Chairman and approved by the Church. Once the specific function detailed by the Deacon Chairman is complete, the ad hoc committee will be disbanded.
- VIII. Committee on Committees:** The Committee on Committees is charged with the important responsibility of organizing Church members into places of service where each individual can exercise their spiritual gifts and contribute to the mission of the Church. The Committee on Committees will present Committee nominations to the Church annually for approval at a regular or special-called business meeting.
- IX.** Members of the Committee on Committees are nominated to serve a 3-year term by members of the Nominating Committee and approved by the Church in a regular business meeting or a special-called business meeting called for that purpose.

**X. Quorums and Voting:**

- A.** Quorums for Deacons and committees shall be a majority of the membership of the Deacon Council or the committee. Matters requiring a vote of the Church membership shall require a three-fourths (3/4) vote in favor of those present and voting after having received notice of the subject matter of the upcoming vote for two weeks prior to the vote.
- B.** Action Requiring Membership Vote: Employing of pastors and ministerial staff as defined in Article 3, Section I-A, amendments to the constitution and by-laws, approval of Church budget, termination and/or reinstatement of membership, purchase of real estate, borrowing of money, and such other matters that may be necessary. Employment of support staff as defined in Article 3, Section I-B will be by the senior pastor with the approval of the deacons.
- C.** In all matters where the membership votes, a three-fourths (3/4) majority vote is required. When voting by secret ballot, members will be allowed cast their vote in the Church office during normal business hours, if not voting otherwise.

**XI. Rules of Order:** Robert's Rules of Order is the authority for questions regarding any parliamentary procedure necessary for meetings to function properly and orderly.

**XII. Dissolution:** In the unforeseeable and unfortunate event that the Church body shall dissolve and no longer exist, all property, real and personal of the Church shall be transferred in accordance with the recommendation of the existing Deacon Council and the approval by a majority vote of the existing membership with the understanding that no property will be transferred to any organization that is not a 501(c)(3) organization as approved and designated by the United States Internal Revenue Service.

## **ARTICLE 3**

### **CHURCH PERSONNEL**

**I. Church Staff:**

- A.** The Ministerial Staff of this Church shall be as follows: Senior Pastor, Associate Pastor(s), Worship Pastor(s), Student Minister(s), Children's Minister. All those who serve as ministerial staff shall be members of this Church.
- B.** The Support Staff of this Church shall be as follows: Church/Pastor Ministry Assistant(s), Financial Ministry Assistant(s), Educational Ministry Assistant(s), Maintenance Supervisor, Housekeeper(s), and Church Hostess(s).
- C.** Staff positions may be created, changed, or revised/realigned by the Deacon Council and the Personnel Committee with approval by the Church.

**II. Employment Practices and Employee Guidelines:** Employment policies and employee guidelines are to be reviewed and/or revised annually by the Personnel Committee, approved by the Policy Committee, and presented to the Deacon Council for approval. The current revision of these guidelines shall be maintained on file in the Church office.

**III. Pastor Search Committee: Requirements.**

- A. Church members only—must be 25 years of age or older.
- B. The Committee to consist of seven voting members consisting of four men & three women (one male alternate and one female alternate).
- C. Elected from nominations and approved by the Church body.
- D. Committee service is for an indefinite period beginning on the date of Church approval until the selection process is secured and the pastor has been elected by the Church.
- E. Work on the Committee must be cordial and confidential.
- F. The new Pastor, once selected and called, will come under the guidelines of the Personnel Committee and the Pastor Search Committee will then dissolve.
- G. No two candidates for the Pastor Search Committee can come from the same immediate/extended family.

**IV. Selection of Pastor Search Committee:**

- A. Each Church member is responsible for talking to nominees in order to confirm the individual's willingness to serve. This will be confirmed by the Deacon Council prior to ballots being mailed. The goal of the Committee is to find God's leader for our Church; therefore, the Committee should be a cross-section of the Church. All nominations will be placed on a ballot to be voted on by the Church.
- B. The Pastor Search Committee will be made up of 7 members (4 men & 3 women) with the highest number of votes from the ballots. The male with the next highest vote count and female with the next highest vote count will be asked to serve as alternate members and will be non-voting members of the committee, attend all meetings, and be prepared to take over should any voting member be unable to continue their service on the Committee.
- C. A ballot will be mailed to each Church member. Parents are responsible for discussing with their children who are church members and deciding if the child member is mature enough to nominate/vote for the Pastor Search Committee.

