

FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH
ASHBURN, GEORGIA

BY-LAWS

Article 1 - Membership

Section 1: Qualifications

The membership of this church shall consist of such persons as confess Jesus Christ to be their Savior and Lord, and who (1) upon their profession of faith are baptized, or (2) come from other Southern Baptist churches with a letter of recommendation, or (3) upon examination give testimony of their Christian experience and Scriptural Baptism (See Constitution, Article 15). All persons coming shall be immediately received under the Watchcare of our church.

Section 2: Duties

Members are encouraged, first of all, to be faithful in all the duties essential to the Christian life; and also to attend the service of this church, to give regularly for its support and its causes, and to share in its organized work.

Section 3: Rights

Only those who hold membership in this church shall hold office or vote on any matter brought before this church.

Section 4: Termination

1. Letters of dismissal to members in good standing shall be issued by the church on request of another church of like faith and order. Such letter shall be issued by the church to the requesting church, and not to the individual member.
2. If a member should request to be released from his covenant obligations to this church after it shall have patiently and kindly endeavored to secure his continuance in its fellowship, such requests may be granted and his membership terminated.
3. The membership roll of the church shall be kept in the church office with the clerk having a duplicate copy. An accurate list of these shall be maintained with the addresses of each when known.
4. If a member unites with a church of a different faith and order, their membership in our church will be terminated.

Article 2 - Church Officers

The officers of the church shall consist of moderator, vice-moderator, deacons, clerk, assistant clerk, treasurer, assistant treasurer, trustees, and such officers as shall be required from time to time. All officers of the church shall be elected by the church and shall be required from time to time. All officers of the church shall be elected by the church and shall report regularly to the church. All organizations of the church shall be under church control.

Pastor

The pastor shall be an ordained Southern missionary Baptist minister of the gospel. He is to be chosen and called by the church whenever a vacancy occurs. His election shall take place at a meeting called for that purpose, of which at least one week's notice shall be given. A pulpit committee shall be elected by the church to seek out a suitable pastor, and their recommendation will constitute a nomination, although any member has the privilege of making other nominations. Only one man should be brought to the consideration of the church at a time

and that one voted on. Election shall be by written ballot. An affirmative vote of three-fourths of those voting is necessary for a call. The pastor, thus elected, shall serve for an indefinite term of office until the relationship is terminated by either party. If at any time he shall wish to withdraw from the pastorate, he shall give a written notice of the same to the church one month previous thereto. If the church shall find it necessary to dismiss her pastor, it shall be done by a majority vote, such note to be made by written ballot. In this event, the church shall grant the pastor thirty days salary and the use of the parsonage for that length of time. In either case, it shall be the duty of the opposite party to yield. The pastor shall preside at all worship services. These provisions shall be called to the attention of the pastor-elect and his consent thereto secured before he shall enter upon his duties. In the event of the church's being without a pastor, the services of an interim pastor shall be secured. The church shall grant the pastor a minimum of two weeks of vacation annually, with the church paying the supply teacher. Provision of the call (vacation, time off for revivals, conference, conventions, etc., and responsibilities) shall constitute a part of the nomination by the Pulpit Committee.

Staff

The ministerial staff of like faith shall be called and employed as the church determines the need for such offices. A job description shall be written when the need for a staff member is determined. Those staff members of whom the church required evidence of a personal call of God to minister shall be recommended to the church by a committee elected for such purpose and called by church action by written ballot with a minimum of three-fourths (3/4's) affirmative vote. At the time of registration at least two week's notice shall be given to the church. The church may vote to vacate such position, such termination being immediate and the compensation conditions being the same as for the pastor, except that the amount shall relate to the individual's compensation.

Non-ministerial staff members shall be employed as the church determines the need for their services. The church personnel committee shall have the responsibility to recommend to the church to employ and to terminate services of non-ministerial staff members. Such employment and termination of services shall be with recommendation of the supervising staff member and, as appropriate, with the consultation of related committees of the church.

