

Constitution and Bylaws of
First Baptist Church
Owasso

***November
2017***

PREAMBLE

Purpose Statement - First Baptist Church of Owasso exists to love all people to Christ and equip them on their journey with God and one another.

ARTICLE I - NAME

This church, its subsidiaries and all campuses, shall be known legally as First Baptist Church of Owasso, Inc. Other designations include and hereinafter are referred to as: First Baptist Church Owasso, First Baptist Owasso, or FBCO.

ARTICLE II - DOCTRINE

The people of First Baptist Owasso affirm and support the 2000 Baptist Faith & Message.

ARTICLE III - ORDINANCES

Baptism and the Lord's Supper are the two ordinances of First Baptist Owasso.

- We call them ordinances because they are the two ceremonies that Jesus ordained and commanded His church to perform.
- We call them ordinances, not sacraments, because these acts do not have the power to save anyone. They are memorials that symbolize our salvation.

SECTION 1 - LORD'S SUPPER

The Lord's Supper symbolizes what happened to Jesus when he went to the cross.

It is called the Lord's Supper because it was Jesus' special supper with His disciples. It is an expression of communion which is an act showing "oneness" and "fellowship" with God. Our church believes the Lord's Supper is a symbolic act of obedience whereby members of the church, through partaking of the bread and the fruit of the vine, memorialize the death of the Redeemer and anticipate His second coming.

Because there is no scriptural mandate on the number of times a church should participate in the Lord's Supper, our church will take the Lord's Supper together at least six times per year. When we come to the Lord's Table, we will practice open communion inviting all believers to partake of the Lord's Supper.

SECTION 2 - BAPTISM

1. Baptism, by immersion, is an act of obedience to the command of Christ, fulfilled by individuals who have submitted themselves to His sovereignty.
2. Baptism symbolizes the spiritual cleansing through divine forgiveness and the newness of life experienced by believers by virtue of their identification with Christ in His death and resurrection.
3. Baptism provides an opportunity for believers to make a formal profession of their faith before the church.

4. Not as an act that causes salvation, but as a biblical rite of initiation into the body of Christ, scriptural baptism of believers is a prerequisite for joining the membership of the church.

ARTICLE IV - MEMBERSHIP

SECTION 1 - HOW TO JOIN

- Profession of Faith & Scripturally Baptized by Immersion - Any individual who has publicly professed faith in Jesus Christ alone for the forgiveness of sin and is scripturally baptized by immersion.
- By letter from another Southern Baptist Church.
- By statement of faith, having publicly professed faith in Jesus Christ alone for the forgiveness of sin and been scripturally baptized by immersion.
- It is required that each new member complete a membership class that provides instruction on the covenant, purpose, philosophy and ministry of the church.

All members should express a desire to actively participate in worship, service and support of the mission and ministries of First Baptist Owasso.

SECTION 2 - HOW TO SEPARATE

Membership may be removed:

- On behalf of a member by request from the member or from another church of like faith.
- By death of the member.
- By church discipline as defined by Scripture.
- If a church member has no record of attendance or giving within five years, the member will be removed from the church roles and required to go through the membership process of First Baptist Owasso to reinstate active membership in the church body.

Matters of church discipline shall be directed by the leadership of the church based on biblical principles (as spelled out in Matthew 18, Titus 3, and 1 Corinthians 5 to name a few.) with the full intention of completely restoring the member to fellowship.

Member Discipline:

It shall be the practice of this church to extend every reasonable measure of grace and restoration to any member who has made a decision to live a life characterized by unrepentant sin. Members of the Church Council will make a good faith effort to consistently communicate with the member engaged in unrepentant sin throughout this process. The Church Council and lay leadership are available for biblical guidance and direction for the congregation. The attitude of our staff and membership will be guided by a concern for redemption and restoration rather than punishment.

Should a situation arise which is causing a liability to the general welfare of the church family, The Church Council, ministry team leaders, deacons and the church body will take every reasonable measure to resolve the problem according to biblical principles.

