**FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH WIMBERLEY**

**CONSTITUTION AND BYLAWS**

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**First Baptist Church Wimberley, Texas**

**Constitution and Bylaws**

**Preamble**

The purpose of this document is to clearly define the structure by which we fulfill the mandate Jesus Christ has given the Church. Clarity of structure should produce better relationships, promote unity, and celebrate the presence of God as we work together for God’s will. It is our desire to function as a healthy New Testament Church for the glory of Jesus Christ. For this reason we express our desire in the following preamble to be followed by our governance structure as expressed in these bylaws.

The Church that we see is a Church of influence, a Church on purpose, whose heart is so large that the cities and nations cannot ignore it. A Church with a message so clear that lives are changed forever. A Church God is using to reach broken people at such a pace that buildings struggle to contain the increase.

We see a Church whose heartfelt praise touches heaven and changes earth through worship that exalts Jesus Christ.

We see a church that is devoted to **connecting** people into fellowship with God and each other; **growing** people into spiritual maturity; helpingpeople to **serve** in ministry; and passionate about **sharing** thelove of God in word and deed.

We see a church that is so dependent on the Holy Spirit that nothing will stop her nor stand against her. A Church whose people are unified, praying and devoted to Christ and to one another.

We see a church that has a message so clear that lives are changed forever and potential is fulfilled through the power of God's word.

We see a Church so compassionate that people are drawn from impossible situations into loving and friendly circles of hope, where answers are found and acceptance is given.

We see a Church so kingdom minded that she counts whatever the cost and pays whatever the price to see lives changed.

We see a Church that is empowering and equipping people in order to contribute back into the life of their community increasing their sense of value, self-worth and dignity.

We see a Church with a passionate global vision desiring to communicate God’s love and bring God's PEACE to the ends of the earth.

We see a Church so committed to raising, training and empowering a generation of leaders who Build Lives that all of her efforts are consumed with this goal.

We see a Church whose head is Jesus, whose help is the Holy Spirit and whose focus is the Great Commandment and the Great Commission.

Yes, the Church that We see is this Church, First Baptist Church Wimberley, Texas, our Church, God's Church....all for Jesus!

# Article I. Name

The name of this nonprofit organization shall be First Baptist Church Wimberley (FBCW) of Wimberley, Texas with principal offices at 15951 Winters Mill Parkway, Wimberley, Texas 78676. The Articles of Incorporation for the church are on file with the Secretary of State in Austin Texas. Electronic and paper copies of these documents are available at the church office upon request.

# Article II. Purpose

Our purpose is to bring glory to God by leading people to spiritual transformation, thus building lives which honor God and fulfilling the Great Commission (Matt. 28:19-20) by carrying out the Great Commandment (Matt. 22:36-40). We seek to accomplish this by:

1. **Honoring**: Exalting Jesus in worship and lifestyle, honoring Jesus above all others, and honoring all mankind as created by God;
2. **Connecting:** Leading people into a life changing encounter with Jesus Christ and bringing them into fellowship with the local church
3. **Growing:** Leading people to connect in life changing gatherings both large and small in order to help them become more like Jesus. This is called discipleship.
4. **Serving**: Helping people discover their unique role in the church family leading them to act in love to impact our community and world, and serve God by serving others; and
5. **Sharing:** Reaching others for Christ, sharing God’s love, and our faith through authentic relationships. Helping people live a life sent out by God to share His love through Christ.

# Article III. Statement of Faith (Core Beliefs)

Our Statement of Faith guides FBCW teachings and practices, consistent with the *2000 Baptist Faith and Message*: http://www.sbc.net/bfm2000/bfm2000.asp. The following beliefs are the essentials with which we agree:

The Bible: Our creed is the Bible, the sole basis of our belief, composed of sixty-six books of the Old and New Testaments. This scripture entirely originated with God, and it was given through the instrumentality of chosen men. Thus, scripture at one and the same time speaks with the authority of God and reflects the background, styles, and vocabulary of human authors. The scriptures are infallible and inerrant in the original manuscripts. They are the unique, full, and final authority on matters of faith and practice, and there are no other writings similarly inspired by God. (Matthew 5:18-19; 2 Timothy 3:16-17)

