

CONSTITUTION AND BYLAWS
FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH OF STILWELL
REVISION DATE: February 22, 2016

CONSTITUTION

PREAMBLE

Having banded ourselves together as a body of believers in Jesus Christ, we adopt this constitution to declare and preserve the principles of our faith, and these bylaws to govern this church family in an orderly manner.

NAME

This fellowship shall be known as the First Baptist Church of Stilwell, Kansas, Inc.

AFFILIATION

This church is affiliated with the American Baptist Churches/USA, (ABC/USA) on the local, state, and national levels.

PURPOSE

In obedience to the will of God, the First Baptist Church of Stilwell, as part of the body of Christ, shall be a faithful and growing family, sharing God's love with all people as led by the Holy Spirit.

BELIEFS

This Church Family holds to the following beliefs and principles:

1. God is Father Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth and all things seen and unseen.
2. Jesus Christ is God's only Son, our Lord and Savior.
3. Jesus was born of the Virgin Mary.
4. Jesus was crucified, dead and buried and on the third day God raised Him from the dead.
5. The Holy Spirit is the presence of God living within believers.
6. The Bible is God's Word, inerrant [without error] in its original languages and it is our authority for faith and life.
7. Every individual has the right to interpret the Bible for themselves and communicate with God personally.
8. In the interest of civil and religious liberty, the church and state should be separate, so that neither is under the control of the other.
9. The ordinance of "Believers Baptism" by immersion.
10. The ordinance of "The Lord's Supper".
11. The complete autonomy of the local church.
12. Because we are born with a sinful nature and choose to disobey God by living only for ourselves, we are in need of salvation.
13. Salvation is God's gracious gift to us through our belief in Jesus Christ.
14. Faith is trusting in God's provision for our lives now and for eternity.
15. Promote, support, and be active in missions and evangelism world-wide.
16. A person becomes a Christian by the confession of his/her sins, believing that Jesus died on the cross as a personal sacrifice for them, asking Jesus to take control of his/her heart (moral center)

- and repenting (promising with the help of the Holy Spirit) to go a different direction for the rest of their lives.
17. All believers are called to extend unconditional selfless love, unconditional grace (kindness), unconditional mercy (forgiveness) and unconditional generosity to each other and to the world.

BYLAWS

Article I

MEMBERSHIP

- Section 1 CANDIDACY:** Any person requesting membership will be interviewed by a pastor or a pastor appointed designee to determine candidacy. Criteria for membership is by one of the following:
1. Upon confession of faith in Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord, followed by baptism by immersion.
 2. By letter from another Baptist Church, or some other Christian church having been baptized by immersion.
 3. Upon statement of prior Christian experience and having been baptized by immersion.
 4. By reinstatement (See Section 5.4)

Section 2 APPROVAL OF CANDIDATES:

1. Approval of the candidate shall take place immediately after the individual comes forward and asks to become a member of the church unless baptism by immersion has not yet taken place or immediately after the individual is baptized.
2. The congregation shall approve and affirm by applauding the candidate's decision to become a church member.

Section 3 DUTIES OF A MEMBER:

All members shall strive to:

1. Live according to the Bible.
2. Financially support the church on a regular and consistent basis.
3. Participate in and support the ministries of this church family.

Section 4 MEMBERSHIP STATUS

1. Active - One who regularly fulfills the duties of a member.
2. Inactive - One who has not attended for one year and also who has not contributed financially for one year. Inactive members are ineligible to vote at business meetings

Section 5 DISMISSAL OF MEMBERS:

Dismissal from this church shall be by:

1. Death.
2. Request of letter of transfer.
3. Request for erasure of name.
4. Removal of inactive member - any member who is inactive may be recommended for dismissal by the Board of Deacons at a business meeting. A three-fourths vote of those members present and voting shall be required for such dismissal. Members dismissed may be reinstated as a candidate upon their request.

Article II

INDIVIDUAL OFFICES

Section 1 OFFICERS AND DUTIES:

All officers are elected annually unless stated otherwise and must be members of the Church.