If it becomes necessary for the leadership to take action to exclude a member, the Church Council can discuss the matter during their regularly scheduled meetings or can call for a special meeting to discuss the action steps to be taken. If additional meetings are necessary, the Church Council will decide on both the appropriate venue for the meeting and the appropriate participants to be included.

A vote of at least (2/3) of the Church Council will be required to terminate church membership. The member will no longer be in good standing at First Baptist Owasso. This communication and these proceedings will be conducted with a spirit of Christian kindness and will continue towards the goal of restoration and forgiveness.

Member Restoration:

Any person previously excluded may be restored to church membership after meeting with the Church Council and completing the membership process of First Baptist Owasso.

ARTICLE V - CHURCH LEADERSHIP

Church leaders are to demonstrate a high level of spiritual maturity, discernment, humility and the qualities of the fruit of the Spirit necessary for sound leadership. In addition to personal spiritual responsibility, it is expected that every leader has a strong familiarity with and:

- Is a member of the church as defined by Article IV of the Constitution and Bylaws of First Baptist Owasso.
- Agrees with Article II of the Constitution and Bylaws of First Baptist Owasso.
- Supports the ministry of First Baptist Owasso in both participation and regular financial contributions through tithes and offerings.
- Affirms the purpose of our church and works to accomplish it.

SECTION 1 - SENIOR PASTOR

The Senior Pastor is responsible for leading the church to function as a New Testament church. He shall lead the membership, ministry organizations, church staff and employees to perform their tasks and may delegate such responsibilities, as he deems appropriate for effective organization and efficient operation. He or an individual selected by the Church Council shall be the moderator of church business meetings in keeping with the order authorized by these bylaws. As such, he works with the Pastoral Leadership and Ministry Leadership Teams in the performance of their tasks to:

1. Promote the values of evangelism, worship, discipleship, biblical community and Christian service;
2. Proclaim the Gospel;
3. Care for the church members and those in our community.

SECTION 1.1 - SENIOR PASTOR SELECTION

A Senior Pastor shall be chosen and called by the church whenever a vacancy occurs. The vote to extend a call shall take place at a meeting called for that purpose. Notice of at least fourteen (14) days shall be given, through public announcement, of such meeting.

A Pastor Search Team shall be elected by the church to seek out a suitable pastor. Selection of a Pastor Search Team shall be in accordance with written procedures established by the Nominating Team and Church Council.

Once selected, the Pastor Search Team will exercise all diligence in its task. The chairman will report the team's progress to the congregation no less than once a month.

The recommendation of the Pastor Search Team will constitute a nomination. The team shall bring only one name at a time to the church for consideration. Election procedures shall follow Article VI. The Senior Pastor, once elected, shall serve until the relationship is terminated by his or the church's request.

SECTION 1.2 - SENIOR PASTOR SEPARATION

The Senior Pastor may relinquish the office of Senior Pastor by presenting a letter of resignation, giving at least two (2) weeks' notice to the church.

The church may declare the Office of Senior Pastor vacant. Such action may only take place at a meeting called for that purpose after at least fourteen (14) days public notice to the congregation. The notice must include as a minimum, the time, place and purpose of the meeting. The meeting may be called upon the recommendation of a two-thirds majority of the Personnel Team, two-thirds majority of the Church Council and a two-thirds majority of active and inactive deacons, or by written petition signed by not less than seventy-five percent (75%) of the church members. The moderator for such a meeting shall be selected by the Church Council and shall be someone other than the Senior Pastor. The vote to declare the office vacant shall be by ballot as outlined in Article VI; an affirmative vote of two-thirds of the members present is necessary to declare the office vacant.

SECTION 2 - PASTORAL LEADERSHIP TEAM

The Pastoral Leadership Team, in consultation with the Senior Pastor, provides overall leadership and direction to the church staff and employees. All members of the Pastoral Leadership Team are accountable to the Senior Pastor.

The Pastoral Leadership Team consists of the assigned leaders of each of the ministry teams within the staff and is assigned leadership responsibilities by the Senior Pastor.

The Pastoral Leadership Team is responsible for the daily operation and implementation of the vision, mission, and goal of the church along-side the Senior Pastor.