Deacons

Section 1: Number

The number of active deacons shall be a maximum of fifteen. Each year one-third shall rotate off with their replacements and any others as needed elected by the church. After serving a three-year term, a deacon shall be ineligible for reelection until the lapse of one year. A quorum required for any action of the deacons shall be a simple majority.

Section 2: Duties

In accordance with the meaning of the word and the practice of the New Testament, deacons are to be servants of the church.

1. They are to be zealous to guard the unity of the spirit within the church in the bonds of peace.
2. They shall serve as council of advice and conference with the pastor in all matters pertaining to the welfare and work of the church. With the pastor, they are to consider and formulate plans for the constant effort and progress of the church in all things pertaining to the saving of souls, the development of Christians, and the extension and growth of the Kingdom of God.
3. By proper organization and method among themselves, they are to establish and maintain personal fraternal relations with, and inspiring oversight of, all the membership of the church.

Especially are they to seek to know the physical needs and the moral and spiritual struggles of the brethren and sisters, and to serve the whole church in relieving, encouraging, and developing all who are in need.

4. The Chairman of Deacons, or any three deacons, shall have the power to call a special meeting of the deacons as needed.
5. The absence of a deacon from two regular consecutive Deacons meetings or absence from a total of four regular Deacons meetings during a calendar year shall cause a forfeiture by such deacon of his office, provided however, that for the purpose of this section, no absence shall be counted if the reported cause of absence is approved by the Deacons at their next regular meeting. When there has become a vacancy under this rule, the Chairman and Secretary of the Board of Deacons shall certify such fact to the next Church Conference and such vacancy shall be filled after proper notice.

Section 3: Method of Procedure

1. The deacons shall be organized as a unit for the consideration of all larger problems and general policies, and shall meet at a regularly designated time, which shall be set by the deacons themselves.
2. They shall apportion the membership of the church among themselves, or make plans whereby the entire membership may have the benefit of the oversight in Christ of their brethren.
3. Each deacon shall confer freely with the pastor about all matters concerning the welfare of the church.

Moderator

The church shall elect annually a moderator and vice-moderator. The moderator shall preside over all regular and called conferences.

Clerk

The clerk of the church shall have in his possession at all times the official church roll. The clerk shall be an ex-officio messenger to the association. He/she shall keep in a suitable book a record of all the actions of the church. He/she shall keep a register of the names of the members, with dates of admission, dismissal, or death together with a record of baptisms. He/she shall preserve on file all communications and written official reports, as indicated by these by-laws. The clerk shall be elected annually, or to fill out an unexpired term of office. He/she shall consider it a part of his/her responsibility to promote loyalty and efficiency in church life. The church shall elect an assistant clerk, or one shall be designated by the moderator.

Treasurer

The church shall elect annually a church treasurer and an assistant treasurer. It shall be the duty of the treasurer to receive, preserve, and pay out upon receipt of vouchers, all money, or things of value paid, or given to the church, keeping at all times an itemized account of all receipts and disbursements. Payments of bills for local work and expenses shall be made promptly by check, and all funds received for denominational or other causes shall be remitted at least monthly by check. The report of the treasurer shall be made to the church in its regular business meeting. Within thirty days after the end of each church year, the treasurer shall render to the church an annual report showing the total number of receipts, and an itemized statement of all disbursements. All books, records, and accounts kept by the treasurer shall be considered property of the church. The books shall be open to inspection at all times by any member of the church.

Trustees

Three trustees of the church are to serve as the legal representatives for the church. Each trustee shall serve a three year term, one rotating off each year. The trustees will take office on October 1. The trustees shall hold in trust the title to all property of the church and shall represent the church in all matters of legal responsibility regarding purchase, improvement, and disposal of church property. They shall execute all legal papers which have been authorized by the church. They shall have no power to buy, sell, mortgage, lease or transfer any property of the church without three-fourths (3/4) majority of vote of the church in conference authorizing such action.