1. *Moderator*
 - a) Presides at all business meetings of the church.
 - b) Appoints temporary special committees as needed.
 - c) Serves as the official corporate head of the church.
 - d) Term of two consecutive years of service.
2. *Vice Moderator*
 - a) Performs the duties of the Moderator in absence of the Moderator.
 - b) Serves as the Parliamentarian.
 - c) Term of two consecutive years of service.
3. *Clerk*
 - a) Keeps accurate minutes of all business proceedings.
 - b) Keeps accurate records of membership.
 - c) Issues letters of dismissal.
 - d) Oversees preparation of denominational reports.
 - e) Conducts official correspondence as requested by the church.
 - f) Co-custodian of the church safety deposit box.
 - g) Term of three consecutive years of service.
4. *Assistant Clerk*
 - a) Performs the duties of the clerk in absence of the Clerk.
 - b) Assists the Clerk as needed.
 - c) Term of two consecutive years of service.
5. *Treasurer*
 - a) Custodian of all monies contributed for the general fund.
 - b) Serves as a member of the Finance Committee.
 - c) Pays all bills by check or electronic funds transfer.
 - d) Prepares and presents quarterly and annual financial reports to the membership.
 - e) Prepares special reports upon request of the Finance Committee.
 - f) Provides financial data to Church Clerk for inclusion in denominational reports.
 - g) Co-custodian of church safety deposit box.
 - h) Term of two consecutive years of service.
6. *Assistant Treasurer*
 - a) Performs the duties of the Treasurer in the absence of the Treasurer.
 - b) Serves as a member of the Finance Committee
 - c) Enlists and coordinates church members to count, record, and deposit weekly offerings.
 - d) Maintains record of individual contributions.

- e) Custodian of the Memorial Fund.
 - f) Term of three consecutive years of service.
7. *Cluster Representatives*: Two - preferably one male and one female.
- a) Represent the church and participate in all cluster activities and functions.
 - b) Serve as the official representatives of the church at all ordination councils.
 - c) Term of three consecutive years of service.
8. *Head Usher*: Enlists and coordinates church members to be ushers and greeters.
- a) Term of three consecutive years of service.
 - b)

Article III

BOARDS

Every member of each board must be a member of the church. At the first meeting of each Church year, a chairperson shall be elected by each board unless otherwise stated. Each board shall submit an annual budget to the Finance Committee.

Each board may choose to have a Youth Representative as an additional member of that board. Term of office shall be one year. A Youth Representative shall be at least 15 years of age.

Section 1 BOARD OF DEACONS

1. Consists of a minimum of seven Deacons plus additional Deacons as needed to adequately assist the pastor in caring for the needs of the church family.
2. *Term of Office*: Term limit of three consecutive years in office.
3. *Responsibilities*:
 - a) In conjunction with the pastor, provide spiritual guidance to the church including attending at least three worship services each month.
 - b) Assist in providing the pulpit supply when needed.
 - c) Assist the pastor in visiting and caring for the needs of the church family.
 - d) Assist in the preparation and the observances of the ordinances of the church.
 - e) Determine the use of the memorial fund monies in conjunction with the Board of Trustees.
 - f) Support and uphold the Purpose of this church family as stated in this Constitution and the fundamental tenets of Christianity which are unconditional love, grace, mercy and generosity.
 - g) Any disputes that arise over the interpretation of these bylaws shall be deferred to the Deacons with the advice of the Senior Pastor.
4. *Voting*: All board members shall be entitled to vote for the purpose of conducting the official business of the board.
5. *New Deacons*: When the need arises for a new Deacon:
 - a) The Deacons will suggest and review potential deaconate candidates and after a majority of deacons approve, they shall ascertain if the candidate desires to serve. If the answer is "yes" then the candidate's (or candidates') name(s) will be placed before the congregation for approval at the next business meeting by the Chair of Deacons.
6. Once approved a Deacon may serve until he or she retires, resigns or is terminated.