SECTION 2.1 - PASTORAL LEADERSHIP TEAM SELECTION PROCESS!

Selection of the Pastoral Leadership Team follows a selection/election process. Qualified candidates are selected by the Church Council then presented to the Personnel Team. The Personnel Team then recommends the candidate to the Ministry Specific Leaders and Deacons, then brought before the church to be considered for election according to the process outlined in Article VI.

1. Church Council
2. Personnel Team
3. Ministry Specific Leaders
4. Deacons
5. Church

SECTION 2.2 - PASTORAL LEADERSHIP TEAM ROLES!

- Senior Pastor - Directional Leader and Teaching Pastor
- Executive Pastor - Operations, Support Staff, Campus Development
- Groups Pastor - Small Group Discipleship and Age Level Ministries.
- Missions Pastor - Local to Global Outreach

SECTION 3 - STAFF

SECTION 3.1 - MINISTRY STAFF

The church shall employ other staff to serve as ministers over specific areas in the church. Ministry Staff must be approved by the church through the Church Council, Personnel Team and presented before the church for final approval. Ministry Staff must give evidence of spiritual maturity in their service and devotional lives.

SECTION 3.2 - MINISTRY SUPPORT STAFF

The church shall employ other Ministry Support Staff to equip the church for ministry. All Ministry Support Staff will be recommended by the Church Council, and approved by the Personnel Team. Men and women serving in a ministry specific position must give evidence of spiritual maturity in their service and devotional lives.

The church shall employ other Support Staff to assist in the execution and implementation of ministry. Individuals serving as Support Staff must conduct themselves according to Employee Conduct Guidelines located in the current Personnel Handbook.

The Personnel Team will determine titles to be used (e.g., minister, coordinator, director, associate, assistant, intern, etc.) and establish the qualifications and responsibilities for each position.

SECTION 3.3 - EMPLOYMENT AND SEPARATION OF STAFF

Terms and conditions of employment and separation are defined in the Personnel Handbook.

SECTION 4 - CHURCH COUNCIL

Members of the Church Council are men called to serve among and provide spiritual protection for the church body and are accountable to Christ and the church membership. They provide overall leadership to the church through prayer and commitment to the Word of God and are to set the example for all church members by their obedience to the mission of Christ and His church. It is expected that members of the Church Council are to demonstrate a high degree of spiritual maturity and leadership ability. They are elected by the church to carry out responsibilities of leadership and direction in their specific ministry areas.

The Church Council consists of thirteen (13) members; the Senior Pastor with the Pastoral Leadership Team, three (3) At-Large Members, the chairman of Deacons, and the chairmen of the Ministry Leadership Teams:

- Personnel Team
- Finance Team
- Nominating Team
- Mission Team
- Campus Development Team

At-Large Members are chosen based on a process of selection and election. The Pastoral Leadership Team with the Chairmen of the Deacons, Personnel, Finance, Nominating, Missions, and the Campus Development Team will nominate At-Large Members to be presented to the church for election. Once selected At-Large Members serve a three (3) year term according to Nominating Team guidelines as defined in Article V, Section 5.1.

The Senior Pastor shall serve as chairman of the Church Council. The vice chairman of the Church Council shall be selected by majority vote of the Church Council and will serve as chairman in the absence of the Senior Pastor.

The Church Council will:

- Be the ultimate authority for our church in matters of biblical interpretation and disputes arising from these interpretations.
- Faithfully lead their respective ministry teams.
- Meet quarterly, or as needed, to evaluate the mission and ministry of the church.

SECTION 5 - MINISTRY LEADERSHIP TEAMS

The Ministry Leadership Teams shall consist of the Personnel, Finance, Nominating, Missions Team, and the Campus Development Team.

Other teams operating outside the work of the Ministry Leadership Team will be assigned as needed by the Church Council.

Members of Ministry Leadership Teams will serve on one (1) Ministry Leadership Team at a time in a three-year term on a rotating basis. Exceptions to this can be made when needed by majority vote within the Church Council.

The Nominating Team will solicit nominations for the Ministry Leadership Teams from the church body after consultation with the Senior Pastor and Church Council. The approved nominees will be brought to the church for election at a specified church meeting.

