

By-laws of First Baptist Church Edna, Texas

Approved December 8, 2013

Approved April 18, 2021

Approved May 23, 2021

Article I: Membership

Admission

Admission to membership in this body shall be upon majority vote of the members present and voting in any regularly scheduled meeting based upon the satisfaction of one of the following criteria:

1. Upon profession of faith in the Lord Jesus Christ as Savior and baptism by immersion in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit.
2. Upon transfer of letter from some other Baptist church of like faith and order.
3. Upon restoration to membership if, for various reasons, the name of an individual has been dropped from our roll.
4. By personal statement of a Baptist having been baptized by immersion into the fellowship of a Baptist church and whose church connection of church letter has been lost.
5. By personal statement of an individual that they are already a Christian and was immersed by a church of like faith and order as set forth in item 1 above.
6. Individuals may be received under the watch-care of the church for the purpose of worshipping regularly with our fellowship with no privilege of voting, teaching, holding administrative office or committee position (designed primarily for non-Baptist).

Termination

Names of members may be removed from the roll in any of the following ways:

1. Upon due request from another Baptist church of like faith and order, the church may grant letters at its discretion.
2. The name of a member will be removed upon the member's death.
3. The name of a member who united with a church of another denomination may be removed from the roll by erasure when this church is notified by the member or by the church with which the member has united.
4. A member may be dismissed from membership as a method of church discipline provided a three-fourths (3/4) majority of the members present and voting at a regularly scheduled business meeting of the church favor withdrawal of fellowship.

Article II: Meetings

The church shall hold regular meetings for the purpose of worship, prayer, training and fellowship on Sunday mornings, Sunday evenings and Wednesday evenings. Other meetings of the church as a whole shall be set according to the needs of the church.

A church conference shall be held on the third Sunday evening in each month (unless otherwise scheduled) at which time written reports will be received from the church clerk, the Finance Committee, and from such other standing committees or ministry teams as the church may require from time to time. When a report is made by a special committee appointed for a specific or limited purpose, prior notice of intent to present the report will be given the membership by means of announcement in the church's regular publication. Any other business of the church may be considered at these monthly conferences without advance notice except as otherwise specified in the constitution or elsewhere in the by-laws.

By-laws of First Baptist Church Edna, Texas

A special church conference may be called by the Pastor, the Chairman of Deacons or by majority vote of the members present and voting at a regularly scheduled worship meeting provided that written notice shall be given in the church's regular publication at least one week in advance of the special session, stating the purpose of said meeting. A special church conference may also be called during any regular Sunday or Wednesday meeting by the joint consent of the Pastor and the Chairman of Deacons with the unanimous consent of the members present and voting.

All church conferences shall be conducted in accordance with the standard parliamentary procedures as described in "Robert's Rules of Order".

In the event of an emergency (fire, storm, natural disaster, etc.), the Pastor and/or the Chairman of Deacons is authorized to make decisions about the use of the church's property and/or resources to meet the particular emergency.

Article III: Officers and Trustees

Administrative Officers.

The Pastor, the Church Moderator, the Church Clerk, and the Church Secretary/Treasurer shall constitute the Administrative Officers of the church. The Pastor shall hold the position of Church Moderator if he so desires.

Moderator.

A Church Moderator (if the Pastor chooses not to in his capacity) shall be elected annually by the church to serve for a period of one (1) year, the term to begin on January 1, following the election. In the event the Moderator is absent from any regular or special church conference, the Chairman of the Deacons shall preside, or the members present and voting shall elect a temporary moderator to preside over that particular conference. The Moderator shall preside over the regular and special church conference described in these by-laws and the constitution.

Church Clerk.

The Church Clerk shall be elected annually by the church to serve for a period of one (1) year, the term to begin on January 1, following the election. This individual shall be responsible for recording and reporting the minutes of any regular or special church conference. Additionally, this position shall record, report and recommend the granting of church letters for members transferring membership to another Baptist church.

Church Secretary/Treasurer.

The Church Secretary / Treasurer (may be a single position) shall be elected annually by the church to serve for a period of one (1) year, the term to begin on January 1, following the election. This individual shall be responsible for maintenance of the church's financial records including both receipts and disbursements, preparation of authorized disbursements either for general budget expenditures or special funds expenditures, recording of membership and special gifts to the church and preparation of financial reports. Additionally, this position may be a paid position inside the administration of the church. The Church Secretary/Treasurer will always be a member of the Finance Committee.

Trustees.