Section 2 BOARD OF TRUSTEES

1. Consists of three members.
2. *Term of Office:* Three Years with one member elected each year.
3. *Responsibilities:*
 - a) Hold in trust all property belonging to the church and take all necessary measures for its protection, management, and up-keep.
 - b) Determine the use of the Memorial Fund monies in conjunction with the Board of Deacons.
 - c) Secure and supervise the services of a facilitator/custodian at a salary within the approved budget.

Section 3 BOARD OF CHRISTIAN EDUCATION

1. Consists of six elected members with one elected to each of the following positions:
 - a) Board Chairperson
 - b) Adult Chairperson
 - c) Youth Chairperson
 - d) Children's Chairperson
 - e) Family Life Chairperson
 - f) Missions Chairperson
2. *Term of office for six elected members:* Three year terms with two members elected each year.
3. *Responsibilities:*
 - a) Do everything possible to ensure church family grows in its biblical knowledge and understanding.
 - b) Provide resources as needed for Adult, Youth, Children, and Family Life ministries.
 - c) Promote Missions and provide Mission education.
 - d) Appoint all Christian education staff and approve all related materials.

Article IV

COMMITTEES

The following listed committees are standing committees. Temporary committees may be created as needed. Temporary committees that are exploratory or advisory in nature may include non-members. Every member of the Nominating, Finance Committees must be a member of the Church. Nonmembers may serve on the Worship Committee and the Fellowship Committees as long as at least two members of each committee are church members. At the first meeting of each Church year a chairperson shall be elected by each standing committee from among their elected members. Each standing committee shall submit an annual budget to the Finance Committee.

Each standing committee may choose to have a Youth Representative as an additional member of that committee. Term of office shall be one year. A Youth Representative shall be at least 15 years of age.

Section 1 WORSHIP COMMITTEE

1. Consists of three elected members two of whom must be official church members with at least one of those being a representative from the Praise Team.
2. *Term of office:*
 - a) Three year term with one elected each year.
3. *Responsibilities:*
 - a) In conjunction with the Senior Pastor and Associate Pastor, help plan and coordinate elements of the worship service so that each element of the worship services glorified God and works together to make a cohesive service.
 - b) Create opportunities and actively seek out regular church attenders to be involved in various portions of the worship services.
 - c) Create learn about and try new ways to engage people in the worship of God. (Video, prayer times/stations, testimonies, drama, experiential elements, music, etc.)
 - d) Ensure that the musical instruments, video equipment and sound equipment are all in good working condition. Making sure problems are dealt with in a timely manner.
 - e) Work with Praise Team, sound booth operators and ushers to ensure all responsibilities are covered at every worship service.

Section 2 FELLOWSHIP COMMITTEE

1. Consists of three elected members two of whom must be official church members.
2. *Term of Office:*
 - a) Elected members: Three year term with one elected each year.
3. *Responsibilities:*
 - a) Coordinate all social activities of the church and/or schedule these events.
 - b) Provide a hostess for all weddings.
 - c) Facilitate decor for all events.
 - d) Appoint a food coordinator for funeral dinners and other meals as needed.
 - e) Keep kitchen supplied with all necessary products.

Section 3 NOMINATING COMMITTEE

1. Consists of three elected members.
2. *Term of Office:* Three year term with one elected each year.
3. *Responsibilities:*
 - a) With the help and advice of the Pastors enlist one or more qualified candidates for each position to be filled.
 - b) Present a proposed ballot to the membership by September 15.
 - c) Present the ballot of candidates for election at the October quarterly business meeting.
 - d) With the help and advice of the Pastors enlist and present candidates to fill vacated offices during the year.

Section 4 FINANCE COMMITTEE

1. Consists of three elected members and the Church treasurer(s) and Assistant treasurer(s).
2. *Term of office of elected members:* Three year term with one elected each year.
3. *Responsibilities:*
 - a) Prepare an annual church budget.
 - b) Promote stewardship.

- c) Oversee financial matters of the church.
- d) Once every five years (or whenever the Finance Committee recommends) conduct a compliance check of the church's financial records. Compliance check will be done by an accountant or similarly qualified person who is not a member of this church and has no relatives attending this church.
- e) This committee will have at least one formal meeting per quarter that includes the pastoral staff.