God: There is one true, holy God, eternally existing in three persons: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, each of whom possesses equally all attributes of the Deity and the characteristics of personality. In the beginning, God created out of nothing the world and all the things therein, thus manifesting the glory of His power, wisdom, and goodness. By sovereign power He continues to sustain creation. By His Providence He is operating throughout history to fulfill His redemptive purposes. (1 John 5:7; Genesis 1-2)

## Salvation: The central purpose of God’s revelation of scripture is to call all people into fellowship with Him. Originally created to have fellowship with God, man defied God, choosing to go his independent way and was thus alienated from God. Man suffered the corruption of his nature, rendering him unable to please God. The fall took place at the beginning of human history, and all individuals since have suffered those consequences and thus are in need of the saving grace of God. The salvation of mankind is wholly a work of God’s free grace, not in any way the result of human works or goodness. Each person must personally accept Christ by repentance and faith. When God has begun a saving work in the heart of any person, He gives assurance in His Word that He will continue performing it until the day of its full consummation. (John 3:16-18, 36; Luke 13:3 & 5; Romans 5:18; 10:9-10; 1 Corinthians 15:1-4, 20-28; Ephesians 2:8-9)

Jesus Christ: Jesus Christ is the eternal second person of the Trinity. He was united forever with a true human nature by the miraculous conception of the Holy Spirit, being born of a virgin. He lived a life of perfect obedience to God the Father, wholly atoning for the sins of all mankind by dying on the cross as our substitute, thus satisfying divine justice and accomplishing salvation for all those trusting Him alone. He arose from the dead in the same body, though glorified, in which He lived and died. He ascended into Heaven and is seated at the right hand of the Father where He, the only mediator between God and man, continually makes intercession for those belonging to Him. He shall come again to earth personally and visibly to consummate history and the eternal plan of God. (Isaiah 7:14, 53:1-12; Matthew 1:20-23; John 3:16)

The Holy Spirit: The essential accompaniment of the genuine saving relationship with Jesus Christ is a life of holiness and obedience attained by believers as they submit to the Holy Spirit, the third person of the Trinity. The work of the Holy Spirit is to apply to mankind the saving work of Christ. He enlightens the minds of sinners, awakens in them recognition of their need of a Savior, and regenerates them. At salvation, Christ permanently indwells believers, becoming their source of assurance, strength, and wisdom. He uniquely endows each believer with gifts for building up the body of believers. The Holy Spirit guides believers in understanding and applying the scriptures. His power and control are appropriated by faith, making it possible for the believer to lead a life of Christ-like character and to bear fruit to the glory of the Father. (John 14:26, 16:8)

Human Destiny: Death seals the eternal destiny for each person. For all mankind there will be a resurrection of the body into the spiritual world and a judgment that will determine the fate of each individual. Unbelievers will be separated from God by condemnation in Hell. God’s judgment will reveal His justice in consigning them

to eternal retribution as a result of their own rejection of God. Believers will be received into eternal communion with God in Heaven and will be rewarded for their deeds done in this life. (Hebrews 9:27; Revelation 21)

The Church: There is one true church universal composed of all those who accept Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior. The scripture commands believers to gather together to devote themselves to worship, prayer, teaching the Word, observance of Baptism and the Lord’s Supper, fellowship, service to His church, and outreach to the world. Whenever God’s people meet regularly in obedience to His command, there is a local expression of the church. Its members are to work together in love and unity, intent on the ultimate purpose of glorifying God. (Matthew 16:17-19; Colossians 1:24; Hebrews 10:24-25)

Perseverance of the Saints: Those who have received in faith Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord will never fall from grace and be lost, but shall persevere to the end. Though they may fall into sin through neglect and temptation, whereby they grieve the Holy Spirit, impair their Christian growth, bring reproach to the church and temporal judgment on themselves, they will not lose their saving relationship. God in Christ has given to His people eternal life, and they shall never perish. They are kept by the power of God through faith into salvation. (Ephesians 1:13-14; Philippians 1:6; Romans 8:28-39; John 10:27-30)

Baptism: Baptism is an ordinance of the Lord Jesus Christ in which the believer is immersed in water in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. Baptism is a sign of the believer’s identifying with the death and resurrection of Christ and of his obedience to God to live and walk in newness of life. Baptism does not make your right with God but is a symbol of your decision to follow Jesus. (Matthew 3:13; 28:16-20; Mark 1:9; Luke 3:21-22)

