

# CONSTITUTION OF FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH OF PECULIAR, MISSOURI (Revised 2023)

## **Article I Corporation Name and Location**

This organization shall be known as the First Baptist Church of Peculiar. Missouri, with principle office located in Peculiar, Missouri.

## **Article II Corporate Seal**

The corporate seal of the corporation shall have the words "First Baptist Church of Peculiar, Inc." in a circular scroll with the further words "Missouri" and "Seal" written thereon.

## **Article III Purpose**

The purpose of this corporation is to bring honor and glory to God through the advancement of the Kingdom of God. It shall seek to attain this end through evangelism, discipleship, and worship as guided by Scripture.

## **Article IV Government**

The government of this church shall be vested in the body of its membership. Each member shall have an equal voice in determining policies that are included as part of this record. This corporation shall be subject to the control of no other religious body but shall cooperate with the Blue River/Kansas City Baptist Association.

## **Article V Members and Meetings**

**Section I** The voting membership of this corporation shall consist of all the persons who are members of First Baptist Church of Peculiar, Missouri.

**Section II** Regular Members' Meetings are to be held on a quarterly basis. Members present shall constitute a quorum.

**Section III** Membership according to Article II of the Bylaws.

**Section IV** Meetings of the corporation may be called at any time by the Pastoral Team, Deacons, or twenty-five members if notice is given two Sundays in advance. Should the meeting be called by 25 members, there must first be a written request given to the Deacons, signed by the same 25 members desiring a meeting, stating the reason for the meeting.

**Section V** In all matters of parliamentary procedure, this body shall be governed by Robert's Rules of Order, revised.

**Section VI** The Senior Pastor, or his designee, will serve as Moderator at Members' Meeting. In his absence a Deacon, or a church member designated by the Deacons, shall serve as Moderator.

## **Article VI Corporation Funds**

All funds of the Corporation shall be deposited in such a bank or banks as the Finance Committee directs and be paid out by the Church Treasurer in such a manner as the church may direct. In case of special funds, an account may be created to require two signatures at the direction of the church. Any decision to take on debt as a church must be approved by seventy-five (75) percent of the members present at a regular or special called Members' Meeting.

## **Article VII Corporation Stipulations**

The Corporation shall support the Covenant, Article of Faith, and the Constitution and bylaws of the First Baptist Church of Peculiar, Missouri, and shall aid and assist the organization and membership of the First Baptist Church of Peculiar, Missouri, in all benevolent and religious enterprises in which said church may engage; and shall be subject to the usages and ministerial appointments of the First Baptist Church of Peculiar, Missouri, as are now or shall from time to time be established, made and declared by the lawful authority of said church; and no bylaw shall ever be adopted inconsistent with the provisions of said generally accepted doctrines, disciplines and faith of The Baptist Faith and Message 2000.

## **Article VIII Questions of Legality**

**Section I** In case the church should apostatize to the extent that a majority should attempt to pass upon questions requiring a 2/3 majority vote (altering of the constitution) and a dispute exists between the minority and the majority as to the legality of the act, the minority shall call a council from seven (7) "doctrine like" sister churches (no more than one representative from each church), to determine whether the bylaws or Constitution of this church has been violated. The decision of the said council shall be final, and if the bylaws or Constitution have been violated, the majority must submit to the minority, as all authority is herein vested in the members who are loyal to the bylaws and Constitution"

**Section II** Should a division of membership occur because of doctrinal differences, the title to and possessions of all property and assets owned by this congregation shall remain with the group holding the doctrinal position of The Baptist Faith and Message 2000. An advisory council shall be made up of six (6) representatives from "doctrine-like" sister churches (no more than one representative from each church) along with the Blue River/Kansas City Director of Missions. Parties of the outgoing group in the custody of physical properties shall immediately relinquish the same to proper church officers.

## **Article IX Article of Faith**

The First Baptist Church of Peculiar, Missouri subscribes to the statements of belief found in The Baptist Faith and Message 2000.

