

CONSTITUTION

THE FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH OF THE CITY OF WASHINGTON, D.C.
16th and O Streets, NW, Washington, D.C. 20036

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**THE FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH
OF THE CITY OF WASHINGTON, D.C.**

(Incorporated as a Religious Society under the
Laws of the District of Columbia)

CONSTITUTION

ARTICLE I - NAME

Section 1 - The name of this Church shall be The First Baptist Church of the City of Washington, D.C.

ARTICLE II- OBJECTIVES

Section 1 - United by the grace of God in Christian experience and recognizing and receiving the Bible as the inspired Word of God for the people of God, authoritative in all matters of faith and practice, the members of this Church declare its objectives to be:

A. To maintain the worship of God and to develop the spiritual lives of those who make up the fellowship of this Church to the end that its Christian influence may be extended in the service of Christ both in this community and to all people everywhere.

B. To provide a Christian witness in the nation's capital, faithful to the Baptist tradition and focused on the teachings of Jesus as applied to life today.

C. To cultivate within the Church's fellowship a deep respect for the dignity of each individual, with tolerance for the views of those whose convictions differ, and in all matters to be motivated by mutual love as exemplified in the life and teachings of Christ.

D. To contribute the resources both spiritual and financial, of this Church in a united effort with other Baptist organizations and other Christian bodies and groups whose objectives are common to those of this Church. Historically these have included: the District of Columbia Baptist Convention, the Southern Baptist Convention, the American Baptist Churches in the U.S.A., the Cooperative Baptist Fellowship, the Alliance of Baptists, and the Baptist World Alliance.

ARTICLE III - MEMBERSHIP

Section 1 - The Church shall consist of applicants for membership who: have made a profession of faith in Christ as Savior and Lord; desire to be numbered among His disciples; accept the faith and practices of this Church; embrace the disciplines of the

Covenant; satisfy the membership requirements of the Bylaws; and are thereafter accepted for membership by vote of the Church.

Section 2 – Church Covenant

Having been brought by Divine Grace to receive the Lord Jesus Christ, and to give up ourselves to Him,

And remembering that as we have been voluntarily baptized and united in Christian experience, so there is on us a special obligation, henceforth, to lead a new and holy life,

We do now, relying on His gracious aid, solemnly covenant with one another:

That we will walk together in Christ-like love as becomes the members of a Christian church;

That we will exercise an affectionate care and watchfulness over, and faithfully admonish and entreat one another as occasion may require;

That we will not forsake the assembling of ourselves together, nor neglect to pray for ourselves and others;

That we will endeavor to bring up those under our care in the nurture and admonition of the Lord, and by a pure and lovely example to win our kindred and acquaintances to the Savior, to holiness, and to eternal life,

That we will rejoice in one another's happiness, and endeavor with tenderness and sympathy to bear one another's burdens and sorrows;

That we will seek by Divine aid to live circumspectly in the world, practicing and advocating temperance, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts;

That we will strive together, and contribute of our means for the support of a faithful evangelical ministry, and for the spread of the Redeemer's Kingdom among all persons;

And that through life, amidst evil report and good report, we will humbly and earnestly seek to live to glorify Him who has called us out of darkness into His marvelous light.

Section 3 - Admission and termination of membership shall be as prescribed in the Bylaws.

ARTICLE IV - OFFICERS

Section 1 - The officers of this Church are:

Pastor

Associate and/or Assistant Pastor(s)

Moderator

Superintendent of the Church School

President of the Woman's Society

Clerk

Treasurer

Financial Secretary

Assistant Financial Secretary
Librarian
Historian
Director of Publicity

Section 2 - The terms of office and duties of the officers shall be as prescribed in the Bylaws.

ARTICLE V - FORM OF ORGANIZATION

Section 1 – The Church will seek to conduct its business in the presence of God, under the Lordship of Jesus Christ, with the guidance of the Holy Spirit. The form of government shall be democratic. The source of authority shall be the congregation of the membership. All matters of Church policy which are not otherwise specifically provided for in the Church Constitution and Bylaws shall be established by the Church through a majority vote at any regular or special business meeting.

Section 2 - The objectives and needs of this Church are addressed through: the Church Council, the Diaconate, the Board of Trustees, and committees and auxiliary organization.

Section 3 - The membership, terms of office, and duties of the standing organizations shall be prescribed in the Bylaws. The membership, duties, and duration of special committees shall be prescribed by the Church.

Section 4 - Any Member of the Church as defined in the ByLaws shall be entitled to attend any meeting of the organizations in Section 2 of this Article and to have the privilege of the floor, except when the organization by vote of those present and voting goes into executive session or limits the privilege of the floor to members of the organization. When the organization goes into executive session, the reason for this action shall be stated in the minutes of that meeting and made available to any member of the congregation upon request.

Section 5 – An Integrated Auxiliary of the Church is The First Baptist Church of the City of Washington, D.C. Foundation, Inc., an independent 501(C)(3) corporation.

ARTICLE VI - MEETINGS

Section 1 - Services of worship shall be held each Lord's Day (Sunday) and at such other times as the pastoral staff in consultation with the Church Council may determine.

Section 2 - Business meetings of the Church shall be as follows:

A. The Church fiscal year shall begin January 1st and end December 31st. The meeting for the adoption of the budget for the ensuing fiscal year shall be on a date established by the Church Council each year, preferably in November.

B. The Church program year shall begin May 1st and end April 30th. Quarterly business meetings shall be held on the date of a midweek night or Sunday service in May, September, November, and February. The Church Council shall establish specific dates each year. The May meeting shall be known as the Annual Meeting. All officers and standing organizations shall file with the Moderator written reports of their work for the past year to be submitted to the Church at the Annual Meeting.

C. The election of officers to fill vacancies in office arising through the normal expiration of specified terms shall be held in April of each year on a date established by the Church Council. Vacancies arising from any other cause may be filled at any business meeting.

D. Special business meetings may be called by the Pastor or the Moderator. The Moderator shall call a special business meeting upon the written request of twenty-five members of the Church. In all cases, notice of place, time, and matter to be considered at each special business meeting shall be given at a Sunday morning worship service at least three days before the proposed meeting.

E. Quorum at business meetings will be as set forth in the ByLaws.

ARTICLE VII- ORDINANCES AND ORDINATION

Section 1 - The ordinances shall be Baptism and the Lord's Supper.

A. Baptism shall be by the immersion of believers.

B. The Lord's Supper shall be observed at such times as prescribed by the Pastor in consultation with the Diaconate, normally on the first Sunday of each month.

Section 2 – Ordination of Ministers by the Church will be in accordance with the Policies and Procedures Document of the Church.

ARTICLE VIII - AMENDMENTS

Section 1 - This Constitution may be amended by a vote of three-fourths of the membership present and voting at a quarterly business meeting, provided that the notice of intent to amend is published in writing at a previous quarterly business meeting and that notice is given in the *Weekly Update* or its successor publication within sixty days and at least twenty days before the time of voting on the amendment.

Section 2 - The Bylaws to this Constitution may be amended by a two-thirds vote of the members present and voting at any business meeting held in accordance with ARTICLE VI, provided that the notice of intent to amend is published in writing at a previous business meeting held at least thirty days before the time of voting and that notice is given in the *Weekly Update* or its successor publication at least fifteen days before the time of voting on the amendment.