**V. Qualifications and Employment of Senior Pastor:**

**A. The Senior Pastor:**

1. Shall have been ordained as a minister by a Southern Baptist Convention church.
2. Shall be a male and meet all Biblical qualifications for the office of pastor as set forth in I Timothy 3:1-7, and shall have personally determined that he has been called into the ministry by the prompting of the Holy Spirit.
3. Shall fully support the Articles of Faith of the Church and the Church Covenant as set forth in the Church Constitution and The Baptist Faith and Message 2000.
4. Should be a good steward of his income, recognizing the tithe to his local Church as a minimum of his giving.
5. If the Senior Pastor is married, his wife shall share in like manner in Christian consecration and Church loyalty.
6. Shall have at least a Master's Degree from an accredited seminary affiliated with the Southern Baptist Convention. The required Master's Degree shall include one or more of the following Master's Degree programs: a Master of Divinity, an Advanced Master of Divinity, a Master of Arts, and/or a Master of Theology. A Doctoral Degree from an accredited seminary affiliated with the Southern Baptist Convention is highly desired but not required.
7. Exceptions can be made based on experience and other qualifying factors.

**VI. Qualifications and Employment of Ministerial Staff Members:**

- A. All male Ministerial Staff Members shall have been ordained as a minister by a Southern Baptist Convention church.
- B. Shall meet all Biblical qualifications for the office of a minister as set forth in I Timothy 3:1-7 and shall have been called into the ministry by the prompting of the Holy Spirit.
- C. Shall fully support the Articles of Faith of the Church and the Church Covenant as expressed by the Church Constitution.
- D. Shall be a member of the Church so long as employed in this position.
- E. Shall be a good steward of their income, recognizing the tithe to their local church as a minimum of their giving.
- F. If the Ministerial Staff Member is married, their spouse shall share in like manner in Christian consecration and Church loyalty.
- G. Shall have at a minimum, a Bachelor's Degree from an accredited four (4) year institution of higher learning, and such other educational, training, and/or licensing requirements as may be deemed necessary or advisable for the particular Ministerial Staff position. A Master's Degree from an accredited Southern Baptist Seminary is desired.
- H. Exceptions can be made based on experience and other qualifying factors.

- VII. Staff Termination:** The Church may terminate the Pastor for good cause shown by a three-fourths (3/4) vote of the membership in a regular membership meeting. Other ministerial and support staff terminations will follow the procedure as stated in the current policy and procedure guidelines maintained by the Policy Committee.

## **ARTICLE 4**

### **DEACONS**

Three passages in the New Testament are commonly cited concerning the office of Deacons: Acts 6:1-7, Philippians 1:1, and 1 Timothy 3: 8-12. A Deacon's major attention will be given to serving God under the leadership of the Pastor and Deacon Officers in the practical ministry of the Church. This will be achieved in the following ways: (1) helping lead the Church in the achievement of its mission, (2) proclaiming the Gospel to believers and unbelievers, and (3) serving the Lord by caring for Church membership and other people of the community.

#### **I. Election of Deacons:**

- A.** A master list of all eligible men who have agreed to serve if elected will be maintained in the Church office. Anyone who previously requested that his name be removed from the master list will remain off the list. Anyone who has previously removed their name from the master list must call the Church office to request that his name be put back on the master list. The date that members are contacted regarding their willingness to serve will be recorded on the master list.
- B.** The process of the Church Body voting on the number of available positions on the Deacon Council will begin in June. The Deacon Officers will review the master list as described above and contact new eligible candidates. This list will be maintained in the Church office under the direction of the Church Pastor's Ministry Assistant. Eligible candidates include male church members who meet the following criteria:
- (1) must be 25 years of age or older.
  - (2) have been members of this Church for at least one year prior.
  - (3) are regularly engaged in the life and fellowship of the Church.
  - (4) who meet the Scriptural requirements of Deacon as found in 1 Timothy 3: 9-13 and Acts 6:3.
  - (5) Men elected to the Deacon Council are obligated to attend a minimum of 75% of the 12 monthly meetings in a calendar year.

Should a Deacon fail to do so, the Deacon Council will review and may remove him from the Council. No candidate will be listed who was not previously contacted and agreed to serve if elected.

