
Bylaws for First Baptist Lake Park, Ga

PREAMBLE

First Baptist Lake Park endeavors to be a Church of the Lord Jesus Christ as described, established, and mandated by the New Testament. The purpose of these Bylaws is to help us accomplish the task of this Church in a “decent and orderly” manner through the use of effective and efficient means of good stewardship of the body’s time, gifts and resources. Our ultimate desire is to bring glory to God through the Church.

These Bylaws are to provide general guidance on organization, governance and operation, based upon biblical principles and practices. However, the ultimate authority for First Baptist’s organization, governance and operation is the Bible. When a conflict or ambiguity exists with regard to these Bylaws, deference is to be given to the biblical reference to resolve conflict or ambiguity.

ARTICLE I – Name and Principal Office

This body of believers shall be known as the First Baptist Church of Lake Park, Inc., of Lake Park, Georgia (referred to as the ‘Church’, ‘First Baptist’ or ‘Faith Family’). The Church maintains its principal office at 601 W. Marion Avenue, Lake Park, Georgia.

ARTICLE II – Membership

The New Testament presents a picture of definable groups of people who, once committed to the Lord, identified themselves with and committed themselves to a particular local body. (Romans 16:1; 1 Corinthians 1:2; 2 Corinthians 8:1; Philippians 1:1; Acts 11:26)

In order to implement the principles of accountability and commitment to the local body of Christ, as defined in the New Testament and practiced in the early churches, First Baptist recognizes the need for formal membership. Membership in this Church shall consist of all persons who have met the qualifications for membership and are listed on the membership roll.

Section 1: Qualifications for Membership

To qualify for membership at First Baptist:

1. A person must be a believer in Jesus Christ who gives evidence of salvation and is committed to living and serving in a manner consistent with standards set forth in Scripture.

2. A person must be baptized or have been baptized, in obedience to Christ, by immersion following his or her regeneration and wholeheartedly believe in the Christian faith as revealed in the Bible.

A person interested in becoming a member of First Baptist should approach a staff member, Pastoral Leadership Team member, deacon or other ministry leader, or come forward during one of the worship services during the altar call and share their desire to join First Baptist.

1. After expressing a desire to join First Baptist, a meeting will be set up with a member of the Pastoral Leadership Team, Staff Member, Deacon or Appointed Ministry Leader to verbalize their personal testimony, and to determine the integrity of their faith and their desire to be committed to First Baptist as a local body of believers.
2. Prospective members will be asked to attend a Church Membership Class and to affirm the Church Membership Covenant. Exceptions may be made occasionally when someone's physical condition does not allow them to sit for those extended sessions. Membership classes will be offered periodically to provide prospective members, but not limited to, the following:
 - a. Introduction of ministerial staff and other key leaders.
 - b. First Baptist Core Values, Purpose, Vision and Structure (Constitution and Bylaws).
 - c. Basic beliefs.
 - d. Overview of current Church ministries.
 - e. Leadership and member responsibilities.
3. Upon completion of the Church Membership Orientation, signing of the Church Covenant and having been baptized or given testimony of baptism by immersion, the prospective member will be officially introduced to the Church as a member of FBCLP.

Section 2: Responsibilities of Church Membership

The responsibilities of membership are described in the Church Membership Covenant as detailed in First Baptist Lake Park's Constitution Article VI.

Section 3: Privileges of Membership

Voting Rights of Church Membership:

1. Only members, at least eighteen years of age, who are physically present at a duly-called Members' Meeting shall be entitled to vote on all matters presented to the Church for consideration.
2. Each member of the Church is entitled to one vote. Voting by proxy or absentee ballot is prohibited.
3. This congregation does not function as a pure democracy, but as a body under the headship of the Lord Jesus Christ and the direction of the Senior Pastor as undershepherd. Determinations of the internal affairs of this Church are ecclesiastical matters and shall be determined exclusively by the Church's own rules and procedures. The Senior Pastor will work in conjunction with the appropriate elected Church leadership in overseeing all aspects of the Church.

Membership in this Church does not afford the members with any property, contractual, or civil rights based on principles of democratic government. Although the general public is invited to all of the Church's worship services, the Church property remains private property. The Senior Pastor (or in his absence, an individual designated by the Pastoral Leadership Team) has the authority to suspend or revoke the right of any person, including a member, to enter or remain on Church property. If after being notified of such a suspension or revocation, the person enters or remains on the Church property, the person may, in the discretion of the Senior Pastor (or in his absence, an individual designated by the Pastoral Leadership Team), be treated as a trespasser.

A member may inspect or copy the prepared financial statements of the Church and the minutes of the proceedings of Church meetings and board meetings, provided he shall have made a written request upon the Church and the Church has received the written request at least five business days before the requested inspection date.

- A member may not, under any circumstances, inspect or copy any record relating to individual contributions to the Church, or the accounting books and financial records of the Church as related to financial contributions.
- The Church may impose a reasonable charge, covering the costs of labor and material, for copies of any documents provided to the member before releasing the copies to the member.
- Church members' personal contact information may be used for ministry purposes only.

Section 4: Designations of Membership

In an effort to properly reflect the membership of the First Baptist Church, two rolls shall be maintained. These rolls shall be updated periodically.