The Lord’s Supper: The Lord’s Supper is an ordinance of the Lord Jesus Christ, to be administered with the elements of bread and the fruit of the vine. It is to be observed by the Church until Jesus Christ’s return. In no sense is it a sacrament; rather, it is designed to commemorate His death on the cross for the sins of mankind. This observance is always to be preceded by solemn self-examination. (Matthew 26:26-29; 1 Corinthians 5:6-8; 11:23-26)

Marriage and Sexuality: The term “marriage” has one meaning, the union sanctioned by God that joins one man and one woman in a single, exclusive union, as delineated in Scripture. (Genesis 2:22-24; Matthew 19:4-6)

God intends sexual intimacy to occur only between a man and a woman who are married to each other. God commanded that no intimate sexual activity occur outside of marriage between a man and a woman. Any form of sexual immorality – such as adultery, fornication, homosexuality, bisexual conduct, bestiality, incest, pornography, or any attempt to change one’s biological sex or to otherwise act upon any disagreement with one’s biological sex – is sinful and offensive to God.

In light of this belief and in all areas of disobedience, God offers redemption and restoration to all who confess and forsake their sin, seeking His mercy and forgiveness through Jesus Christ. Every person must be afforded compassion, love, kindness, respect, and dignity. Hateful and harassing behavior or attitudes directed towards any individual are to be repudiated and are not in accord with Scripture or the beliefs of the church.

In order to preserve the function and integrity of the church as the local Body of Christ and to provide a biblical role model to the church members and the community, it is imperative that all persons employed by the church in any capacity should abide by and agree to this Statement on Marriage and Sexuality and conduct themselves accordingly.

# Article IV. Government

1. It is agreed that the intention of this body is to discover and follow the will of Christ, its head, in making decisions and taking action. To this end, the government of FBCW is entrusted to the body of believers who are its members. All internal teams and leadership positions are created and empowered by the church. This church is a local, autonomous entity and is not subject to the control of any other ecclesiastical body. It is, however, an active, cooperating part of the Bluebonnet Baptist Association, the Southern Baptist of Texas Convention, and the Southern Baptist Convention for the purpose of sharing the Gospel with the whole world.
2. To enable this body to govern itself in a way that honors Christ, several leadership teams are developed from the congregation. These **Congregation Leadership Teams (CLTs)** are duly constituted under Article VI and will consist of the following:

**The Advisory Leadership Team (ALT)** serves several functions, such as providing spiritual leadership and accountability for the Lead Pastor and the church, annually evaluating the Lead Pastor’s performance, reviewing the effectiveness of the church, and assisting the Lead Pastor in ministry evaluations. The members of the ALT are selected from the church family who meet qualifications as described in article VI section1. Although the ALT has leadership function a selected church member can serve on any leadership team or ministry teams if so desired by the church.

**The Deacon Service Team (DST)** assists the Lead Pastor in ministry to individuals and family groups.

**The Trustee Board (TB)** serves primarily to make and execute all contracts, deeds, bonds, notes, negotiable instruments, mortgages, trusts, and all other instruments of indebtedness or conveyance of the church. They have a fiduciary duty to the church and can take no action without the approval of the church.

**The Stewardship Team (ST)** will work directly with the Lead Pastor and the ALT to oversee and direct all the church’s financial resources, including the development of a budget, creating and maintaining staff salary structures, reviewing and recommending salaries, and providing insight and oversight into the budget management. This team is accountable to the ALT and functions under their leadership.

**The Nominating Team (NT)** collects, screens, and recommends church members to fill positions on the ALT, DST, TB, and ST.

The responsibilities and membership selection of each of the CLTs provided above are more fully detailed in Article VI. These teams play a key role in the leadership of the body as described in Article VII. When necessary, other congregational ministry teams may be formed as the staff or ALT deem necessary and presented to the church for approval.

# Article V. Church Leadership

## The church leader shall be the Lead Pastor, assisted by the Ministry Staff, Congregational Leadership Teams and any other leaders necessary to maintain the administration and ministry of the church.

### **Section 1. Lead Pastor**

General: The Lead Pastor is responsible for leading the church in functioning as a New Testament church. He is responsible for providing leadership, spiritual teaching, and vision to the body of believers. He is also responsible for the direction and supervision of the ministerial and administrative staff. He is a member of the ALT, the church moderator, and an ex officio (full functioning member as per position) member of all church leadership and ministry teams.