Chairman vacancies shall be filled by the Nominating Team in cooperation with the Church Council and shall be elected by the church. All Ministry Leadership Team chairmen shall be subject to qualifications established by these bylaws for members of the Church Council.

One member of the Pastoral Leadership Team shall be an ex-officio member of each of the Ministry Leadership Teams, shall have the right to vote, and shall serve as a liaison to each Ministry Leadership Team in order to ensure congruency between ministry objectives.

The Nominating Team can fill, by majority vote, any non-staff member Ministry Leadership Team or at-large Church Council member vacancy during a regularly scheduled meeting of the Nominating Team.

SECTION 5.1 - NOMINATING TEAM

The Nominating Team is responsible for establishing and maintaining ministry team rosters for all approved teams. Each team member must be approved by the church. Minutes of all ministry team meetings shall be recorded and a copy from each meeting shall be sent to the Church Office for permanent filing. An appointed member of the Pastoral Leadership Team shall be assigned to each approved ministry team.

Special ministry teams may be created as needed by the Church Council and the Nominating Team.

Each ministry team shall have a designated number of members elected for three- year terms. Individuals recruited to fill a vacated term may complete that term and be selected to serve a subsequent three-year term.

Members completing a full term must take a one (1) year break before becoming eligible to serve another term on the same team. Team members may serve on a maximum of one ministry team position at a time.

The Church Council may, under unusual or extreme circumstances, extend the term for any individual or team. Request for extension must include the reason for extension and may not exceed one year.

Vacancies shall be filled by the Nominating Team with the Church Council.

All ministry teams shall meet at least quarterly. Special meetings of established Ministry Teams may be called by the Pastor, Chairman or Vice-Chairman of the Team, in the absence of the chairman.

Newly approved ministry teams shall be formed by nominating one-third (1/3) of the designated number of members for a one (1) year term, one-third (1/3) for a two (2) year term, and one-third (1/3) for a three (3) year term.

SECTION 6 – DEACONS

In accordance with the meaning and practice of the New Testament church, deacons are to be men who display spiritual maturity, godly humility and servant leadership within the church. Deacons are members of the church responsible for supporting the pastoral staff in the ministry of the word, caring for the needs of the church and community, and promoting the unity of the church. The duties of deacons include, but are not limited to, administering aid to help the poor and needy in times of crisis and distress, assisting in the care and encouragement of widows and the bereaved, helping with the hospitality ministries and membership processes of the church, aiding the staff in hospital ministry and assisting in administering the ordinances of the Lord's Supper and Baptism. Each year the Deacon Body shall nominate, in consultation with the Church Council, the Chairman and Officers who will then be elected by the Deacons. Active Deacons are selected according to the process outlined in the current Deacon Handbook.

SECTION 7 – TRUSTEES

The trustees are to be the legal representatives of the corporation to enact actions approved by the church. There shall be a total of three (3) trustees.!

Trustees shall be selected as needed from the Church Council and include at least one staff member.

SECTION 8 - MEETINGS

SECTION 8.1 - CHURCH COUNCIL MEETINGS

The Church Council shall meet no less than one time per quarter.
Additional meetings may be called by the Senior Pastor or his designee.

SECTION 8.2 - BUSINESS MEETINGS

Business Meetings shall occur no less than four times per year or as called by the Church Council, Senior Pastor or his designee. Business Meetings require two weeks notification using any current method of church wide communication.

A

quorum consists of those members who attend the business meeting, provided it is a stated meeting or one that has been properly called.

SECTION 8.3 - MINISTRY TEAM MEETINGS

Ministry Team Meetings shall occur no less than four times per year.

Additional meetings may be called by the Ministry Team Leader or his designee.

ARTICLE VI – VOTING

SECTION 1 - WHO VOTES

Members of First Baptist Owasso age 13 and above with recorded attendance or giving within six months of the called vote are eligible to vote.

SECTION 2 - HOW DO WE VOTE

SECTION 2.1 – STANDARDS

- Simple Majority - defined as 50% plus 1.
- Two-Thirds Majority - defined as two-thirds of the total number of votes received.
- Matters requiring a simple or two-thirds majority are defined in Article VI, Section 3.

