

BYLAWS OF THE FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH OF PECULIAR, MISSOURI
(Revised 2023)

Article I Duties and Discipline of Members

Section I General Duties

- A. Attend – Each member is expected to faithfully attend the services of this church, to their best physical abilities.
- B. Serve – Each member is expected to be faithful in all duties essential to the Christian life, including the responsibility to share and serve in its organized work.
- C. Disciple – Each member is expected to proclaim the gospel faithfully, our goal is to evangelize the lost, according to God's Great Commission (Matthew: 28:19-20)

Section II Members in Good Standing

- A. Members in good standing are those members who are fulfilling the general duties of members of FBC Peculiar and living in line with the Covenant of FBC Peculiar.

Section III Discipline

- A. Should a concern arise between members of FBC Peculiar, the aggrieved member shall follow, in a tender spirit, the rules given by our Lord in Matthew 18. The aggrieved member will reach out to the aggrieving member for repentance, if that member does not respond or repent, two members will approach and speak with the aggrieving member. If that member still does not respond or repent, then the aggrieved member will bring the issue to the Pastor to be added to the agenda for the next Members' Meeting. The congregation will receive notice of a disciplinary vote at an upcoming Members' Meeting. Both the aggrieved member and the aggrieving member will have a chance to speak at Members' Meetings, moderated by the Pastors of the church before a vote is called for. The goal of this process is repentance and renewed fellowship in the body of Christ.
- B. If a member is absent from the regular worship gathering for six (6) consecutive months, they shall enter the attendance disciplinary process. At six (6) months of consecutive absences the Pastors of the church will lead the church in trying to connect with the absent member. If the church is unable to make contact or the member continues being absent then at nine (9) months another attempt will be made under the leadership of the Pastors to connect with the member. If at twelve (12) months the member is still absent, or cannot be contacted, that member will have their membership brought before the church for a vote of termination.

- C. Any person whose membership has been terminated because of an offense may be restored by vote of the church after the person has given evidence of repentance and reformation. If a person is restored to full membership, they will enter the church as a new member without any of their former responsibilities or positions of leadership.

Article II Membership, Acceptance, and Termination

Everyone desiring membership in this church, regardless of religious background will make their intention known in either one of the following ways:

1. They will make their decision public during a regular worship service. Following the public decision, they will meet with the Pastors who will then give the candidate guidance on becoming a member.
2. The candidate can reach out to the Pastors of the church to express their desire to become a member. The Pastors will give the candidate guidance on becoming a member. Following their contacting a Pastor the candidate should make their decision public during a regular worship service.

Section I Conversion

If the person's decision is that of accepting Christ as Lord and Savior, then the Pastors will ask the candidate to relate their conversion experience to help them be assured they have become a Christian. The Pastors will also explain baptism to the candidate. The person will then be presented to the church body for approval of baptism and following baptism, completion of the membership class, and affirmation of the covenant, full membership in the church will be granted.

Section II Uniting as a Christian

- A. If a person is coming from another Baptist church, they will meet with the Pastors and give evidence of their conversion and adherence to Baptist Faith and Message 2000. They will then be instructed to complete the next steps/membership class and sign the Covenant. Full membership will be extended pending the reception of a letter of recommendation from their former church, the completion of the membership class, and the signing of the Covenant.
- B. If a person is coming from another Baptist church but has lost his connection by a long absence, church destruction, or disbandment, they may be accepted in the way prescribed above without assuring a letter of recommendation from their former church.
- C. If a person is coming from a Christian church other than Baptist and finds themselves to be a Baptist in spirit and practice and has been baptized by immersion, believing that they were converted prior to their baptism, they will be

accepted in the way of a person coming from another Baptist church as described above. Following the person's acceptance into the membership, their former church will be notified of their decision.

- D. If a person is coming from another Christian church and has not been immersed as an already professed believer, they will relate their conversion experience to the Pastors. The Pastors will then counsel them to be baptized, attend a next steps/members' class, and sign the Covenant. Upon completing these three steps they will be presented to the church for membership. Following their acceptance, their former church will be notified of their decision.
- E. If a candidate for baptism (see above) is physically hindered (as evidenced by the Pastors) from being submersed, their agreement to the meaning and message of baptism will be acceptable for membership.

Section III Training requirements

Every person wishing to unite with this church will be required to complete a next steps/membership class, which are to be offered at least twice a year, and have signed the Covenant of First Baptist Church of Peculiar (appendix A) before being recommended for membership of the church.

Section IV Termination

A person may have their membership brought for termination before the church body at a Members' Meeting for the reason(s) listed below. To be terminated a two-thirds vote of those present at the Members' Meeting is necessary

- A. A letter of request from another Baptist church
- B. A letter of request from another Christian body
- C. Being an offense to the church as described in Article I, Section III

In the event a church member should pass away the church will, upon receiving formal notice of their death, remove them from membership. The church office will keep record of their passing.

(Note: All members moving away from the church far enough that their attendance cannot be regular, are urged to, as quickly as possible, become active in the church of their choice.)

Article III Finances

Section I The fiscal year shall begin on January 1 and end on December 31.

Section II The church budget will be prepared by the Finance Committee and the Pastoral Team and be adopted by a majority of members present at a regular or special called Members' Meeting.

Section III All financial policies of the church shall be listed in the financial policy manual created and maintained by the Finance Committee.

Article IV Use of Building and Equipment

Section I General Use

- A. The building and equipment shall be available to the church according to the operations manual created and maintained by the Operations Committee.
- B. Use of any equipment outside the building must first be cleared through the Operations Committee