Vacancy: When a Lead Pastor vacancy occurs, the ALT, in coordination with the staff, is required to provide for the preaching, pastoral, and administrative needs of the church. During a Lead Pastor vacancy, the ALT has the authority to:

1. Delegate responsibilities among staff members as well as contracting with a Transition Pastor. The Transition Pastor reports to the Chairman of the ALT;
2. Hire and terminate church employees in the absence of a Lead Pastor; and
3. Facilitate the process for calling a Lead Pastor.

Selection: A Lead Pastor shall be chosen and called whenever a vacancy occurs. A Lead Pastor Selection Team shall be formed by the church within sixty days of vacancy. A Lead Pastor Selection Team member shall be a church member in good standing, nominated by the congregation, reviewed and selected by the ALT, and affirmed by the congregation. The team shall consist of seven to nine voting church members; at least two members of the Selection Team shall be selected from the members of the ALT. A two-thirds recommendation from the Selection Team is necessary to present the Lead Pastor to the ALT, and with their approval, to the congregation for affirmation.

Calling of a Lead Pastor: A Lead Pastor’s affirmation shall take place at a meeting called for that purpose for which at least two weeks’ notice has been given per Article X. The selection of the Lead Pastor shall be by a seventy-five present (75%) affirmative vote of the voting members present at the called meeting.

Eligibility: The Lead Pastor must be committed spiritually, physically, and financially to the church, and have signed the FBCW Staff Agreement. He must possess the qualifications described in 1 Tim. 3:1-7 and Ephesians 4:11-12.

Termination: The Lead Pastor thus elected shall serve until the relationship is terminated at his request or by three-fourths vote of the voting members at a meeting called for this purpose by the ALT and the TB. At least two weeks’ notice shall be given for such a meeting per Article X.

### **Section 2. Ministry Staff**

General: The Ministry Staff is composed of Associate Pastors, Ministry Directors, and Support Staff whose purpose is to assist the Lead Pastor in providing vision, values, ministry, direction, and structure. These positions are subject to being discontinued or changed by the Lead Pastor and the ALT when necessary to fulfill the ministry objectives of the church.

Role: Each member will be given a job description, created by the Lead Pastor or his designate and approved by the ALT.

Eligibility: Members must be committed spiritually, physically, and financially to the church, and have signed the FBCW Staff agreement. They must possess the qualifications described in Ephesians 4:11-12.

Selection: When the need for a staff position is identified by the Lead Pastor, the ST confirms that monetary resources are available, and the ALT approves the position; the Lead Pastor or his designate will lead the search for the staff member. Once a suitable candidate is found and appropriate authorization is given by the ALT an offer of employment will be extended to the candidate that best meets the needs of FBCW. A pastoral candidate is then presented to the church for introduction and clarity of role.

Supervision: The supervision of the Ministry Staff shall be provided by the Lead Pastor or his designate. In the case of a Lead Pastor vacancy, the Ministry Staff will report to the Chairman of the ALT or his designate.

Termination: The Ministry Staff, once hired, shall serve until the relationship is terminated at his or her request or by the Lead Pastor after ALT consultation.

### **Article VI. Congregational Leadership Teams (CLTs)**

**Section 1. Advisory Leadership Team**

General: The ALT is composed of the Lead Pastor and five to nine ordained or suitable to be ordained male members who selected from the church family, vetted and screened by the NT and affirmed by the church at the Annual General Meeting as found in Article X section 1:c. The ALT Chairman shall be selected by the Lead Pastor and affirmed annually by the ALT.

Role: Specific responsibilities are detailed in the ALT Policy. The general responsibilities of the ALT are the following:

1. Provide spiritual leadership, encouragement, and an accountability standard for the Lead Pastor, and annually evaluate Lead Pastor’s performance and compensation.
2. Assist the Lead Pastor by reviewing the effectiveness and direction of the church;
3. Assist the Lead Pastor in recommending objectives and goals to the church;
4. Assist the Lead Pastor in evaluating achievements in terms of objectives and goals;
5. Promote the unity and biblical doctrinal purity of the church; Facilitate conflict resolution and address church discipline as described in Article VIII;
6. Join the active DST in administration of the ordinances;
7. Support the DST and the church according to their gifts and calling; and
8. Elect a ALT Chairman annually.

ALT meetings will be held once a month. Special meetings may be called by the Lead Pastor or by the ALT Chairman. Meeting notice (one week) and purpose must be provided to all active ALT members. If a church member has a question, comment, or a concern, that member may address the ALT at a regular or specially called ALT meeting by coordinating with the Lead Pastor or ALT Chairman one week in advance of the regular or special called meeting.