## **Article X Pastors/Elders/Overseers**

### **A. Qualifications and guidelines:**

Pastors shall seek to meet the qualifications of Pastors/Elders/Overseers in Scripture specifically those found in 1<sup>st</sup> Timothy 3 and 4, Titus 1, and 1<sup>st</sup> Peter. These qualifications are understood to include but not be limited to the following areas:

1. Call (1<sup>st</sup> Timothy 3:1): Every man serving in the office of Pastor shall express a calling of God to the office of Pastor
2. Character (1<sup>st</sup> Timothy 3:2-3,6-7): Every man serving in the office of Pastor should demonstrate Christian character that is above reproach. They should be marked by maturity in all their thoughts and deeds. Their reputation both in the church and the community should be without question. Areas for consideration of Christian character include but are not limited to, the raising of one's family, upholding a biblical sexual ethic, a person's speech and interpersonal conduct, humility, integrity, work ethic, and sobriety.
3. Competency (1<sup>st</sup> Timothy 3:2-4): Every man serving in the office of Pastor should display a level of competency in the areas of hospitality, leading, and biblical teaching
4. Chemistry (1<sup>st</sup> Peter 5): Every man serving in the office of Pastor should demonstrate compatibility with the congregation of FBC Peculiar and other Pastors of FBC Peculiar. Every Pastor of FBC Peculiar should seek to live among the people of FBC Peculiar.
5. Commission (1 Timothy 4:14,5:22): Every man serving in the office of Pastor must be affirmed by affirmation of the membership of FBC Peculiar. The commissioning of Pastor of FBC Peculiar is reserved solely for the membership of FBC Peculiar.

### **B. Duties and Responsibilities**

The duties and responsibilities of Pastors, as found in scripture, are expressed in the following four areas.

1. Teaching (Ephesians 4:11, 1 Timothy 5:17) The Pastors of FBC Peculiar are primary teachers of the church and are responsible for overseeing all teaching in the church.
2. Leading (1 Timothy 5:17, Matt 20:25-28) The Pastors of FBC Peculiar are entrusted by God and the local body with leading the church to accomplish its God-given mission.
3. Prayer (James 5:13-15) The Pastors of FBC Peculiar are to pray for those in the local body who are sick and in need.

4. Shepherding (1 Peter 5:2-3, Matt 20:25-28) The Pastors of FBC Peculiar are to care for the spiritual health of the members as those who will give account to God for the souls of the people under their care.

C. Election of new Pastors

1. Upon a vacancy of a Pastoral position or under the leadership of the Pastoral Team, the Senior Pastor (if applicable) and the Deacons, shall coordinate the election of the Search Team.
2. The Pastoral Search Team shall consist of five (5) members of FBC Peculiar. Eligible to serve on the Search Team are members of FBC Peculiar as defined in Article II of these bylaws.
3. FBC Peculiar members shall submit nominations of up to five (5) members to serve on the Search Team at a regular or special called Members' Meeting. For said meeting, no less than two (2) Sundays notice shall be given to the FBC Peculiar membership at all FBC Peculiar worship services.
4. The five (5) FBC Peculiar members with the most votes and agreeing to serve will be the Search Team. The members of the Search Team will be announced to FBC Peculiar at the next worship service after all five (5) positions have been filled. The next two (2) FBC Peculiar members receiving the most votes and agreeing to serve will be alternates to serve if a member of the Search Team is unable to complete his/her service on the Search Team. The alternates will not participate on the Search Team unless asked to fill the role of a member leaving the Search Team.
5. If more than one member of a household is nominated, such members of the household will choose between themselves which one member will serve on the Search Team.
6. FBC Peculiar's Senior Pastor, or another FBC Peculiar Pastor of his choosing, will serve as a voting ex officio member of all Search Teams.
7. In the absence of a Senior Pastor, the elected Search Team can allow an Interim Pastor or another Pastor of FBC Peculiar to serve as a voting ex-officio member of the search team.
8. The Search Team shall search for and unanimously recommend the calling of a candidate to FBC Peculiar. Recommendation by the Search Team constitutes a nomination. The vote to call a Pastor must be announced at all FBC Peculiar Sunday worship services at least two (2) Sundays in advance of the Members' Meeting for such vote. Approval for calling of a candidate requires seventy-five (75) percent affirmative vote of the members present at a regular or special called Members' Meeting of FBC Peculiar.
9. If there is a need for financial compensation, the financial package for the prospective Pastor, including salary and benefits, shall be approved by the Pastoral team, Personnel Committee, and Finance Committee. Such a financial package shall be presented to and approved by the prospective Pastoral Staff member prior to the formal calling.
10. Prior to the vote, the prospective Pastor will meet for a question-and-answer time with the Deacons, congregation, and any other groups of the membership, as determined by the Search Team. Any candidate for a

pastoral position shall preach at a Sunday morning worship service prior to a vote being taken to call such an individual.