- C. On the last Sunday in June of each year, a Deacon nomination form will be distributed to the Church body. This form will consist of the following:

- (1) qualifications of a Deacon.
- (2) list of Deacons currently serving on the Deacon Council.
- (3) list of eligible candidates.
- (4) space for nominating the number of available positions on Deacon Council.

Nomination forms will be collected after the worship service or received in the Church office through the next week and the first Sunday in July morning worship service. Deacon Council members will remain after morning worship to tally votes.

- D. On the second Sunday in July, candidates receiving the most nominations will be announced during the morning worship service. Their names will appear in the Church bulletin and on the Church website. This list will consist of twice as many names as the number of Deacons to be elected.
- E. On the fourth Sunday in July, the Church body will vote on the number of available positions on the Deacon Council. If a Church member is unable to attend on that Sunday, votes may be cast Monday through Friday of the prior week in the Church office during normal business hours. Deacon Council members will remain after the morning service to tally votes.
- F. In the event of any un-ordained man being elected Deacon, an Examination Council will be held at the earliest possible time set by the Pastor. This examination will be held at least one week prior to the Ordination Service.
- G. The Deacon election process will conclude with the new Deacons being announced in the Church's next printed material and on the Church website.

## **II. Deacon Officer Nomination/Election Process:**

- A. The election of Deacon Officers will be preceded by a formal nomination process. Nominations for the offices of Vice-Chairman/Chairman-Elect, Second Vice-Chairman, and Secretary can be made by any man serving as a member of the Deacon Council. Those men nominated to serve in any of the afore named positions will be given an opportunity to prayerfully consider their call to service as a Deacon officer prior to their name being placed on the ballot.
- B. The nomination process will be administered by a committee appointed by the current or presiding Chairman. The committee will consist of no more than five men who will be chosen from among those serving either on the Deacon Council or the Deacon Body.
- C. A plan of automatic succession will apply to the office of Vice-Chairman/Chairman-Elect, meaning that the Vice-Chairman/Chairman-Elect will assume the office of Chairman at the expiration of the current Chairman's one-year term. During the annual Deacon Officer Nomination process, the pool of those Deacons eligible for nomination to the office of Vice Chairman/Chairman-Elect will be restricted to those Deacons who have at least two years of active service remaining in their three-year term.

- D. The suggested calendar for the Deacon Officer nomination and election process is as follows:
1. **August Meeting:** A secret ballot nomination process for the offices of Vice-Chairman/Chairman-Elect, Second Vice-Chairman, and Secretary will be completed. The ballots will be tallied by the Nominating Committee as noted in Section B above. Those nominated for each office must be contacted for consent prior to their name being listed on the official officer election ballot.
  2. **September Meeting:** That class of Deacons beginning their three-year term of service in October will be asked to attend the meeting and participate in the election. A ballot listing each Deacon Officer position, along with the names of those nominated and who consented to serve in each position if elected, will be included in the meeting packet. Prior to the secret ballot vote, the current or presiding Chairman will inquire if there are any nominations from the floor. Any individual nominated from the floor must have consented, prior to the meeting, to allow their nomination and willingness to serve in order for their name to be added to the ballot. A secret ballot election will then be held with the ballots tallied by the Chairman's selected designee(s). Prior to the end of the meeting, the names of those elected for each office will be announced. The newly elected officers will assume their duties beginning October 1<sup>st</sup>.

### III. Ordination of Deacons:

- A. Upon election as a Deacon as set forth in **Article 4 Section I.F**, any man who has not been previously ordained by a Southern Baptist Convention-affiliated church shall be subject to confirmation by an Ordination Council. Under the direction of the Deacon Chairman, the Deacon Council shall be responsible for establishing and maintaining the procedures for review, examination, and ordination of candidates and shall make revisions to those procedures as the Deacon Council deems necessary from time to time, with such procedures fully documented in the Deacon Handbook. At a minimum, the procedures established by the Deacon Council shall include the following:
1. The Chairman of the Deacons shall convene an Ordination Council consisting of ordained Deacons and ministers from any Southern Baptist Convention church. The Chairman of the Deacons or his designee shall serve as Chairman of the Ordination Council.
  2. After examining the candidate, the Chairman of the Ordination Council, with the advice and consent of the Ordination Council, shall prepare and deliver a written report to the Deacon Council concerning the acceptability of the candidate.
  3. The Ordination Council shall determine whether to recommend to the Church that the candidate be ordained, and if so, an ordination service shall be placed on the Church calendar and carried out.
  4. The Chairman of the Deacons shall read into the minutes at the next regular Church business meeting the names of the men ordained as Deacons at the Ordination Service.