1. Active Members: All members who reside within the Church's ministry area and are currently active in the Church.
2. Inactive/Non-voting Members: In being part of a local body of believers, it is the responsibility of each member to be faithful in attendance and participation of the meetings and ministries of the congregation. To be lax or indifferent toward faithful participation may indicate the need for admonition concerning one's faithfulness to the local Church. Those who have not participated in the life of the Church for an extended period of time except for reasons of deployment, homebound and college or other extenuating circumstances, will be moved to an inactive roll. This determination will be made by the Pastoral Leadership Team after efforts have been made to reclaim to this fellowship those who have absented themselves from the fellowship of the congregation. Those placed on the inactive role will not be allowed to exercise the voting privilege reserved for active members. If inactivity persists for more than 2 years, that individual may be removed from the membership roll completely.

Section 5: Termination of Membership

Members shall be removed from the Church roll for the following reasons:

1. Death

2. Transfer of Membership to another Church. No member of this Church may hold membership in another Church. The membership of any individual shall automatically terminate without notice if the member unites in membership with another Church.
3. By personal request of the member; but no letter of transfer or written statement of good standing will be issued upon such a resignation.
4. Dismissal by the discipline committee and the Church according to a member's life and conduct which is not in accordance with the Church Membership Covenant and is in such a way that the member hinders the ministry influence of the Church in the community. Procedures for the dismissal of a member shall be in accordance with Section 6 of Article 2.
5. The membership of any individual member shall automatically terminate without notice if the member files a lawsuit in violation of Article 4 (XIX) in the Constitution.
6. Non-Letter Transfer. Any member who unites with another Church without a letter will be dropped from the membership.

Section 6: Discipline of a Member

Purpose: The purpose of Church discipline is to glorify God by maintaining (1) purity in the Church (1 Corinthians 5:6), (2) protecting believers by deterring sin (1 Timothy 5:20) and (3) promoting the spiritual welfare of the offending believer by calling him or her to return to biblical standards of doctrine and conduct (Galatians 6:1). Furthermore, upon joining this Church, all members are in agreement with Article II and section 5 of these Bylaws.

Process: Members and all other professing Christians who regularly attend or fellowship at First Baptist who err in biblical doctrine or conduct shall be subject to discipline according to Matthew 18:15-18.

1. There shall be a discipline committee consisting of the Senior Pastor and the Pastoral Leadership Team and, if they deem necessary, select members of the Deacon Ministry Team. These men shall have sole authority in determining heretical deviations from the Statement of Faith and violations of the Church covenant. If the pastor, Pastoral Leadership Team member or deacon is the subject of a disciplinary matter, he shall not sit as a member of the discipline committee. The Pastor, Pastoral Leadership Team member, Deacon Ministry Team member shall be entitled to the same steps as other Church members and be subject to the same discipline.
2. Members are expected to demonstrate special loyalty and concern for one another. When a member becomes aware of an offense of such magnitude that it hinders spiritual growth and testimony, he is to go alone to the offending party and seek to restore his brother. Before he goes, he should first examine himself. When he goes, he should go with a spirit of humility and have the goal of restoration.
3. If reconciliation is not reached, a second member, possibly a ministry leader, is to accompany the one seeking to resolve the matter. This second step should also be preceded by self-examination and exercised in a spirit of humility with the goal of restoration.
4. If the matter is still unresolved after the steps outlined above have been taken, the discipline committee, as the Church representatives biblically responsible for putting down murmuring, shall hear the matter. If the matter is not resolved during the hearing

before the discipline committee, the committee shall recommend to the members of the Church that they, after self-examination, make an effort to personally go to the offending member and seek that member's restoration.

5. If the matter is still unresolved after the steps outlined above have been taken, such members who refuse to repent and be restored are to be removed from the membership of the Church upon a majority vote of the members present at a meeting called for disciplinary purposes.
6. No matter may be heard by the discipline committee or the Church unless the steps outlined in points 2 and 3 in Section 6 have been taken, except in the case of a public offense.
7. If an unrepentant offending party is removed from the Church membership, all contact with him from that point forward (except by family members) must be for the sake of restoration.
8. The procedures provided in this section are based on Matthew 18:15-20; Romans 16:17; 1 Corinthians 5:1-13; 2 Corinthians 2:1-11; Galatians 6:1; 1 Thessalonians 5:14; 2 Thessalonians 3:6, 10-15; 1 Timothy 2:19-20 and Titus 3:10-11.

ARTICLE III – Meetings

Section 1: Worship Meetings

Worship services shall be held each Lord's Day and may be held throughout the week as the Church determines.

Section 2: Members' Meetings

In every meeting together, members shall act in that spirit of mutual trust, openness, and loving consideration which is appropriate within the body of our Lord Jesus Christ.

1. Members' meetings shall be held annually at some time apart from a public worship service at which time the regular Church administration shall be considered. Provided all provisions as stated in the By-Laws for notification have been met, a quorum shall be understood to consist of members present.
2. The moderator, appointed by the Pastoral Leadership Team, shall determine the rules of procedure according to his sense of fairness and common sense, giving all members a reasonable opportunity to be heard on a matter. The moderator is the final authority on questions of procedure and his decision is final and controlling.
3. The moderator shall adhere to and execute the agenda as set forth by the Pastoral Leadership Team for each Members' Meeting.
4. All matters requiring Church approval shall be brought to the attention of the Pastor, a Staff member or a Pastoral Leadership Team member at least 10 days before being placed on the agenda for a Members' meeting. Special exceptions may be granted if deemed necessary by the pastor, Pastoral Leadership Team and/or Deacon Ministry Team. Only items on the agenda will be presented and discussed.
5. For any meeting under this article, the moderator, in his discretion, shall have the authority to require nonmembers to leave the meeting room and to remove any member

or person present who is deemed to be disruptive to the proceedings by act or presence. The moderator shall have the authority to have all children (ages to be determined by the moderator) removed if it is deemed warranted by the circumstances. If the moderator determines that compliance with his order of removal is unsatisfactory, the moderator may revoke the disruptive person's right to remain on the premises in accordance with Article II: Section 3 and treat the person as a trespasser.