Decisions by the ALT shall be reached after prayerful consideration and be made by consensus of the active ALT members. All decisions of the ALT shall be kept in the minutes of the team meetings and will be available to the church body on request.

Eligibility: Open to current church members who are biblically qualified to be ordained Members must be a voting member in good standing at FBCW, be committed spiritually, physically, and financially to the church, and have signed the FBCW Leadership agreement.

Selection: ALT member nominations shall be made by the church, screened and vetted by the NT. ALT member selections are presented to the church for affirmation at the Annual General Meeting.

Term of Service: Individual ALT members serve on three-year staggered rotations. A former ALT member may return to the team after taking one year off. Members may serve unlimited three-year rotations. The Lead Pastor shall have automatic tenure on the ALT.

Removal: An ALT member may be removed from office for failure to follow the FBCW Leadership agreement by a majority vote of the ALT or by the member’s own decision to step down.

**Section 2. Deacon Service Team (DST)**

General: The DST is composed of no less than twelve male members who are or will be ordained. The DST Lead shall be elected annually by the DST.

Role: Deacons assist the Lead Pastor in ministry to individuals and family groups. Deacons are expected to be involved in the church and serve according to their gifts and calling. They are not to be an administrative decision-making team. Specific responsibilities are detailed in the DST Policy. The general responsibilities of the DST are the following:

1. Promote the mission of the church by building lives which honor God by connecting, growing, serving and sharing;
2. Maintain a spirit of unity in the church and care and concern for all members as well as those outside the fellowship of the church;
3. Proclaim the Gospel to believers and unbelievers and care for the physical, emotional, and spiritual needs of church members and of others in the community by serving on the DST and other church ministry teams;
4. Fulfill the ministry objectives of the church. There shall be DST members designated for areas such as ordinance celebration, visitation of the sick and shut-in, benevolence, prayer, and such other areas as required; and
5. Elect a DST Lead annually.

Eligibility: The church may nominate for screening any male voting member who is in good standing at FBCW; who is committed spiritually, physically, and financially to the church and who has signed the FBCW Leadership agreement. Each nominee must possess the biblical qualifications described in 1 Tim. 3:8-12 and Acts 6:3.

Selection: DST candidates will be nominated by the church membership to the NT. The NT screens DST nominees for eligibility and willingness to serve, and selects the number needed to take back to the church membership. The candidates are then presented to the church for affirmation at the Annual General Meeting. An ordination service will be held within sixty days after the Annual General Meeting to ordain first term DST members who have not been ordained.

Term of Service: Individual Deacons serve on three-year staggered rotations. A former Deacon may return to the team after taking one year off. Members may serve unlimited three-year rotations. Once ordained by FBCW, a Deacon need not be re-ordained. FBCW affirms ordination from churches of like faith and order and ordination is considered a lifetime calling.

Removal: A Deacon may be removed from office for failure to follow the FBCW Leadership Agreement by consensus of the ALT or by the member’s own decision to step down from service.

### **Section 3. Trustee Board (TB)**

General: The Trustee Board is composed of no less than five members, one of whom will serve as President of the Trustee Board, one as Vice President of TB, one of whom will serve as Secretary of TB, and one of whom will serve as Church Treasurer. These officers are elected annually by the TB and may serve no more than two consecutive three year terms. The Church Treasurer’s term may be extended longer if the church desires.

Role: The TB shall make and execute all contracts, deeds, bonds, notes, negotiable instruments, mortgages, trusts, and all other instruments of indebtedness or conveyance of the incorporated church. They will elect a President, Vice President, and Secretary annually. In addition to the responsibilities provided in the Articles of Incorporation, the Trustees shall also have the responsibilities to:

1. Enter into feasibility studies, investigations, discussions, negotiations, taking bids, executing options, leases, loans, and contracts, and in general representing the best interest of the church in all matters relating to the prospective purchase and/or sale of real property, either presently owned by the church or deemed necessary and desirable for acquisition by the church to further church objectives, tasks, programs, and goals. All such actions shall be subject to and contingent upon the ultimate approval of the church;
2. With the consent of the ALT and ST, authorize the sale of real property and/or tangible or intangible personal property, other than cash, received by the church as a contribution, donation, or any other form of lifetime gift, or by devise or bequest under will, at such price as the TB deems in the best interest of the church, provided that all such sales shall be for cash. Proceeds shall be utilized as determined by the ALT;
3. Take appropriate emergency action to preserve and maintain property or fiscal interests; and
4. Represent the church in any litigation brought by or against the church.