**IV. Categories of Deacons:**

- A. Deacon Body:** This group of Deacons will consist of ordained men of the Church who are not serving on the Deacon Council or who are not included in the group of Emeritus Deacons. They will work together with the Pastor, Church Staff, and Deacon Council to advance the people of God and to grow the assembly of believers. This group will meet quarterly with the Pastor and a Deacon Council officer in order to remain informed of the ongoing spiritual ministry of the Church.
- B. Deacon Council:** This group of Deacons will consist of 21 men and shall remain at this number until such time as the Church determines there is reason for change. They will serve on the Council under a rotating system. One third (1/3) of the Deacon Council will be elected every year and shall serve for three (3) years before rotating off. One year must elapse before a Deacon is eligible for reelection. The Deacon Council will serve as the functional organized body of Deacons elected and set aside by First Baptist Church, Kosciusko. They will meet monthly with the Pastor and Church Ministerial Staff in order to facilitate the various activities/ministries of the Church.
- C. Emeritus:** This group of Deacons is comprised of those male members of First Baptist Church of Kosciusko, who have been ordained as a Deacon. This honorary position may be bestowed by the Deacon Council for the following reasons:
  - 1. Health and/or age will not permit the individual to serve the church.
  - 2. Circumstances and other reasons that might arise.

Ordained men who fall into this group are automatically invited to all fellowships, training sessions, and other special events afforded Deacons of the Church.

**ARTICLE 5**

**ORDINATION OF MINISTERS**

- I. Ordination of Ministers:** A candidate will be considered for ordination into the Gospel ministry upon written request made to the Church by a Christian church or other Christian ministry and when the candidate is serving or has been called to serve in a bona fide occupational ministry position by a church or Christian ministry. Under the direction of the Deacon Chairman, the Deacon Council shall be responsible for establishing and maintaining detailed procedures for review, examination, and ordination of candidates and shall make revisions to those procedures as the Deacon Council determines necessary from time to time.

- A.** At a minimum, the procedures established by the Deacon Council shall include:
- 1.** Upon receipt of a request for ordination, an application package shall be delivered to the candidate for completion and submission to the Chairman of the Deacons or his designee.
  - 2.** The candidate's completed application package shall be reviewed by the Senior Pastor, the Chairman of Deacons, and the Chairman-Elect of the Deacons to determine the acceptability of the application package.
  - 3.** Provided that the candidate's application is found to be acceptable and is approved following review, the Chairman of Deacons shall convene an Ordination Council consisting of ordained Deacons and Ministers from any Southern Baptist Convention affiliated church. The Chairman of the Deacons or his designee shall serve as Chairman of the Ordination Council. The Council shall examine the candidate relative to his conversion experience, his knowledge of Scripture, his support of the Baptist Faith and Message 2000 and other aspects of Southern Baptist doctrine, his call to the Ministry, and other matters as appropriate.
  - 4.** After examining the candidate, the Chairman of the Ordination Council, with advice and consent of the Ordination Council, shall prepare and deliver a written report to the Deacon Council concerning the acceptability of the candidate.
- B.** The Deacon Council shall determine whether to recommend to the Church that the candidate be ordained, and if so, an ordination service shall be scheduled and duly conducted.

## **ARTICLE 6**

### **COMMITTEES**

- I.** See list of committees adopted by the Deacon Council on the 10th day of September 2020 or as periodically amended thereafter with current listing maintained in the church office.
- II.** The Church Body operates under the Lordship of Jesus Christ to exercise the gifts invested in each believer to spread the Gospel to the world. While the Church's scriptural offices are Pastors and Deacons, every member is gifted for service. In order to accomplish the work of the Church toward its mission of reaching the world for Christ, members are organized into committees. Work through committees gives each member of the Church Body a place to use their gifts in service to the Lord and to mature in their faith by serving alongside other believers.
- III.** As set forth in **Article 2 Section VII**, committees will be designated as Ministry Committees, Standing Committees, or Ad Hoc Committees depending on the mission assigned to each committee. Committees deemed necessary by the Church shall be established with the number of members the Church feels necessary to accomplish the mission of each Committee. Each committee will have a clear scope of expectations along with a detailed budget approved by the Church.