Section 3: Special Meetings

The pastor, in conjunction with the Pastoral Leadership Team, may call a special meeting by giving notice of such a meeting and the purpose for which it is called by giving notice to the members in accordance with Section 4 of this Article.

Bible conferences, missionary conferences, revivals and other special events may be held as the Senior Pastor deems beneficial

Section 4: Notice Requirements for Membership Meetings

General Requirements - Notice of scheduled and called Members' Meetings shall be provided to members no less than one week prior to a meeting. Notification of membership meetings shall be given in any of the following manners, which shall be deemed to be a reasonable method of calling a membership meeting:

1. Distribution of written material to the congregation in attendance at a regular weekend worship service or by mail.
2. Announcement of the meeting in a Church publication such as a bulletin or newsletter.
3. Oral announcement to the congregation at a scheduled worship service.

Notice of Certain Agenda Items - Action by the members on any of the following proposals, not on the agenda for a called meeting, is valid only if the following procedure is followed: A motion is made to discuss the proposal and the general nature of the proposal is included in the motion and the motion to discuss the proposal is approved unanimously.

1. Selection, rebuke, or dismissal of the Senior Minister
2. Amending the Articles of Incorporation
3. Adopting, amending or repealing the Bylaws
4. Disposing of all or substantially all of the Church's assets
5. Approving the acquisition of real property and related indebtedness
6. Approving the election to dissolve the Church

Section 5: Quorum

Those members present and voting at a meeting duly noticed and called shall constitute a quorum of the membership for the transaction of business.

Section 6: Voting

Church action shall be by concurrence of a majority of members present and voting, except for the calling and removal of the Senior Minister which shall require an affirmative vote of three-fourths (3/4) of those present and voting, and the amending of the Constitution and Bylaws which shall require an affirmative vote of two-thirds (2/3) of those present and voting. All voting shall be by those physically present at the Church meeting at which a vote is taken and no proxy votes shall be allowed.

Section 7: The Fiscal Year

The fiscal year of the Church shall begin January 1st and end December 31st. A budget shall be approved by the membership at a Members' meeting no later than January 31st after the start of the fiscal year. Prior to this approval and subject to the Finance Team's discretion, expenditures may continue at the prior year's level.

ARTICLE IV – Church Structure and Leadership

Section 1: Eligibility for Office

1. Adherence to Statement of Faith. The Church shall not install or retain any person as an officer of the Church who fails to adhere to or expresses disagreement with the Statement of Faith. All Church officers, upon request of the pastor, shall affirm their agreement with the Statement of Faith (as set forth in Article IV of the First Baptist's Constitution)
2. Church Members. Only Church members are eligible for election or appointment to any Church office or position of leadership.
3. Consistent Christian Walk. All Church leaders shall continue or adopt a lifestyle consistent with the biblical principles expressed in the Statement of Faith and carry out their leadership role accordingly.

Section 2: Senior Pastor

1. Qualifications
 - a. The Senior Pastor shall be a man called of God and set apart to the Gospel ministry, evangelical in theology, in accordance with First Baptist's Statement of Faith, and committed to living and serving in a manner consistent with the standards set forth in Scripture for such a leader.
 - b. The Senior Pastor shall meet the Scriptural requirements set forth in 1 Timothy 3:2-7 and Titus 1:6-9.
2. Responsibilities
 - a. The Senior Pastor shall be recognized as the spiritual leader of the Church. The Senior Pastor shall be in charge of all worship and other public services of the Church.
 - b. The Senior Pastor shall direct the work of the Church Staff and lead the Pastoral Leadership Team to fulfill their responsibilities in caring for and leading the Church.

- c. The Senior Pastor shall be called to lead the Church to understand, embrace, and accomplish its mission as defined by the primary biblical purposes of worship, evangelism, missions, fellowship, discipleship and service. The Senior Pastor leads the Church through his primary biblical roles of elder/overseer, evangelist, shepherd, preacher/teacher, and equipper.
3. Selection and Term of Pastor and Church Relationship
- a. Selection
 - i. When a vacancy in the Senior Pastor position exists, a Pastor Search Team will be established with Church membership approval. The Search Team will be responsible for screening all resumes, interviewing applicants, and confirming the qualifications and experience of the top candidates.
 - ii. The Senior Pastor Search Team will be comprised of at least one non-staff member of the Pastoral Leadership Team, Chairman of the Deacon Body and five (5) members of the Church at large. These members will be chosen by the Nominating Team and elected by the Church in a specially called Church business conference. Two (2) alternates will be chosen if for any reason a vacancy occurs. Family members (husbands, wives, brothers, sisters or children) cannot simultaneously serve on the Senior Pastor Search team.
 - iii. Once elected by the Church, the Senior Pastor Search team will work to identify a Senior Pastor whose gifts, character and calling fit him for that office. The Senior Pastor Search team must be in unanimous agreement to present the potential candidate to the Church for consideration.
 - iv. The selection of the Senior Pastor will occur at a Church business conference called specifically for that purpose. No name shall be considered or nominated except as recommended by the Senior Pastor Search Team. The vote for the Senior Pastor will be by secret ballot, with a “Yes” and “No,” and shall require a three-fourths (3/4) affirmative vote of the members present and voting for election. If the recommendation of the Senior Pastor Search Team does not receive the requisite three-fourths (3/4) affirmative vote, the Senior Pastor Search team shall continue its duties and present another recommendation to the Church.
 - b. Term
 - i. The Senior Pastor shall serve at the pleasure of the Church and under continuing call until the Church or the Senior Pastor requests otherwise.
 - ii. Resignation of the Senior Pastor shall require thirty days prior written notice to the Church, or less by mutual consent.
 - iii. Termination of the Senior Pastor
 - 1. The Church may declare the office of Senior Pastor to be vacant if circumstances dictate. Such action will take place at a meeting called for that purpose, with at least a two (2) weeks written notice given to the Church.
 - 2. The meeting may be called only on the recommendation of two-thirds of the Pastoral Leadership Team and three-fourths (3/4) of the Deacon Body or by written petition signed by not less than