There shall be three (3) individuals serving as Church Trustees at all times. Trustees shall be elected for life terms and shall be individuals of impeccable reputation and service in the Church. A trustee shall be a member of First Baptist Church for a period of at least five (5) years before they may be elected to the position. An individual shall be elected as Trustee upon at least a three-fourths (3/4) majority vote in a regular or special church conference. A Trustee may be removed from office upon the request of the individual serving as Trustee by a simple majority vote in a regular or special church conference, otherwise any other removal shall require a three-fourth (3/4) majority vote.

Trustees are authorized to execute any contract for the benefit of the church, for acquisition or disposal of personal property, services, real estate, buildings or intangible property. No contract shall be binding on the church without prior church approval in a regular or special church conference for the acquisition or disposal of real property including building. The signature of all three Trustees will be required on any contract to legally bind the church in said contract.

Article IV: Deacons

Election

The church shall elect from its membership the number deacons that the church deems necessary to fill its needs. Deacons will be elected by the church in regular conference upon recommendation of the Deacon Body.

Within the Deacon Body policy there should exist a requirement that a nominee for original Deacon Ordination should be a member of First Baptist Church Edna for a period of at least three (3) years. Additionally, there should exist a requirement that any Deacon who has moved into membership from another Baptist fellowship should be a member of First Baptist Church Edna for a period of at least six (6) months before being admitted into the Deacon Body.

The Deacon Body shall elect its own officers including, but not limited to, a Chairman, a Vice-Chairman, and a Secretary.

Duties

In accordance with the meaning of the word “deacon” and the example of the New Testament churches, deacons are to be leader-servants of the church. The following principles of service (based on Acts 6) define the purpose for deacons:

1. To assist the ministerial staff with the secondary responsibilities in order that they may spend more time in prayer and the ministry of the Word. (For example, the visitation ministry, aid church committees in administrative matters, ministry to the sick and needy, etc.)
2. To assist in resolving problems which arise within the employees and the membership of the entire fellowship and work toward unity. Also, if the need arises, the Deacon Body shall elect a “Unity Panel” of five (5) deacons to help solve any problems that might occur.
3. To give attention to the needs of the membership, especially to widows.
4. To be supportive of the God-called leadership.
5. To be examples within the fellowship of wisdom, spirituality, faithfulness and good character.

Article V: Standing Committees and Ministry Teams

Members of any standing committee shall be elected by the church in a regular church conference. A member of the church staff shall serve as advisor for each standing committee. Church members are eligible to serve on more than one committee simultaneously.

Standing Committees

Committee on Committees (Ministry Enlistment Team)

The committee on committees (also known as the Ministry Enlistment Team) shall be elected by the church in regular conference. This committee shall bring recommendations to the church for Sunday School teachers, for members of all standing committees and ministry teams by use of general membership surveys and follow-up to determine those church member's interest and willingness to serve on a particular committee(s).

Budget Committee

Members of this committee are:

Chairman, Current year Deacon Chairman,
Members; Chairman of the Building & Grounds Committee, Chairman of the Personnel
Committee, Chairman of the Mission Committee, Chairman of the Baptist Men's Ministry and
Chairman of the Women's Ministry Committee.

This committee shall study expenditures and needs, estimate giving potential of the church, prepare an achievable budget for the coming year and present it to the church for adoption.

Building Committee

This committee shall be responsible for maintaining the church's physical property through oversight and management of the physical plant needs. This shall include all real property, buildings, furniture and equipment.

Finance Committee and Sub-Committees

1. **Tellers Sub-Committee** – The Finance Committee chairman shall recommend to the Committee on Committees those persons who should serve as Tellers. Tellers are responsible for collecting, counting and depositing funds received from tithes, offerings and special offerings. Because this is a sensitive position which should be occupied by persons with high moral character and ability to maintain confidential information regarding amounts of gifts and names of those making gifts, the Finance Committee chairman will use great discretion and care in selecting members of the Teller Committee.
2. **Signatures Sub-Committee** – The Finance Committee chairman shall recommend to the Committee on Committees those persons who should serve on the Signatures Committee. This committee shall be comprised of at least four (4) members, any one of which may sign checks prepared by the Church Treasurer representing church expenditures. Members of this committee shall be persons with business experience who have a good understanding of current church business and who are able to understand the reason for and the need to make a particular expenditure for the church.