- IV. A Ministerial Staff member shall be assigned to each committee and shall act as an ex officio, non-voting member of the committee to which they have been assigned. The Pastor and the Chairman of Deacons shall also serve as ex officio, non-voting members of each committee, and attend committee meetings when and if they individually deem necessary.
- V. Each committee shall maintain detailed minutes and attendance records for each meeting. Within thirty days, those minutes shall be filed in the Church office with the Administrative Assistant. Minutes shall be maintained on file for not less than 2 years.
- VI. Standing committee members shall serve on a three-year rotation system with one-third (1/3) of the committee rotating off and with new members elected to fill those positions each year. After serving a term of three years or more than one year of an unexpired term, no committee member shall be eligible to serve on the same committee until the lapse of at least one year.
- VII. The Policy Committee is responsible for maintaining the policies and procedures under which each committee will operate. The Policy Committee shall be reviewed and adjusted by working with each committee at least annually. Should the Policy Committee agree that changes are advisable, the Policy Committee shall present to the Deacon Council their recommendations under which each committee will operate.

## ARTICLE 7

### POLICY AND PROCEDURES

- I. **Policies and Procedures:** All policies and procedures, including but not limited to, the use of Church facilities, child protection policies (as revised 12/14/18) shall be reviewed periodically by their respective committee, and if amended, must be presented for approval by the Policy Committee and the Deacon Council.

## ARTICLE 8

### CHURCH OFFICERS

- I. **Church Officers:**
  - A. **Moderator:** The Moderator presides over Church business meetings. He guides each meeting to ensure that proper decorum is maintained. Unless otherwise specified by the Church, the man currently serving as Chairman of Deacons will act as Moderator.

- B. **Church Clerk:** The Church Clerk keeps records of Church business meetings. The Church Clerk should read the minutes from previous meetings in order that they might be approved by the Church. The Church Clerk maintains any records or correspondence deemed necessary by the Church Body. This position shall be filled by the Nominating Committee with church approval.
- C. **Treasurer:** The Church Treasurer handles the funds of the Church Body, keeps records of all funds received and dispersed, and gives a report thereof as directed by the Church Body. Assistant Treasurer(s) may be elected to assist the Treasurer as needed. This position shall be filled by the Nominating Committee with Church approval.

## ARTICLE 9

### INDEMNIFICATION AND IMMUNITY

#### I. **Indemnification:**

- A. **Mandatory Indemnification:** If a legal claim or criminal allegation is made against a person because he or she is or was an officer, employee, or agent of the Church, the Church shall provide indemnification against liability and costs incurred in defending against such claim if the Deacon Council determines that the individual acted: a) in good faith, b) with the care an ordinarily prudent person in a similar position would exercise under similar circumstances, and c) in a manner the person reasonably believed to be in the best interest of the Church, and the person had no reasonable cause to believe his or her conduct was unlawful.
- B. **Permissive Indemnification:** At the discretion of the Deacon Council, the Church may also indemnify the individual who has acted in good faith and the Church has reason to believe that his or her conduct was in the Church's best interest and not unlawful. The Deacon Council shall be the sole judge and authority insofar as indemnification in any form is concerned. In the event where indemnification is to be made for a Deacon, the requisite determination may be made by the membership or by special legal counsel appointed by the membership.

## ARTICLE 10

### CHURCH OFFICES AND REGISTERED AGENT

- I. Church offices are located at 310 East Washington Street in Kosciusko, Mississippi.
- II. The Registered Agent is nominated and selected by the Church Officers and shall serve until replaced by a unanimous vote of the Church Officers.

## ARTICLE 11

### CHURCH FACILITIES AND SECURITY

- I. **Church Facilities:** See current policies for use of Church property and Child Protection Policy maintained in the Church office.
- II. **Church Security:** The Church shall maintain security teams made up of appropriately trained and certified personnel. The security teams shall be supervised by the four security team leaders and one member appointed by the Deacon Council.