one-third (1/3) of the active Church membership. The vote to declare the office of Senior Pastor vacant will be by written ballot with three-fourths (3/4) affirmative vote of those present.

Section 3: Other Staff Positions

1. Ministerial Staff

- a. Ministers (excluding the Senior Pastor) are called to serve by the recommendation of the Pastoral Leadership Team and will be responsible for running the day-to-day ministry operations of the Church to which they are assigned. Ministers can act individually to enter into transactions regarding their specific area of ministry, conditioned upon budgetary constraints and authorization levels granted by the Senior Pastor, Pastoral Leadership Team and/or Financial Oversight Team. They are subject to the oversight of the Senior Pastor, Pastoral Leadership Team and Finance Team. If a minister exceeds his or her authorization level in a Church transaction, the minister may be held personally responsible for any obligations incurred as a result.
- b. The Senior Pastor is responsible for the oversight of all ministerial staff of the Church and is accountable to the Pastoral Leadership Team for the management of Church Staff.
- c. The need for additional ministerial staff will be determined by the Senior Pastor in conjunction with the Pastoral Leadership Team and other appropriate Church leadership.
- d. When a ministerial staff position is to be established or filled, the budgetary needs for the position will be determined by the Pastoral Leadership Team in conjunction with the Financial Oversight Team and presented to the Church for approval. The vote for the approval of a ministerial staff position shall be by secret ballot, with a “yes” and “no,” and shall require a three-fourths ($\frac{3}{4}$) affirmative vote of the members present and voting for election.
- e. After the Senior Pastor, in conjunction with the Pastoral Leadership Team and other appropriate leadership, identify and approve the ministerial staff member, the new staff member will be formally introduced to the membership of the Church.
- f. The services and employment of ministerial staff may be terminated upon the recommendation of the Senior Pastor to, and approved by, the Pastoral Leadership and Deacon Team with not less than a three-quarter ($\frac{3}{4}$) majority vote.
- g. In the event of a ministerial staff vacancy during a Senior Pastor vacancy, the vacant ministerial staff position will be filled on an interim basis until such time as a permanent Senior Pastor is called.

2. Support Staff

- a. The need for additional support staff will be determined by the Senior Pastor in conjunction with the Pastoral Leadership Team and other appropriate Church leadership as necessary.
- b. When an additional support staff position is to be established, budgetary requirements for the position will be determined by the Pastoral Leadership Team

in conjunction with the Finance Team. If funding for additional support staff is not allocated in the current budget, amendments shall be made with the approval of the Church.

- c. The Senior Pastor, along with the Pastoral Leadership Team and other appropriate Church leadership, will develop written job descriptions for non-ministerial staff positions.
- d. Though not always specifically ministerial in scope, all staffing positions at First Baptist contribute to the pursuit and fulfillment of the purpose and mission of the Church. Employees filling non-ministerial support staff positions are representative of First Baptist.
- e. Therefore, conduct or lifestyles deemed by the Senior Pastor and Pastoral Leadership Team as contradictory or harmful to First Baptist's purpose and mission will be grounds for termination. Also, such conduct and lifestyles would exclude a candidate from consideration for employment.
- f. All Church support staff shall be selected by the Senior Pastor and appropriate leadership, as determined by the Senior Pastor, and will serve at the discretion of the Senior Pastor.

Section 4: Pastoral Leadership Team

1. Reasoning

- a. While the New Testament allows much freedom on the issue of Church structure, it presents consistent and sufficient evidence demonstrating that the New Testament Church is to be congregationally governed yet led by a plurality of godly men, (*Philippians 1:1; Acts 11:30, 14:23, 20:17, 20:28; 1 Peter 5:1-2*), known as pastors/elders/overseers. Those terms are used synonymously to refer to the same office and work of pastoring.
- b. These leaders were tasked with the responsibility to skillfully and lovingly lead the Church and equip the Church, offering accurate and insightful teaching of the Scripture. They were also tasked with providing care for the Church. This care is shown in the love, concern, prayers, ministry and management of the Church's resources. They were also responsible for protecting the Church from harmful influences and beliefs.
- c. A plurality of leadership benefits both the Church and pastor by:
 - i. Rounding out the pastor's gifts by making up for some of his weaknesses and supplementing his judgment.
 - ii. Creating support in the congregation for decisions and leaving the pastor less exposed to unjust criticism.
 - iii. Connecting leadership to the congregation and making leadership more rooted and permanent by not relying solely on paid staff. Too much reliance on paid staff can leave the Church vulnerable when those positions become vacant. This requires the Church to take greater responsibility for the spiritual growth of its members.