3. **Finance Committee** shall review financial expenditures each month, evaluate requests for special offerings by the church organizations and keep church membership informed regarding the income received and expenditures made by the church through formal reports presented to the church conference. Reports shall include information about regular and special offerings received, budget and special fund expenditures and month-end fund balances for general and special funds. The Church Secretary/Treasurer shall be a member of this committee and prepare such reports as necessary to accomplish the committee's responsibilities.

Bus and Van Committee

Members of this committee have specific knowledge concerning the maintenance of the church bus and vans. They will be responsible for performing general maintenance such as oil changes, tire rotation, washing and waxing of the vehicles. Furthermore, they will arrange for qualified mechanics to accomplish certain tasks such as replacing tires, wheel alignment, tune-ups and any other specific maintenance that they themselves cannot perform.

Insurance Committee

This committee shall be comprised of individuals with business experience who possess appropriate knowledge about the insurance requirements of the church and understanding of the appropriate insurance products to meet the needs of the church in the most efficient manner possible.

This committee shall:

- Study insurance requirements for the church's property including buildings, rolling stock, furniture, equipment, liability, and other needs,
- Secure premium quotes for such coverage as they deem necessary,
- Present coverage and quotes to the budget committee for consideration.

Nursery Committee

The Nursery Committee is responsible:

- a. for supervising the employed personnel of the nursery and the volunteers,
- b. for providing adequate equipment and materials for use by the nursery department,
- c. for seeing that nursery department classrooms are kept clean, disinfected, and linens laundered,
- d. for listening to and working out problems arising in the nursery program,
- e. for recommending to the Personnel Committee the hiring or releasing of workers, and
- f. for encouraging and showing appreciation of the nursery staff.

Kitchen Committee

This committee shall have the following responsibilities:

- a. Set up policies for the operation of the kitchen, amend or add rules that are not working.
- b. Recommend to Building & Grounds Committee any large purchases of equipment needed or repairs that need to be done.
- c. Assist with church-wide dinners, to wit: arrive early, cut cakes, place cake on plates, purchase bread for luncheons, put food on the serving tables, keep flow of people going, put ice in cups and pour tea, wash and clean the kitchen afterwards. The custodian will make the tea for dinners.
- d. Oversee any loan of any kitchen equipment.

By-laws of First Baptist Church Edna, Texas

- e. Work with the custodian in charge of ordering all paper supplies, all items pertaining to the kitchen.
- f. Once or twice a year, clean cabinets, check all utensils and equipment.

Personnel Committee

The Personnel Committee shall be comprised of seven (7) to nine (9) church members. This committee shall be responsible for all matters related to personnel including employment, salaries, benefits, job descriptions, and personnel performance. Any controversial personnel issues or disputes concerning doctrine or performance shall be referred to the Pastor and the Deacon body for resolution.

Other Standing Committees

Other standing committees may be elected to fill specific needs and shall operate under the same general provisions as described in this article for the committees specifically named. Such committees may be added, continued or discontinued as the church sees fit. Each committee should prepare a statement of purpose and determine the number of members needed.

Ministry Teams

Members of the Church are considered ministers since everyone “born of the Spirit” has been given specific gift(s) to proclaim the message of the Gospel. Unlike committees where specific Church administration is needed, Ministry Teams are organized to provide specific forms of “ministry”. Anyone may at any-time become a member of a Ministry Team. Members are “called by God” into service of each Ministry Team function.

Each Ministry team is named to be self-evident of its particular function.

Ministry Teams may be added, continued or discontinued as the church sees fit. Each Ministry Team should prepare a statement of ministry needs and determine the number of members needed.

Article VI: Pastor Supply/Search Committees

Pulpit Supply Committee

Selection

In the event that the office of Pastor shall become vacant, the Personnel Committee will assume the responsibilities of a Pulpit Supply Committee and fulfill the following duties:

Duties

The Pulpit Supply Committee shall be responsible for securing an appropriate speaker for each worship service until more permanent arrangements are made.

Pulpit Supply Committee shall, if appropriate and desired by the church, recommend to the church for its consideration, a person to serve as Interim pastor until such time as a pastor is called.

Pastor Search Committee

Selection

By-laws of First Baptist Church Edna, Texas

The Pastor Search Committee shall consist of a membership of nine (9) active members (five men and four women) who will be available to attend meetings.