**D. Termination**

The pastoral relationship may be terminated at any time by mutual consent of the Pastor and the church body. Two weeks notice must be given by the Pastor to the church or the church to the Pastor, whichever the case may be. The church may, however, terminate the Pastor's service immediately by a majority vote of the church at a special meeting called for the purpose, of which meeting public notice is given at least two (2) Sundays before such action. Any grievance against the Pastor requiring a Members' Meeting must follow the procedure outlined under Article V members and meetings twenty (20) percent of the church membership shall be considered a quorum for termination of a Pastor.

**E. Interim Pastors**

1. During a vacancy in the position of Senior Pastor, the Deacons, shall see that the pulpit is supplied and subsequently make a recommendation to FBC Peculiar for an Interim Pastor to serve during the vacancy.
2. During a vacancy of other Pastoral positions, and if the vacancy proves the need for an interim, the Senior Pastor, in conjunction with other members of the Pastoral Team, shall be responsible for making a recommendation to FBC Peculiar for an interim to serve during the vacancy.
3. All interim positions must be approved by seventy-five (75) percent of the members present at the regular or special called Members' Meeting. For said meeting, no less than a two (2) week notice shall be given to the FBC Peculiar membership at all FBC Peculiar worship services.

**Article XI Deacons**

**A. Qualifications and Guidelines:**

1. The church will endeavor to have a Deacon for every 10-15 resident families.
2. Each Deacon will meet the qualifications of 1<sup>st</sup> Timothy 3:8-13.
3. To qualify for a nomination to be a Deacon, every man must be a member of the church for one year. During his time, he must exhibit a strong Christian character and witness for Christ.

**B. Procedure for electing new Deacons**

1. As needed, the Deacons will recommend the names of men to replace those Deacons lost by letter, death, inactivity, and/or to raise the number of Deacons to correspond with the number of resident church families.
2. The men recommended to the church will be screened by the Deacons, will have been found to meet the above qualifications, and found willing to promote the duties of a Deacon listed below.

3. Although the Deacons will make the recommendation for new men, other members of the church may also make a nomination. If others are nominated, they will be screened by the Deacons.
4. The recommended men will then be presented at regular Members' Meetings and will be elected by secret ballot.
5. Any man who is not ordained upon being elected will then be trained and ordained as soon as possible.
6. Any Deacon transferring into the membership from another church will not automatically serve as a Deacon. He may be accepted, however, through the designated guidelines and procedures listed above without being ordained.

#### C. Duties and Disciplines

1. The Chairman of Deacons will automatically serve as the Assistant Moderator of the church.
2. Deacons will uphold all the values and ideas of the Covenant of FBC Peculiar.
3. He will be disciplined individually and collectively in brotherly love according to Matthew 18:15-17, Galatians 6:1-2 and I Thessalonians 5:12-24.
4. Should a Deacon fail to comply with the duties set forth above for a period of one year, he will become an inactive Deacon. Before the action is complete, however, he must be visited by two or more Deacons to see him reestablish his commitment. If this effort fails, the Chairman of Deacons will inform him by mail that he has become inactive.
5. The procedure to reverse the inactive decree will be as follows: The man will reestablish himself as an active member of the church for a period. if he then desires to become an active Deacon, he will request the same to the Deacon Chairman. The Chairman, in turn, will arrange with the Deacons for him to appear at the next regular deacons meeting to make his request. If the Deacons are satisfied with their screening, he may then be reinstated as an active Deacon.
6. Should the Deacon be overtaken in a fault to such an extent that he, in the judgment of the deacon body, has lost his witness, the offense will be brought before a regular church Members' Meeting along with the request that he be permanently relieved of the duties and credentials of a Deacon.
7. Should the church at any time desire to go to a rotating deacon system, this could be done without changing the Constitution and bylaws.