2. Responsibilities

- a. Provide support and counsel for the Senior Pastor in (not limited to):
 - i. Doctrine

- ii. General oversight and evaluation of the Church's ministries
 - iii. Establishing Vision and setting direction
 - iv. Maintaining and executing the policies and procedures of the Church
 - v. Oversight of staffing and personnel
 - vi. Disciplinary matters and handling grievances
 - b. Provide accountability for the Senior Pastor in the execution of his duties as the spiritual leader of the Church.
 - c. When deemed necessary, the Pastoral Leadership Team may form special task forces, temporary teams, from the Church membership. The Pastoral Leadership Team shall initiate an appropriate recommendation to the Nominating Team which in turn shall make the necessary appointments, subject to the Church's approval, to such special task force. Once members are appointed to such a task force, they shall function under the direction of and in communication with the Pastoral Leadership Team.
3. Qualifications
- a. The Pastoral Leadership Team members shall be required to meet the same spiritual qualifications as that of a Senior Pastor. They shall be men called of God and set apart to the Gospel ministry, evangelical in theology, in accordance with First Baptist's Statement of Faith, and committed to living and serving in a manner consistent with the standards set forth in Scripture for such a leader.
 - b. The Pastoral Leadership Team member shall meet the Scriptural requirements set forth in 1 Timothy 3:2-7 and Titus 1:6-9.
4. Selection and Terms of Service
- a. The Pastoral Leadership Team will be composed of the Senior Pastor, and if possible, the Church will strive to appoint one man for every 100 members; however, the team is not to exceed eight (8) nor have less than three men total. At least one half of the team shall be filled by laymen selected by the congregation at large. The remaining positions shall consist of the Senior Pastor and ministerial staff, selected from the pastoral staff. Congregational team members for the Pastoral Leadership Team are to be elected by a two-thirds (2/3) majority vote of the Church.
 - b. Pastoral Leadership Team members are to be appointed by the existing Pastoral Leadership Team and approved by the Church in a Members' Meeting. Team members shall serve terms of 3 years, at the end of which they may be re-elected. Terms shall be staggered such that no more than two Pastoral Leadership Team member's terms end in any one year. A team member may be allowed to serve 2 consecutive terms, after which there shall be a lapse of one year before they may be reconsidered for re-election. Ministerial staff serving on the Pastoral Leadership Team are not subject to term limits or re-election but are appointed by and serve at the discretion of the Senior Pastor and Pastoral Leadership Team.
 - c. The Pastoral Leadership Team shall prayerfully observe and nominate members of the Church who they believe meet the qualifications for the position. Once the team has identified the names of potential nominees, the following procedures shall be observed:

- i. The names of all potential nominees shall be submitted to the Senior Pastor. The Pastor may request a potential nominee's name be removed from the list if he believes that the nominee does not meet the spiritual qualifications for service.
- ii. Members of the Pastoral Leadership Team shall contact potential nominees to determine if they are willing to serve if elected and nominees will be given an information packet. Potential nominees must indicate they believe that they meet the qualifications for service and are willing to serve.
- iii. The names of the potential nominees who agree to serve shall be submitted to the Financial Recorder to ensure that each nominee is a generous financial giver, should they be elected.
- iv. The potential nominees shall take part in an interview process with the current Pastoral Leadership Team.
- v. The Pastoral Leadership Team shall submit information (picture, biographical sketch, testimony, etc.) to the members of the Church about each nominee at least 14 calendar days before the annual Members' Meeting in January. The number of nominees presented shall be the exact number of persons needed for service.
- vi. Election to the Pastoral Leadership Team shall be by secret ballot by selecting "yes" or "no" by each nominee's name, and shall require a two-thirds (2/3) affirmative vote of the members present and voting for election of such nominee to the Pastoral Leadership Team.

Section 5: Deacon Ministry Team

1. Purpose and Responsibilities

- a. Deacons are the Servant Ministers of the Church. Their purpose is to relieve the Senior Pastor, Staff and Pastoral Leadership Team of the multitude of practical duties of caring for the flock. Deacons are to give their primary attention toward caring for the congregation's physical welfare.
- b. Deacons have the honor of modeling, for the local Church and lost world, God's compassion, kindness, mercy and love. Deacons are to be an example of commitment, unity and harmony in their service.
- c. The Deacon Ministry Team will serve the Church in, but not restricted to, these areas:
 - i. Pastoral support (i.e., evangelism, new member follow-up, hospital, homebound and nursing home visitation, bereavement, etc.)
 - ii. Oversee and help administer the Church's ordinances of baptism and Lord's Supper
 - iii. Administer and oversee the benevolence ministry
 - iv. Help resolve conflicts
- d. The deacons, in conjunction with the pastor, may establish unpaid administrative positions or ministry teams to assist them in fulfilling their responsibilities to the Church.

- e. The deacons will work in conjunction with the pastor, staff and Pastoral Leadership Team in meeting ministry and administrative needs of the Church as they arise.