Eligibility: A Trustee candidate must be a voting member in good standing at FBCW, be committed spiritually, physically, and financially to the church, and have signed the FBCW Leadership agreement.

Selection: Trustee candidates will be nominated by the church membership to the NT. The NT screens TB nominees for eligibility and willingness to serve. Trustee selections are made by the ALT and affirmed by the church body at the Annual General Meeting.

Term of Service: Individual Trustee members serve on six-year staggered rotations. A former Trustee may return to the team after taking one year off if nominated. Members may serve unlimited six-year rotations. Trustees may serve on other CLTs.

Removal: A Trustee may be removed from office for failure to follow the FBCW Leadership agreement by consensus of the ALT or by the member’s own decision to step down from membership.

**Section 4. Stewardship Team (ST)**

General: The Stewardship Team (ST) is composed of no less than six members, and the Lead Pastor or his designate. The ST Lead is elected by a vote of the ST.

Role: The ST provides stewardship oversight and direction for all of FBCW financial resources. Transparency is maintained by oversight of their work and approval by the ALT. The general responsibilities of the ST are the following:

1. To assist the development of the budget in partnership with Lead Pastor, the ALT, and staff;
2. To assist in providing oversight and insight into budget management;
3. In coordination with the Lead Pastor, to create and maintain a staff salary structure, review salaries, and make recommendations for new positions;
4. To present the budget to the ALT then the ALT will present to the congregation for approval annually; and
5. Elect a ST Lead annually.

Eligibility: Each ST member must be a voting member in good standing at FBCW, be committed spiritually, physically, and financially to the church, and have signed the FBCW Leadership agreement.

Selection: ST candidates will be nominated by the church membership to the NT. The NT screens ST nominees for eligibility and willingness to serve, and selects the number needed to take back to the church membership. The candidates are then presented to the church for affirmation at the Annual General Meeting.

Term of Service: Individual ST members serve on three-year staggered rotations. A former ST member may return to the team after taking one year off. Members may serve unlimited three-year rotations.

Removal: A ST member may be removed from office for failure to follow the FBCW Leadership Agreement by consensus of the ALT or by their decision to step down from membership.

### **Section 5. Nominating Team (NT)**

General: The Nominating Team (NT) is composed of no less than seven members, including the Lead Pastor (Chairman) and at least one ALT member. The NT collects, screens, and recommends church members to fill FBCW positions such as ALT, DST, TB, and ST.

Role: The NT provides oversight for selection of key FBCW leadership. Transparency is maintained by oversight of their work by the ALT. Specific responsibilities are detailed in the NT Policy.

Eligibility: Each team member must be a voting member in good standing at FBCW, be committed spiritually, physically, and financially to the church, and have signed the FBCW Leadership agreement.

Selection: NT candidates will be nominated by the church membership to the NT. The ALT screens NT nominees for eligibility and willingness to serve, and selects the number needed to take back to the church membership. The candidates are then presented to the church for affirmation at the Annual General Meeting.

Term of Service: Individual NT members serve on three-year staggered rotations. A former NT member may return to the team after taking one year off. Members may serve unlimited three-year rotations.

Removal: A NT member may be removed from office for failure to follow the FBCW Leadership agreement by consensus of the ALT or by the member’s own decision to step down from membership.

**Section 6. Other Congregational Ministry Teams (CMTs)**

General: Church ministries are those task groups or teams which perform a service or ministry. Ministry teams shall be formed as the staff or ALT deem necessary. Ministry teams shall serve under the supervision of their selected leadership and under the direction of the church staff. Ministry teams may be formed or discontinued as necessary to achieve the church’s service or ministry objectives.

Role: Each team will have its own policy that will describe the team’s role.

Eligibility: The staff leader or their designate of individual CMTs will determine the qualifications for their specific team.

# Selection: Each team will have its own policy that will describe member and leader selection.

Term of Service: Each team will have its own policy that will describe terms of service.

Removal: Any CMT member may be removed from office at the discretion of the sponsoring minister or by the member’s own decision to step down from membership. In cases of church discipline, this will be coordinated with the ALT Lead in accordance to Article VIII.