#### **Article XII Committees**

**Section I** FBC Peculiar shall keep three (3) standing Committees. These three (3) committees are Operations, Finance, and Personnel.

**Section II** Each committee shall be made up of five (5) members of the congregation nominated by the Pastoral Team and approved by a majority of the members present at a regular or special Members Meeting. Each member shall serve a five (5) year term with one member rotating off the committee every year. If a committee member needs to step down before their term is up a replacement shall be nominated by the Pastoral Team and approved by a majority of the members present at a regular or special Members' Meeting. This person shall complete the remaining term of the original committee member. Upon the completion of their term, a person is not eligible to be nominated for any committee for a period of one year. Every effort will be made to only have one person from each household serving on committees.

**Section III Operations:** This committee shall assist in the repair of all buildings and equipment of FBC Peculiar. They have the responsibility of using any building funds as long as the total amount does not exceed the designated amount in the yearly budget. This committee is responsible for creating and maintaining a building use manual.

**Section IV Finance:** This committee shall help review the financials of FBC Peculiar. They will meet regularly to review financial statements and work to provide a clear financial picture to the Pastoral Team and the church body. Along with the Pastoral Team, this group will work to create a yearly budget that is brought to the church for approval. This body will also be responsible for bringing to the church any financial requests outside of yearly budget expenses. This committee is responsible for creating and maintaining a financial policy manual.

**Section V Personnel:** This committee shall work alongside the Pastoral Team to hire, terminate, and supervise all non-pastoral positions. They will work alongside the Pastoral Team to help meet the staffing needs of the church. This committee is responsible for creating and maintaining a personnel policy manual.

**Section VI** All committees can set their own meeting times and need only meet as necessary to fulfill their responsibilities and duties. Each committee should ensure the office of the church is aware of their meetings and that minutes from each committee meeting are promptly submitted to the office for record keeping.

**Section VII** All committees upon meeting for the first time each year shall select by majority vote of the committee a Chairperson. This person's job is to help set meeting times, ensure proper communication between the committee, church, and Pastoral Team, and if necessary, speak on behalf of the committee at Members' Meetings.

**Section VIII** The Senior Pastor, or his designee from the Pastoral Team, shall serve as a voting ex-officio member of all standing committees.

**Section IX** Should the need arise, the Pastoral Team in tandem with the Deacons, can bring before the church the creation of a Task Force. This Task Force must have a defined purpose, a stated length of time, and can consist of as many members as the Pastors and Deacons deem necessary. The Pastoral Team and the Deacons will bring before the church at a regular or special called members meeting the purpose, length of time, and the members of this Task Force for approval by a majority of the members present. The Task Force shall upon the completion of their responsibilities present to the church a record of their work at a regular or special called Members' Meeting.

### **Article XIII Other Offices**

**Section I President:** This person shall sign all books, records, deeds, mortgages, conveyance, or any other instrument for and on behalf of the corporation that he may be authorized to sign and execute by the authority of the church and in general shall perform all duties incident to the office of President and such other duties as may be prescribed by the church from time to time.

**Section II Secretary:** This person shall keep an accurate record of minutes from all Members' Meetings. This person shall sign all books, records, deeds, mortgages, conveyance, or any other instrument for and on behalf of the corporation that he may be authorized to sign and execute by the authority of the church.

**Section III Treasurer:** This person shall assist the Finance Committee and Pastoral Team in reviewing the finances. This person shall sign all books, records, deeds, mortgages, conveyance, or any other instrument for and on behalf of the corporation that he may be authorized to sign and execute by the authority of the church. This person serves as a voting ex-officio member of the Finance Committee.

**Section IV** Any person serving in the roles listed above shall be nominated by the Pastoral Team and approved by a majority vote of the church at the regular or special called Members' Meeting. They shall serve a one (1) year term and cannot serve more than three (3) consecutive terms in a row.

### **Article XIV Amendment and Repeal**

The foregoing Constitution and bylaws may be amended or repealed, in whole or in part, by a two-thirds vote of all the voting members present at any regular or special Members' Meeting, providing that at least two (2) Sundays notice thereof shall first be given and noted of record, giving the time when the repeal or amendment intended will



be offered. Public announcement from the pulpit must be made by the Moderator or in his absence by the Deacons on the first Sunday following the offer of the proposed repeal or amendment.