Article V

AUXILIARY ORGANIZATIONS

Auxiliary organizations are groups formed within the church for the purpose of facilitating special ministries. The objectives of each group shall not conflict with the purpose and beliefs as stated in this Constitution. Meetings of these groups may be held at such times as will not conflict with meetings of the church.

Article VI

PASTOR(S)

Section 1 REQUIREMENTS

1. The senior pastor shall be a believer and a preacher of the Gospel.
2. The senior pastor shall support and uphold this constitution.
3. The senior pastor shall be licensed and ordained as a minister by the American Baptist Churches of the USA.

Section 2 DUTIES:

1. Preach the Gospel.
2. Administer the ordinances.
3. Promote the spiritual interests of the church.
4. Be an ex-officio member of all church boards, committees and auxiliary organizations.
5. Exercise pastoral care and leadership.
6. Perform duties as defined in a "Minister/Church Agreement".
7. Any disputes that arise over the interpretation of these bylaws shall be deferred to the highest authority of this church. In this case, it would be the Senior Pastor with the advice of the Board of Deacons.

Section 3 CALLING A SENIOR PASTOR:

When there is a senior pastoral vacancy, the church will elect a Search Committee:

1. This committee shall consist of five members that are representative of the general membership.
2. *Term of Office:* Until dismissed by a vote of the membership at a business meeting.
3. It shall be the duty of this committee to take the necessary steps to secure a pastor as follows:
 - a) Consult with the local ABC/USA representative for potential candidates.
 - b) Investigate the merits of each potential candidate under consideration in regard to personal character, education, ministerial record, and preaching ability to determine fitness for said senior pastorate.

- c) When a suitable candidate is found, negotiate a "Minister/Church Agreement" with said candidate, detailing salary, benefits, and responsibilities.
 - d) Present said candidate to the church for consideration. (Only one candidate shall be presented at a time.)
 - e) Recommend the candidate to be called.
4. The recommendation shall come before the church at a regular or called business meeting, notice of such meeting and its purpose having been read from the pulpit on two successive Sundays. Eighty percent of the voters present and voting must be in favor to extend a call. The vote shall be by written ballot.
 5. If a call is extended, the Search Committee will present the "Minister/Church Agreement" for approval by a majority vote of those members present and voting.
 6. When a call is accepted, a Pastoral Relations Committee consisting of three members from the Search Committee (including alternates, if any) and two Deacons, selected by their respective committee or board, shall be formed to serve for one year commencing when the Senior Pastor's duties begin. It shall be the duty of this committee to:
 - (a) Guide the pastor as to the internal workings of the church
 - (b) Be an advocate for the pastor.
 - (c) Serve as a liaison between the church family and the pastor.

After one year, the continuation and make-up of a Pastoral Relations Committee shall be at the discretion of the pastor.

Section 4 TERM OF OFFICE: Shall be for an indefinite period of time.

Section 5 TERMINATION:

1. The term of office may be ended upon thirty day notification on the part of the senior pastor or the church.
2. Termination of the office by the church shall be voted on at a regular or called business meeting, notice of such meeting and its purpose having been read from the pulpit on two successive Sundays.
3. A vote of the majority of the members present and voting shall make valid the termination of said office.

Section 6 INTERIM PASTOR: When there is a senior pastoral vacancy, The Board of Deacons will be responsible for securing an interim senior pastor with the approval of the church.

B. ASSOCIATE PASTOR(S)

Section 1 REQUIREMENTS

1. An associate pastor shall be a believer of the Gospel.
2. An associate pastor shall support and uphold the Purpose and Beliefs as stated in this constitution.

Section 2 DUTIES:

1. Promote the spiritual interests of the church.
2. Be an ex-officio member of appropriate church boards, committees and auxiliary organizations.
3. Exercise pastoral care and leadership.