SECTION 2.2 – PRACTICES

- Public Affirmation - Matters that require a simple majority may be passed through a public affirmation of a simple majority of attending eligible voters. A public affirmation may be requested in a variety of forms, including but not limited to: a show of hands, verbal agreement, signed individual ballot or other, similar, corporate and public expression of acceptance.
- Signed or Signed for Ballot - Matters that require a two-thirds majority, or as designated by the Church Council, require a signed or signed for ballot. The vote cast on a signed or signed for ballot may be public or private. Membership is verified when the member prints and signs their name to receive a ballot.
 - Public - Members must submit their vote on a ballot containing their printed and signed name during the time allotted for voting.
 - Private - After membership is verified the member receives a ballot and submits their vote during the time allotted for voting. The disposition of their vote remains private.

SECTION 3 - ON WHAT DO WE VOTE

SECTION 3.1 - MATTERS REQUIRING A TWO-THIRDS VOTE

- Ordained, Pastoral Staff
- Church Council
- Annual Budget & Amendments
- Acquisition or Disposition of Real Estate
- Debt that encumbers existing and/or future assets
- Amendment of Bylaws
- Other matters as determined by the Church Council

SECTION 3.2 - MATTERS REQUIRING A SIMPLE MAJORITY

- Ministry Leadership Teams
- Other matters as determined by the Church Council

SECTION 4 - WHEN DO WE VOTE

For matters requiring a two-thirds majority vote a two-week notice to members must be give.

For matters requiring a simple majority vote a one-week notice to members must be given.

Notice of an upcoming vote may be delivered to members using any current method of church wide communication.

ARTICLE VII - MARRIAGE AND SEXUALITY

We believe 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.

We believe 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 a marriage between a man and a woman.

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. But with that in mind, we believe that God offers redemption and restoration to all who confess and forsake their sin, seeking His mercy and forgiveness through Jesus Christ.

We believe 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.

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 on Marriage and Sexuality and conduct themselves accordingly.

ARTICLE VIII - MISCELLANEOUS

SECTION 1 - INDEMNIFICATION

The Church shall indemnify any present or former employee, trustee, officer or member of the Church Council against liabilities, judgments and all expenses incurred by reason of and arising out of his or her service to the Church, except as to matters in which he or she shall be adjudged to be liable for negligence or misconduct in the performance of his or her duties to the Church. This right of indemnification shall not be exclusive of any other right of such person, including but not limited to rights provided by Resolution of the Church and by the provision of Title 18, Section 1031 of the Oklahoma Statutes.

SECTION 2 - NO PRIVATE INUREMENT

The Church is organized as a nonprofit corporation and is to be operated exclusively for one or more of the purposes specified in Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code, or the corresponding sections of any future federal tax code, and in the promotion of purposes stated in the Certificate of Incorporation of the Church. The net earnings of the Church shall be devoted exclusively to such charitable purposes and shall not inure to the benefit of any private individual. No member or person from whom the Church may receive any property or funds shall receive or shall be entitled to receive any pecuniary profit from the operation thereof.

SECTION 3 - PERMISSIBLE ACTIVITIES

Notwithstanding any other provision of the Certificate of Incorporation of the Church or these Bylaws, the Church shall not engage in any activities that are not permitted by a nonprofit corporation exempt from federal corporate tax under Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code or by a nonprofit corporation's contributions to which are tax deductible under 170(c)(2) of the Internal Revenue Code.

SECTION 4 - SEVERABILITY

The invalidity of any provision of these Bylaws shall not affect the other provisions hereof, and in such event, these Bylaws shall be construed in all respects as if such invalid provisions were omitted.

ARTICLE IX - RATIFICATION, REVIEW & AMENDMENTS

These bylaws shall be approved by members of First Baptist Owasso on November 19, 2017 and enacted January 1, 2018. They shall be reviewed every three (3) years beginning 2021.

Amendments may be presented by the Church Council during any called business meeting and are approved in a process defined by Article VI.