Article 3 - Committees

The committees of this church shall be a nominating committee, a personnel committee, finance committee, and a building and grounds committee, and such other regular and special committees as the church shall authorize. Additional regular committees may be added by the amendment procedure prescribed with these by-laws. All committee members shall be recommended by the church nominating committee and elected by the church unless otherwise specified within these by-laws. Committee members shall serve on a two (2) year rotation basis with one-half (2) to be elected each year. Action of all committees shall be presented to the church for approval or disapproval.

1. The nominating committee coordinates the staffing of all church leadership positions filled by volunteer workers, unless otherwise specified herein. Persons considered for any such positions shall first be approved by the nominating committee before they are approached for recruitment. The nominating committee shall present to the church for election all who accept the invitation to serve. Nominations from the floor during church conference by any member are acceptable.
2. The personnel committee assists the church in matters related to employed personal administration, including those called by church action. Their work includes such areas as determining staff needs, employment, salaries, benefits, other compensation, policies, job description, and personnel services.
3. The finance committee shall develop and recommend an overall stewardship development plan, a unified church budget, and budget subscription plan to the church. It advises and recommends to the church in the administration of the gifts of church members and others, using sound principles of financial management. It works with the treasurer in the preparation and presentation to the church of required reports regarding the financial affairs of the church.
4. The building and ground committee shall consist of six members. This committee shall give attention to the condition and state of repair and appearance of all church property. This committee shall meet as necessary to consider any needed item of purchase for maintenance or repair of church property.

Article 4 - Church Programs and Organizations

The church shall maintain programs of Bible teaching; church member training, church leader training, new member orientation; missions education, action and support; and music education, training and performance. All organizations related to the church programs shall be under church control, all officers being elected by the church and reporting regularly to the church, and all program activities subject to church coordination and approval. The church shall appropriate advancement of these programs.

1. The Sunday School shall be the basic organization for the Bible-teaching programs. Its tasks shall be to teach the biblical revelation, reach persons for Christ and church membership, perform the functions of the church within its constituency, provide and interpret information regarding the work of the church and denomination.

The Sunday School shall be organized by departments and/or classes, as appropriate for all ages, and shall be conducted under the direction of the Sunday School director elected by the church.

2. The Discipleship Training organization shall serve as the training unit of the church. Its task shall be to train church members to perform the functions of the church; train church leaders; orient new church members; teach Christian theology, Christian ethics; Christian history, and church policy and organization; and provide and interpret information regarding the work of the church and denomination.

Discipleship Training shall be organized by departments for all ages and conducted under the direction of general director.

3. Woman's Missionary Union shall be the missions education, missions action, and missions support organization of the church for women, young women, girls, and preschool children. Its tasks shall be to teach missions; engage in missions action; support world missions through praying and giving; and provide and interpret information regarding the work of the church of denomination.
4. The Brotherhood shall be the church's organization for missions education, missions action, and missions support for men, young men and boys. Its task shall be to teach mission; engage in missions action; support world mission through praying and giving; and provide and interpret information regarding the work of the church denomination.

The Brotherhood shall have such officers and organization as the program requires.

5. The Church Music organization, under the direction of the church-elected music director, paid or volunteer shall be the music education, training and performance organization of the church. Its task shall be to teach music, train persons to lead, sing and play music; provide music in the church and community, and provide and interpret information regarding the work of the church and denomination.

The Church Music program shall have such officers and organizations as the program requires.

Article 5 - Church Council

The church council shall serve the church by leading in planning, coordination, conduction, and evaluating the ministries and programs of the church and its organizations.

1. The primary functions of the church council shall be to recommend to the church suggested objectives and church goals; to review and coordinate ministry and program plans recommended by church officers, organizations, and committees; to recommend to the church the use of leadership, calendar time, and other resources according to program priorities; and to evaluate achievements in terms of church objectives and goals.
2. Regular members of the church council shall be the pastor, other church staff members, directors of church programs, organizations, and the chairman of deacons.