4. Perform duties as defined in a "Minister/Church Agreement".

Section 3 CALLING AN ASSOCIATE PASTOR:

When there is an associate pastoral vacancy, the church will elect a Search Committee:

1. This committee shall consist of three members that are representative of the general membership, one deacon, the Senior Pastor, and two representatives of the specific area(s) of responsibility of the associate pastor being sought.
2. *Term of Office:* Until dismissed by a vote of the membership at a business meeting.
3. It shall be the duty of this committee to take the necessary steps to secure an associate pastor as follows:
 - a) Consult with the local ABC/USA representative for potential candidates.
 - b) Investigate the merits of each potential candidate under consideration in regard to personal character, education, and ministerial record to determine fitness for said associate pastorate.
 - c) When a suitable candidate is found, negotiate a "Minister/Church Agreement" with said candidate, detailing salary benefits, and responsibilities.
 - d) Present said candidate to the church for consideration. (Only one candidate shall be present at a time.)
 - e) Recommend the candidate to be called.
4. The recommendation shall come before the church at a regular or called business meeting, notice of such meeting and its purpose having been read from the pulpit on two successive Sundays. Eighty percent of the voters present and voting must be in favor to extend a call. The vote shall be by written ballot.
5. If a call is extended, the Search Committee will present the "Minister/Church Agreement" for approval by a majority vote of those members present and voting.

Section 4 TERM OF OFFICE: Shall be for an indefinite period of time.

Section 5 TERMINATION:

1. The term of office may be ended upon thirty day notification on the part of an associate pastor or the church.
2. Termination of the office by the church shall be voted on at a regular or called business meeting, notice of such meeting and its purpose having been read from the pulpit on two successive Sundays.
3. A vote of the majority of the members present and voting shall make valid the termination of said office.

Section 6 INTERIM PASTOR: When there is an associate pastoral vacancy, The Board of Deacons will, at their option, be responsible for securing an interim associate pastor with the approval of the church.

Article VII

ELECTIONS

Section 1 TIME: The annual election of officers, board members, and committee members will be at the October business meeting. The terms of office will begin January 1.

Section 2 PROCEDURES:

1. The nominating committee will present the slate of officers. The floor will then be open for nominations for any position. Individual voting will occur if there is more than one candidate for a position.
2. Anyone nominated from the floor must be present at the time of election, or written consent from the nominee must be presented to the presiding officer at the time of the meeting.
3. A simple majority vote of those present and voting is required for election.

Section 3 RESIGNATIONS: Resignation of office shall be in writing to the church clerk who will present it to the church for official action.

Section 4 TERMINATIONS: If an officer fails to faithfully perform the duties pertaining to that office, the church has the power of recall. Removal of an officer from office can be done at any business meeting by a majority vote.

Section 5 FILLING VACANCIES: Vacancies that occur during the year may be filled for the unexpired term at any business meeting.

Article VIII

MEETINGS

Section 1 BUSINESS MEETINGS:

1. Regularly scheduled meetings will be held in January, April, July, and October.
2. The date and time will be established by Moderator, Clerk, Treasurer(s) and Pastors.
3. The date and time shall be published at least two weeks prior to meeting. Notice shall be sent by all means available.
4. *Quorum*: Twenty-five qualified voting members shall constitute a quorum. A majority of such members present and voting at any regular business meeting shall be sufficient to decide on any question presented, unless otherwise provided by these bylaws.
5. *Voting*:
 - a) Voting on any motion at any meeting shall be by secret ballot if so requested by any voter.
 - b) Members must be present to vote.
 - c) *Qualifications*: On matters pertaining to the purchase sale or mortgaging of real property, only members who are of legal age are entitled to vote. On all other matters, members fifteen years of age or older are entitled to vote.
6. *Robert's Rules of Order*: The rules contained in Robert's Rules of Order shall govern the business proceedings of this church in all cases where they are consistent with the Constitution.

Section 2 ANNUAL MEETING:

1. The January meeting will be the annual business meeting.
2. The annual business meeting will be held for the purpose of receiving the annual reports of individual officers, boards, and committees of the church, and its auxiliary organizations; The transactions of such other business as is proper to come before this meeting.
3. Notice shall be sent by all means available.