2. Qualifications

- a. The Deacon Ministry Team members shall be men called of God and set apart to the Gospel ministry, evangelical in theology, in accordance with First Baptist's Statement of Faith, and committed to living and serving in a manner consistent with the standards set forth in Scripture for such a leader (Acts 6:1-6; 1 Timothy 3:8-13)
- b. The Deacon Ministry Team will consist of men who have been members of the Church for a period of at least 1 year at the time of his election. There is no obligation to constitute as an active deacon a person who comes to the Church from another congregation where he served as an active deacon.

3. Selection and Service

- a. The Deacon Ministry Team shall determine the number of men necessary to function effectively in its various ministries.
- b. The Deacon Ministry Team shall prayerfully observe and nominate members of the Church who they believe meet the qualifications for the office of deacon. Once the deacon body has established the number of men needed to serve and identified the names of potential nominees, the following procedures shall be observed:
 - i. The names of all potential nominees shall be submitted to the Senior Pastor and the Pastoral Leadership Team for review. The Pastoral Leadership Team may request a potential nominee's name be removed from the list if they believe that the nominee does not meet the spiritual qualifications for service.
 - ii. Members of the Deacon Ministry Team shall contact potential nominees to determine if they are willing to serve if elected and nominees will be given an information packet. Potential nominees must indicate they believe that they meet the qualifications for service and are willing to serve.
 - iii. The names of the potential nominees who agree to serve shall be submitted to the Financial Recorder to ensure that each nominee is a generous financial giver, should they be elected.
 - iv. The potential nominees shall take part in an interview process with the current Deacon Ministry Team.
 - v. The Deacon Ministry Team shall submit information (picture, biographical sketch, testimony, etc.) to the members of the Church about each nominee willing to serve if elected, at least 14 Calendar days before the annual Members' Meeting in January. The number of nominees presented shall be the exact number of persons needed for service.
 - vi. Election to the Deacon Ministry Team shall be by secret ballot by selecting "yes" or "no" by each nominee's name, and shall require a two-thirds (2/3) affirmative vote of the members present and voting for election of such nominee to the Deacon Ministry Team.

- c. If vacancies occur on the Deacon Ministry Team, the team may decide to function with fewer members or fill the vacancy with a replacement of the Deacon Ministry Team's own choosing. Such a replacement shall serve out the remainder of the unexpired term of the person he replaces.
- d. Members of the Deacon Ministry Team will serve three-year terms, on a rotating basis, beginning January of each year. They may serve 2 consecutive terms after which they must not succeed themselves in office for at least 1 year without being reappointed by the deacon body and the Church.

Section 6: Financial Oversight Team

1. Financial Oversight Team

- a. **Qualifications:** The Financial Oversight Team shall include men and women who are members of First Baptist, exemplary in their conduct, discreet in judgment, of honest report, full of faith, consistent and generous in giving and conscious that they shall set worthy examples of cooperation, love and loyalty for all members of the Church.
- b. **Responsibilities:**
 - i. In conjunction with the Senior Pastor, or Pastoral Leadership Team representative, and Treasurer, the Financial Oversight Team shall develop and recommend to the Church an annual budget for the upcoming fiscal year to be approved by the membership at the annual Members' Meeting.
 - ii. The Financial Oversight Team shall be accountable to the Church for maintaining the financial integrity of all the financial activities of the Church. They shall establish operating and reserve funds that are adequate to operate the Church efficiently. If anticipated receipts are less than the annual budget, the Team will make the necessary changes in the annual budget to operate within the anticipated receipts.
 - iii. The Financial Oversight Team shall meet at least once quarterly to review the current budget process and prepare for the upcoming budget year.
- c. **Selection and Service**
 - i. The Financial Oversight Team shall consist of three members at large, the Church Treasurer and one representative from the Pastoral Leadership Team.
 - ii. Team members will serve 3 year terms on a rotating basis, beginning January 1 of each year, and shall not succeed themselves in office for at least two years.
 - iii. The Nominating Team, before contacting nominees, will submit names of all potential Financial Oversight Team members to the Pastor. The Pastor may request a potential nominee's name be removed from the list if he believes the nominee does not meet the spiritual qualifications of service.
 - iv. Immediate family members (husbands, wives, siblings or parents and children) may not serve simultaneously on the Financial Oversight Team. Family members of ministerial or support staff may not serve on the Financial Oversight Team.

- v. The Nominating Team, before contacting nominees, will submit names of all potential team members to the Financial Recorder to determine if nominees are faithful and generous financial contributors.
- vi. The election of the Financial Oversight Team shall be held at the annual Church Members' Meeting. The vote shall be by secret ballot with a "yes" and "no" by each nominee's name and shall require a simple majority of affirmative votes from the members present. If a nominee is not elected, another nominee shall be submitted to the Church by the Nominating Team.