3. All matters agreed upon by the council which call for action shall be referred to the church for approval or disapproval.

Article 6 - Church Ordinances

Section 1: Baptism

This church shall receive for baptism any person who has received Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior by personal faith, who professes Him publicly at any worship service, and who indicates a commitment to follow Christ as Lord.

1. Baptism shall be by immersion in water.
2. The pastor, or whomever the church shall authorize, or others at the discretion of the pastor, shall administer baptism. The deacons shall assist in the preparation for, and the observance of baptism
3. Baptism shall be administered as an act of worship during any worship service of the church.
4. A person who professes Christ and is not baptized after a reasonable length of time shall be counseled by the pastor and/or staff or deacons. If negative interest is ascertained on the part of the candidate, he shall be deleted from those awaiting baptism.

Section 2: The Lord's Supper

The church shall observe the Lord's Supper at least quarterly. The Observance shall generally alternate between the morning and the evening services of worship. The pastor and deacons shall administer the Lord's Supper, the deacons being responsible for the physical preparations.

Article 7- Marriage

The church recognizes marriage as a legal union only between one man and one woman as husband and wife, and the word "spouse" refers to a person of the opposite sex who is a husband or a wife (Genesis 2:24, Matthew 19:5, 1 Corinthians 7:2, Ephesians 5:31). Neither the church, its facilities, pastor or staff will recognize or participate in a union that violates this definition.

Article 8 - Meetings

Section 1: Business

1. The regular conference of this church shall be held at a Sunday evening service monthly.
2. The church may conduct called business meetings to consider matters of special nature and significance. A one-week notice must be given for the specially called business meeting unless extreme urgency renders such notice impractical. The notice shall include the subject, the date, and the time and place; and it must be given in such a manner that all resident members must be contacted to establish a mutually satisfactory time. If the pastor and/or moderator cannot agree on a satisfactory time, and three church members may call a conference by giving notice set forth above.

3. A majority vote shall rule in all meetings, excepts as shall be provided elsewhere in the by-laws.
4. The business of the church shall be transacted according to accepted parliamentary procedure.
5. At any regular meeting for worship, the church may, without special notice, act upon the reception of members and upon the appointment of messengers.
6. Quorum. Ten percent of resident members shall constitute a quorum when the church is in regular conference. An individual must be a church member at least 18 years old to be eligible to vote.

Article 9 - Denominational Affiliation and Representation

Section 1: Messengers

The appropriate number of messengers to the annual association meeting and conventions shall be selected by the church as needed.

Section 2: The Pastor A Messenger

The pastor shall be considered by virtue of his office an appointed messenger to these denominational meetings.

Section 3: Executive committeeman a Messenger

Executive committeemen of the Turner Baptist Association are messengers to the association by virtue of their office.

Article 10 - Adoption and Amendment of Constitution and By-Laws

Section 1: Voting Rule

The rules of this Constitution and By-Laws shall be considered adopted by a two-thirds majority of the members voting at the conference to which they are proposed for adoption.

Section 2: Rules for Changing

Any article, or subdivision thereof, in this Constitution and By-Laws may be altered or repealed by a two-thirds vote of the members voting at any regular church conference, provided, however, such proposed changes shall have been presented to the church in writing at a business meeting not less than one month before the time for voting on the proposed change.

Section 3: Affect of this Adoption

The adoption of this Constitution and By-Laws shall at all times be kept with the records for the church clerk; any amendments to or revisions thereof, shall after passed, be prepared in type written form and attached to the copies of the Constitution so kept; this also to apply to any resolution passed for the permanent or temporary government of the church.

This Constitution and By-Laws having been recommended to the church by the Deacons will become effective upon adoption of the church.