The committee members will be selected under the supervision of the Personnel Committee as follows:

1. Every church member shall have the opportunity to submit a single, written and signed list of nominations of not more than five (5) persons for election to the Pastor Search committee.
2. The Personnel Committee, from these nominations, shall prepare a ballot of thirty (30) nominees, observing the following criteria:
 - a. Give primary consideration to the number of nominations each person received.
 - b. No two (2) members of the same family or related family within the third degree by consanguinity or within the second degree by affinity shall be elected to the committee. The man or women receiving the lesser number of votes shall be dropped and the next highest man or woman shall be elected.
 - c. No church staff member shall be placed on the ballot.
 - d. All nominees must be active members of the First Baptist Church of Edna, at least Twenty-One (21) years of age, and must, in advance, consent to serve if elected.
3. The ballot of thirty (30) nominees will be published in the regular church publication and the election will be held at the Sunday morning service(s) on the Sunday after the publication date.
4. Each Church member will have the opportunity to cast a written ballot for nine (9) nominees (for five (5) men and four (4) women). All ballots must be signed.
5. The nine (9) nominees receiving the highest number of votes shall constitute the Pastor Search Committee.

Duties

The Pastor Search Committee, under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, shall have the duty of seeking-out and after prayerful consideration, recommending to the church a person to be called to serve as Pastor. In the process of fulfilling this responsibility, the Pastor Search Committee will work closely with the Personnel Committee and such other committees as may be necessary.

After its election, the Pastor Search Committee will meet, select its own chairman and organize itself to fulfill its duties. This committee shall make periodic reports on its progress to the church in conference.

The work of the Pastor Search Committee is complete when a Pastor has been called, has accepted and has arrived on the field. This committee shall then be automatically dissolved.

Article VII: Amendments

These by-laws may be amended by the following procedure:

Any proposed amendment shall be offered in writing at the regular church conference.

The proposed amendment, together with the designated time for its consideration, shall be published in two (2) consecutive issues of the church's official weekly (or bi-weekly) publication thirty (30) days prior to the meeting in which a vote is taken.

By-laws of First Baptist Church Edna, Texas

The proposed amendment shall be approved by three-fourths (3/4) of the membership present and voting at each of the two (2) consecutive regular business meetings of the church after proper offering and notification described above.

Article VIII: Statement of Belief Regarding Marriage and Sexuality

We believe that the term 'marriage' has only one meaning and that is marriage sanctioned by God which joins one man and one woman in a single, exclusive union, as delineated in Scripture. (Genesis 2:18-25; Matthew 19:5)

We believe that God intends sexual intimacy to only occur between a man and a woman who are married to each other. We believe that God has commanded that no intimate sexual activity be engaged in outside of marriage between a man and a woman. (Genesis 1:28; Exodus 20:14; I Corinthians 7:1-5)

We believe that any form of sexual immorality, such as adultery, fornication, homosexuality, bisexual conduct, bestiality, incest, pornography or any attempt to change one's sex, or disagreement with one's biological sex, is sinful and offensive to God. (Leviticus 18; Romans 12:1-2; 1 Corinthians 6:9-10, 19-20)

We believe that in order to preserve the function and integrity of the church as the local Body of Christ, and to provide a Biblical role model to the church members and the community, it is imperative that all persons employed by the church in any capacity, or who serve as volunteers, should abide by and agree to this Statement of Belief on Marriage and Sexuality and conduct themselves accordingly. (1 Corinthians 6:12-20)

We believe that God offers redemption and restoration to all who confess and forsake their sin, seeking His mercy and forgiveness through Jesus Christ. (Romans 19:9-10, 13; Acts 4:12)

We believe that every person must be afforded compassion, love, kindness, respect and dignity. Hateful and harassing behavior or attitudes directed toward any individual are to be repudiated and are not in accord with Scripture nor the doctrines of the church. (Romans 12:16-18)

Article IX: Youth Ministry (Deep Roots) Guidelines

All guidelines for managing the youth ministry (Deep Roots) are outlined in the Youth Ministry Handbook. Amendments to the Youth Ministry Handbook can only be made by unanimous vote and approval by the youth committee of First Baptist Church-Edna. Copies of this handbook can be obtained through the church office upon request.

Revision and Update History

2021-04-18 On January 17, 2021, recommendation from Youth Committee to add Article IX: Youth Ministry (Deep Roots) Guidelines. On March 21, 2021, recommendation to modify wording in handbook and first vote.

2021-05-23 On February 21, 2021, recommendation by Allen Taylor to amend Personnel Committee description under Article V. On April 18, 2021, recommendation by Deacon Body and Personnel Committee of new amendment to the Personnel Committee description under Article V. Second vote on May 23, 2021.