Section 3 SPECIAL BUSINESS MEETINGS:

1. May be called by either pastor, the moderator, clerk, or upon written request of a quorum of the members of the church.
6. A specially called business meeting may be held to consider special matters of a significant nature. A one week notice of the subject, date, time, and location must be given for the specially called business meeting unless extreme urgency renders such notice impractical. Notice shall be sent by all means available.
2. No other matters may be brought before the membership.

Section 4 DEVOTIONAL MEETINGS:

The church shall meet each Lord's Day [Sunday] for worship, Christian instruction (the study and teaching of the Bible) and at such other times as the church may decide.

Article X

Building Use Rules and Guidelines

**FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH OF STILWELL, KS
RULES AND GUIDELINES FOR FACILITY USE
FOR NON-CHURCH FUNCTIONS**

These rules and guidelines are intended to direct the use of the First Baptist Church Stilwell facilities by members and non-members for all non-church functions. Non-church functions are defined as "Any usage of the facilities which is not planned, organized, sponsored or scheduled by a recognized group or committee or board that is by definition a part of the Stilwell First Baptist Church". Weddings and receptions are considered non-church functions for the purpose of these rules and guidelines. These rules are intended to ensure the facilities are available on a priority basis for church functions and maintained in a condition to minimally impact church upkeep.

1. Functions must be scheduled with the Trustees or in their absence the Senior Pastor and placed on the Official Church Calendar (located on the church secretary's desk) at least one week in advance of the date of the event to ensure that there are no conflicts. Preference will be given to official church events over non-church events.
2. The following activities are prohibited: smoking, alcoholic beverages (even if they are being consumed from a container that does not indicate their alcoholic nature - including punch bowls or pitchers of punch); loud music and dancing.
3. Equipment such as chairs, tables, etcetera, must be returned to the location from which they were moved prior to the event. All areas of the facility must be left in an equal or better condition of cleanliness that they were prior to the event. Access is restricted to the area approved for use for this event. Closest restroom must be used. Access to all other areas is expressly prohibited.
4. Any damage to facilities, grounds or equipment is the responsibility of the person making the reservation for the facility's use. A refundable deposit of \$100 is required at the time when the reservation is made. If facilities are in the same condition after the event as they were before the event, the deposit will be returned. If not, the cost of repairs will be deducted and the balance (if any) refunded.
5. Functions must end and the premises be vacated by 11:00 PM unless prior express approval to do otherwise has been given in writing by the Trustees or in their absence the Senior Pastor.

6. Event planner whose signature appears below agrees that he/she, the group he/she represents and all attendees of their non-church event will NOT hold First Baptist Church Stilwell or the pastoral staff or any person representing the church liable for any injuries, damages or other liabilities of any kind that arise as a result of this non-church event being held on church grounds. Proof of event planner's liability insurance must be provided upon request.
7. For functions not involving members of the First Baptist Church Stilwell, non-church event planners must arrange for a church member to be present during the course of their event.
8. Be it known by all parties that First Baptist Church Stilwell is NOT a place of public accommodation. We do not rent our facilities for money nor do we use our facilities in any way to generate income other than by holding worship services and related spiritual activities.
9. Approval of the use of these facilities for non-church related events can only be granted in writing by the Trustees or in their absence, the Senior Pastor.

I have read and I agree to abide by the above "Rules and Guidelines for Facility Use for Non-Church Functions".

Requested Date for event _____

Stated Purpose of Event _____

Date Signed _____

Signed _____

[Signature of the responsible party representing the non-church group desiring to use these facilities]

[Printed Name]

[Address]

[City, State and Zip]

[Best Phone Number to use to reach this individual]

Article X

PRIVACY STATEMENT

The church takes every reasonable precaution to maintain the privacy and security of personal and financial information provided by its members. Our membership list or any other information collected is not sold or made available to any party outside of the church body for any reason.

Article XI

CHURCH YEAR

The Church's business year shall be from January 1 to December 31.

Article XII

REVISIONS

This Constitution and Bylaws may be revised or amended at any regular or called business meeting of the church by a two-thirds vote of those members present and voting. Notice shall be sent by all means available. Such change must be available in written form and read from the pulpit on two successive Sundays preceding the business meeting.