2. Treasurer

- a. Qualifications: The Treasurer shall be a member of First Baptist, exemplary in conduct, discreet in judgment, of honest report, full of faith, consistent and generous in giving and consciously set a worthy example of cooperation, love and loyalty for all members of the Church.
- b. Responsibilities:
 - i. The Treasurer shall ensure that all funds and securities of the Church are properly secured in such banks, financial institutions or depositories as appropriate.
 - ii. The Treasurer shall also be responsible for presenting regular reports of the account balances, revenues and expenses of the Church. The Treasurer shall be responsible for presenting the proposed budget for the upcoming fiscal year at the annual Members' Meeting.
 - iii. The Treasurer shall also ensure that full and accurate accounts of receipts and disbursements are kept in books belonging to the Church, and that adequate controls are implemented to guarantee that all funds belonging to the Church are appropriately handled by any officer, employee or agent of the Church.
- c. Selection and Service:
 - i. The Treasurer will serve a three (3) year term and may serve consecutive terms if reappointed by the Nominating Team and approved by the Church.
 - ii. The Nominating Team, before contacting a nominee, will submit the nominee's name to the Pastor. The Pastor may request a potential nominee's name be removed from the list if he believes the nominee does not meet the spiritual qualifications of service.
 - iii. The Nominating Team, before contacting a nominee, will submit the nominee's name to the Financial Secretary to determine if the nominee is a faithful and generous financial contributor.
 - iv. The election of the Treasurer shall be held at the annual Church Members' Meeting. The vote shall be by secret ballot with a "yes" and "no" by each nominee's name, and shall require a simple majority of affirmative votes from the members present. If a nominee is not elected, another nominee shall be submitted to the Church by the Nominating Team.

3. Annual Budget

- a. The members of the Church shall approve, by secret ballot, the next year's budget during the annual Members' Meeting in January by a two-thirds (2/3) affirmative vote from the members present and voting.
 - b. The members of the Church shall approve non-budgeted expenditures exceeding an annual cumulative total of three percent (3%) of the annual budget and by a *two-thirds (2/3)* affirmative majority of the members present and voting. This shall not apply in emergency situations to monies previously set aside in a maintenance reserve fund.
 - c. The members of the Church shall approve all budget reallocations exceeding an annual cumulative total of three percent (3%) of the annual budget by a two-thirds (2/3) majority of the members present and voting.
4. Church Financial Statements
- a. The Treasurer shall make available to the members of the Church written quarterly financial reports.
 - b. The Treasurer shall provide a year-end report to the Church at the annual Members' Meeting for the previous year.
 - c. Giving statements shall be provided to the members of the Church annually.
5. Audit of Church Finances
- a. The Finance Team shall be responsible for selecting an independent Certified Public Accountant to audit the Church's finances annually. The Auditor shall not be a member of the Church.
 - b. The scope of services provided by the independent Certified Public Accountant shall be determined by the Finance Team.
6. Acquisition of Land, Buildings, Borrowing of Funds, Sale of Property
- a. The members of the Church shall approve, by secret ballot, the acquisition of land, buildings, borrowing of funds and sale of property by a two-thirds (2/3) affirmative vote of Church members present and voting for such motion at any Members Meeting.
 - b. In rare cases when it is prudent to negotiate a business decision without public discussion, and only if the members of the Pastoral Leadership Team are in unanimous agreement with a proposed course of action, the Pastoral Leadership Team may negotiate a legal agreement without the Church's prior approval, but subject to the Church's ultimate approval by a two-thirds (2/3) affirmative vote of the Church members present and voting.
7. Financial Recorder
- a. Qualifications: The Recorder shall be a member of First Baptist, exemplary in conduct, discreet in judgment, of honest report, full of faith, consistent and generous in giving and conscious that they shall set a worthy example of cooperation, love and loyalty for all members of the Church.
 - b. Responsibilities:

- i. The Financial Recorder shall receive the empty collection envelopes after the money has been removed and counted; they shall then record the financial gifts and give donors individual credit.
 - ii. The Financial Recorder shall keep the envelopes for a period of two years.
 - iii. The Financial Recorder will be responsible for preparing quarterly, semi-annual or annual Records of Contributions to all contributing members. The Financial Recorder may designate a team or individuals to assist in any of the above duties as deemed necessary.
- c. Selection and Service:
 - i. The Financial Recorder shall be selected by the Nominating Team and approved by the Church at the annual Members' Meeting.
 - ii. The term shall be for one year of service and he/she may serve consecutive terms.

Section 7: Nominating Team

1. Qualifications: The Nominating Team shall include men and women who are members of First Baptist, exemplary in their conduct, discreet in judgment, of honest report, full of faith, consistent and generous in giving and conscious that they shall set worthy examples of cooperation, love and loyalty for all members of the Church.
2. Responsibilities:
 - a. The Nominating Team shall select nominees for the Financial Oversight Team, Treasurer, Financial Recorder, Church Clerk, Nominating Team and other ad hoc teams.
 - i. The Nominating Team, before contacting a nominee, will submit the nominee's name to the Pastor. The Pastor may request a potential nominee's name be removed from the list if he believes the nominee does not meet the spiritual qualifications of service.
 - ii. The election of these Standing Teams shall be held at the annual Members' Meeting or a called meeting, Article III, section 4. The vote shall be by secret ballot by selecting "yes" or "no" by each nominee's name, and shall require a two-thirds (2/3) affirmative vote of the members present and voting for election of such nominee. If a nominee is not elected, another nominee shall be submitted to the Church by the Nominating Team.
 - b. The Nominating Team may also work with the appropriate staff and/or Pastoral Leadership Team member to recruit Ministry Team Members, Section 8, to carry out the ongoing ministries of the Church and to staff future ministry positions in the Church.
 - c. Meetings of the Nominating Team shall be determined by the Chairman of the Nominating Team and appropriate Pastoral Leadership Team representative. A majority shall constitute a quorum for the transaction of business. Action of the Nominating Team shall be approved by a majority vote of the members of the Nominating Team present and voting.