## ARTICLE 12

### CHURCH MEETINGS

- I. **Regular Business Meetings** are held monthly in accordance with a schedule determined by the Pastor or the Church Moderator. Regular business meetings will be moderated by the Church Moderator, the Pastor, or a person designated by either the Church Moderator or the Pastor. Any matters of business to be brought to the Church for consideration or vote must be published at least one (1) week prior to a regular business meeting in Church publications including print publications, the Church website, and projection screens. Items not published at least one (1) week prior to a regular business meeting may be brought up during the regular business meeting for discussion only. The members present and voting may not vote on that item but may vote to have the item placed on the agenda for a future meeting after proper notice is given to the Church. As addressed in **Article 12 Section II** below, items of a significant nature requiring a Church vote during a special-called business meeting will be presented and discussed at a regular business meeting but not voted on at that meeting. Action on an item of a significant nature must be taken to the Church for a vote during a special-called business meeting.

- II. **Special-Called Business Meetings:** A special-called business meeting may be called by the Senior Pastor, the Chairman of Deacons, or upon written request of a majority of the then-serving Deacon Council members as necessary to address items of a significant nature (e.g., approval of budgets, hiring of Pastor or Ministerial Staff, amendments to bylaws, etc.). Notice of a matter of significant nature to be considered at a special-called business meeting must have been made prior to a regular business meeting as described in **Article 12 Section I** above. A motion and second to take action on the item of significant nature will be made at a regular business meeting and discussion will take place without voting on the matter. The matter will then be presented to the Church in a special-called business meeting when the Church is gathered at the next Sunday worship service. Only matters described in the notice of the special-called business meeting and previously discussed at a regular business meeting will be voted on at a special-called business meeting.
  
- III. Only members who meet the requirements of **Article I** of these bylaws may participate in the voting process at any regular or special-called business meeting.

## ARTICLE 13

### CHURCH FINANCES

- I. **Fiscal Year:** The Church fiscal year shall run concurrently with the calendar year.
  
- II. **Budget:** The Stewardship Committee shall prepare a budget based upon recommendations received from each committee. The budget will be prepared by the Stewardship Committee, approved by the Deacon Council, and presented to the Church for a vote. Committees must operate within the budget approved by the Church.
  - A. Church committees will present budget requests annually by the end of August or 1<sup>st</sup> week of September.
  - B. The Stewardship Committee will compile the full Church budget during the month of October.
  - C. The November newsletter to the Church family will explain the budget process with details concerning the dates of distribution, discussion, and vote.
  - D. A proposed budget will be submitted to the Deacon Council a minimum of one week prior to their November regular meeting with discussion and vote to be taken at the meeting.
  - E. The proposed Church budget will be distributed/made available for two Sundays and two Wednesdays in November.

- F. A discussion of the proposed Church budget will be held at a special-called business meeting.
  - 1. The Stewardship Committee will present the full budget to the Church.
  - 2. The Deacon Chairman will moderate this special-called meeting.
  - 3. Church staff and their families will be dismissed during discussion.

G. The Church vote will be taken without discussion on the first Sunday morning in December.

- III. **Signing of Checks:** Checks will be prepared by the Financial Ministry Assistant, recorded in the financial/accounting system utilized, and signed by either the Church Treasurer or an Assistant Church Treasurer. Any check issued for an amount of \$5,000 or greater will require two authorized signatures. At the time of signature for any check issued for an amount of \$5,000 or greater, an invoice or other supporting documentation for the expenditure must be provided to the authorized signers for review. Other supporting documentation may include approval for payment as authorized by the Church or Deacon Council and documented in applicable minutes, for recurring or on-going payments provided for and approved in the Church budget (e.g., payments to the Attala Baptist Association, payments to the Mississippi or Southern Baptist Convention Board for mission(s), charitable organizations such as Helping Hands Ministry, or others as may be approved), or documentation of expense for an emergency and/or non-budgeted purchase that, at a minimum, would indicate the vendor's name and address, date of purchase or order, billed/purchase amount, and purpose or description of the expenditure.

#### **ARTICLE 14**

#### **BY-LAWS**

**Review of By-Laws:** The by-laws shall be reviewed not less than annually by the Deacon Council or by a committee appointed by the Chairman of Deacons. Any recommended changes to the by-laws should follow the approval process as outlined in **Article 15**.

#### **ARTICLE 15**

#### **AMENDMENTS**

Amendments to these by-laws may be made at any regular or special-called business meeting of the members of the Church, provided the proposed amendment shall have been presented in writing at the previous regular or special-called business meeting called for that purpose, and a copy of the proposed amendment shall have been made available to each Church member. Amendments to the by-laws shall be by the affirmative vote of three-fourths (3/4) of the members present and voting.