# Article VII. Church Membership

Membership Process: FBCW shall have two categories of membership: voting and non-voting. A person becomes a voting member after completionof the member application process. Membership requirements include a statement of a personal relationship with Jesus Christ, baptism by immersion after becoming a believer, and agreement of the FBCW Church Membership Agreement for those sixteen (16) years and older. Any question on church-membership qualifications will be answered by the Lead Pastor.

A non-voting member is anyone under the age of sixteen (16) who has a personal relationship with Jesus Christ and then has been baptized by immersion into the fellowship of FBCW. A non-voting member can become a voting member of the church upon signing the FBCW Church Membership Agreement once he or she becomes sixteen years of age.

## Rights of Membership: Every voting member is entitled to be present and vote in all elections and all actions called for in the bylaws. No voting by proxy shall be permitted. Every voting member has one vote.

## Expectations of Membership: All members share the responsibility of the church: to pray for its health and growth, to invite the unchurched to attend, and to warmly welcome those who visit. Members are considered in good standing if they:

1. Protect the unity of the church by acting in love toward others, by refusing to gossip, and by following the leadership of the church;
2. Serve in the ministry of the church by discovering their gifts and talents, by being equipped by the pastors to serve, and by developing a servant’s heart; and
3. Support the testimony of the church by living a Godly life, attending consistently, and giving Biblically.

## Termination of Membership: Membership may be terminated by the ALT for the following causes:

1. Death of the member;
2. Letter granted to another church upon request;
3. Erasure upon request of the member;
4. Exclusion by action of the church; or
5. Noted Inactive for a period greater than three years.

### **Article VIII. Church Discipline**

## Member Discipline and Conflict Resolution: Church discipline is the Biblical process of confrontation and correction carried out by individual Christians, church leaders, or representatives of the church body when a member of Christ's body is involved in a matter of [open sin](http://christianity.about.com/od/faqhelpdesk/qt/knowsin.htm). The preferred end-result is repentance and reconciliation; however, refusal to repent could lead to formal removal of an individual from church membership and the informal separation from that individual. [Matthew 18:15-20](http://biblia.com/bible/esv/Matthew%2018.15-20) gives the procedure and authority for a church to do this. It instructs us that one individual (usually the offended party) is to go to the offending individual. If he or she does not repent, then two or three go to confirm the situation and the refusal to repent. If there is still no repentance, it is taken before the church. The church in this case will be represented by the ALT.

If the offense needs to be taken to the church, a Deacon selected by the ALT Lead will be asked to facilitate resolution. No matter of church discipline will be brought before the church unless the ALT has been given the opportunity to confirm the situation and the refusal to repent.

The ALT represents the church in matters of formal church discipline. Members of FBCW may be removed from membership by consensus of the ALT, for any of the following situations in which the member is not repentant:

a. Divisiveness or dissension that disrupts the unity and effectiveness of FBCW; (Titus 3:10)

b. Unwillingness to repent of public sin or sin against a member who has followed the Matthew 18 principles; and/or

c. Doctrinal teaching that is contrary to FBCW’s Purpose and Core Beliefs.

The goal of this process is the restoration of the individual to full fellowship with both God and other believers. It is to be done in love toward the individual, in obedience and honor to God, and in Godly fear for the sake of others in the church. This is not the practice of “shunning” but an effort to bring about reconciliation.

Reinstatement of membership can be achieved by following the process outlined in Article VII.

The Bible, as the inspired and infallible Word of God that speaks with final authority concerning truth, morality, and the proper conduct of mankind, is the sole and final source of all that we believe. For purposes of church doctrine, practice, policy, and discipline, the ALT is the church’s final interpretative authority on the Bible’s meaning and application.

# Article IX. Selection of Church Messengers

Messengers to represent FBCW may be needed to attend meetings of the Bluebonnet Baptist Association, Southern Baptist of Texas Convention, and the Southern Baptist Convention.

Eligibility: Any voting member is eligible to be selected as a messenger. Messengers must be a member in good standing at FBCW, be committed spiritually, physically, and financially to the church, and have signed the FBCW Leadership agreement. Messengers shall be selected and approved by the ALT.

The Lead Pastor shall be a messenger if he desires. If the Lead Pastor cannot be a messenger, or chooses not to be, he may designate another staff member to be named in his place. Other staff members can be named with ALT approval.