3. Composition and Service:
 - a. The Nominating Team shall be comprised of one Pastoral Leadership Team representative, Chairman of the Deacons and three members of the congregation at large.
 - b. The three elected team members shall serve 3 year terms on a rotating basis, beginning January 1 of each year, and shall not succeed themselves in office for at least two years.

Section 8: Ministry Teams

Ministry Teams exist to perform specific roles of ministry. Teams perform ministry best when they are performed by a plurality. Teams are the basic organizing units of First Baptist Lake Park to accomplish its ministry goals within the guidelines of our Purpose Statement. These teams devise and carry out the numerous ministries of First Baptist. Unlike standing teams or committees, their primary role is not to exercise administrative responsibilities or set policy. Ministry Teams will possess no authority or responsibility level of the corporate Church and are not subject to any service rotation. Rather, they are the “hands and feet” of the body of Christ.

A team is a small group of people with complementary skills committed to a common purpose or goal for which they are willing to be mutually accountable. Teams may exist for a very short term to perform a specific ministry or may be ongoing in their nature. Ongoing Ministry Team members will be enlisted for one year of service and re-enlisted as needed every year. Ministry Teams may vary in size depending upon their specific purpose and upon those available to serve in that capacity. The appropriate staff representative shall recruit them with the assistance of the Nominating Team as needed. Each Ministry Team will function under a Ministry Position Description, which will outline their primary ministry purpose and briefly describe anticipated duties and responsibilities. These descriptions are needed so as to assure that the ministry function is in fact fulfilling First Baptist Lake Park’s purpose statement and ministry objective goals.

Section 9: Clerk

1. Qualifications: The Clerk shall be a member of First Baptist, exemplary in conduct, discreet in judgment, of honest report, full of faith, consistent and generous in giving and conscious that he/she shall set a worthy example of cooperation, love and loyalty for all members of the Church.
2. Responsibilities:
 - a. It shall be the duty of the Clerk to record the minutes of all regular and special Members’ Meeting s of the Church, to preserve an accurate roll of the membership, and to render reports as requested by the Senior Pastor, Ministerial Staff or the Church.
 - b. It shall be the duty of the clerk to compile and submit the Annual Reports of the Church to the Association.
3. Selection and Service:

- a. The clerk shall be selected by the Nominating Team and approved by the Church at the annual Members' Meeting.
- b. The term shall be for one year of service and the Clerk may serve consecutive terms.

Section 10: Corporate Officers

1. The Church is a Georgia nonprofit tax-exempt corporation known as First Baptist Church of Lake Park, Inc. In accordance with the Georgia Non-Profit Corporation Code, the Church must designate individuals to serve in the corporate roles of Directors and Officers.
2. The Chairman of the Pastoral Leadership Team shall be President of the Church. The Chairman of the Deacon Ministry Team shall be the Vice President of the Church. The Treasurer shall be the Chief Financial Officer of the Church. The Clerk shall be the Secretary of the Church. An individual may not hold more than one Corporate Office of the Church.
3. The President, Vice President and Chief Financial Officer of the Church are authorized to execute and deliver agreements, contracts, deeds, evidences of indebtedness and other legal documents on behalf of and binding to the Church, provided that all such agreements, contracts, deeds, evidences of indebtedness, and other legal documents shall be signed by not less than two such Officers.
4. The Secretary shall record and maintain the minutes and records of all Corporate Officer meetings and all Members' Meetings and the Secretary shall, upon request, authenticate such minutes and Church records.

ARTICLE V – Designated Funds

From time to time the Church, in the exercise of its religious educational and charitable purposes, may establish designated/special funds to accomplish specific goals (i.e. building funds, mission funds, ministry projects or emergency needs, etc.). Apart from the designated/special funds established and promoted by the Church all other gifts given by the contributor will be deemed as advisory rather than mandatory in nature and will be subject to the discretion of the Senior Pastor, Pastoral Leadership Team and Financial Oversight Team. No fiduciary obligation shall be created by an individual's designated contribution made to the Church other than to use the contribution for the general furtherance of any of the purposes stated in Article III of First Baptist Lake Park's Constitution.

ARTICLE VI – 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 the claim if the Pastoral Leadership Team determines the person 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.

ARTICLE VII – Adoption and Amendments

Section 1: These Bylaws shall be adopted by a two-thirds ($\frac{2}{3}$) affirmative vote, by secret ballot, of the members present and voting at the Church business conference in which it is submitted for adoption.

Section 2: These Bylaws may be amended by a two-thirds ($\frac{2}{3}$) affirmative vote, by secret ballot, of the members present and voting at any regular or called Church business conference. Notice of such amendment shall be given through the distribution of written material to the members in attendance at Sunday services at least two consecutive Sundays in advance of the Church business conference in which the amendment is to be considered.

Section 3: These Bylaws were adopted by over a two-thirds majority vote (98%) of the members present and voting at a duly called meeting of the Church on May 11, 2016.

Section 4: These Bylaws were amended and adopted by over a two-thirds majority vote of the members present and voting at a duly called meeting of the Church on December 21, 2022. These amended bylaws supersede any other previous bylaws of First Baptist Church of Lake Park.

Bylaws Team

- John Lones (Chair)
- Robert Bateman
- Vicki Godwin
- Nina Keown
- Jonathan Hancock
- Susan Foster
- Lee Bennett

Bylaws Amendment Team:

- Robert Bateman
- Vicki Godwin
- Nina Keown
- Tyler Shoemake
- Bill Stripling
- Kristin Trees