# Article X. Meetings

1. The church’s practice shall be to meet each week for the purpose of worshipping and glorifying God, edifying members, and reaching non-believers. Church services may be canceled at the Lead Pastor’s discretion. Other meetings of the church as a whole shall be set as necessary to fulfill the purpose of the church stated in Article II.
2. Smaller group meetings for the purpose of outreach, Sunday School, Bible study, leadership development, or other ministry objectives may be scheduled, provided the purpose, study materials, and leaders are approved by the Lead Pastor or staff person responsible for groups.
3. There shall be such annual business meetings as may be required by the church, and they shall be as follows:
   1. An Annual General Meeting shall normally be held in or around the last three months of each year, with the purpose of approving the new fiscal year budget, new Congregational Leadership Team members and other matters as determined by the Lead Pastor and the ALT. There will be written three-week notice given for the Annual General Meeting. Notice shall be sufficient if published in the Sunday bulletin, posted on the church website and broadcast through church-wide email for the required period; and
   2. Special business meetings may be called by the Lead Pastor, ALT or TB. The call for such meetings must be announced two weeks in advance. Notice shall be sufficient if published in the Sunday bulletin, posted on the church website and broadcast through church-wide email for the required period.

Quorum: Thirty voting members present at meetings constitute a quorum.

Parliamentary Rules: *Robert’s Rules of Order, Revised*, is the authority for parliamentary rules for all business meetings of the church.

# Article XI. Property Rights

### **Section 1. Real Property**

The title to all real property of the church shall be in the name of the church and no member or group of members shall have any individual property rights in the assets of the church.

### **Section 2. Other Assets of the Church**

In the event that the church is dissolved, it will be done in the accordance with the laws of the State of Texas, provided that the assets of the church, after paying or making provision for the payment of all of the church’s liabilities, will be distributed exclusively for the religious purposes of the church. This will be decided by a vote of the TB at a special business meeting called for that purpose.

**Article XII. Ordination**

#### Ordaining Pastors: Any member of the church who gives evidence that they are called of God to the work of the gospel ministry and meets ministerial requirements in Titus 1:5-9 and 1 Tim. 3:1-7 may be ordained by this church. The ordination process requires the following:

1. Screening of the candidate by an ordination council selected by the Lead Pastor, composed of ordained individuals from this church and, if needed or desired, other churches of like faith and order;
2. Affirmation by the congregation during a Sunday morning service; then
3. A service of ordination to the gospel ministry will be conducted in the name and presence of this church.

#### Ordaining Deacons: Deacons chosen by the church to serve in accordance with the requirements and procedures in Article V, Section 2, shall be ordained if they have not been previously ordained by this church or a church of like faith and order. Once the screening process is completed per the DST policies, a service of ordination to the Office of Deacon will be conducted in the name and presence of this church.

# Article XIII. Amendments

These bylaws are meant only to help carry out ministry. Should the bylaws restrict FBCW’s ability to carry out ministry, they should be changed. The thrust and purpose of the church is in ministry, not government. Governance is only the channel that expedites ministry. To the best of its ability, this church must always be organized around ministry in carrying out its activities.

These bylaws may be amended by the affirmative vote of 85% of the members present and voting at a regular business meeting or a meeting called for that purpose. The amendments must be presented in writing at a business meeting at least four weeks prior to the vote.

Two identical and complete copies of these bylaws shall be maintained. One copy will be kept by the TB president and the other kept in the church office.

Copies of these bylaws are available to any member upon request.

**Article XIV. General Provisions**

1. This document is adopted in lieu of and supersede and take precedence over any previously existing Rules, Bylaws, or Guidelines, any conflicting minutes of the church, or any conflicting traditional/historical procedure or policy and shall become effective on the date of adoption or as otherwise stipulated herein.
2. Nothing herein shall be construed to affect the validity of any previous financial obligation of FBCW.

**Appendix A**

**MEMBERSHIP AGREEMENT**

Having received Christ as my Lord and Savior and been baptized, and being in agreement with this church's statements, strategy, and structure, I now feel led by the Holy Spirit to unite with this church family. In doing so, I commit myself to God and to the other members to do the following:

1. I Will live a life of Honor

•By acting in love toward other members

•By speaking positively, loving one another, and supporting the leaders

•By seeing all I do as an act of worship

2. I Will Connect with my church family

•By praying for her health & growth

•By inviting the unchurched to attend

•By warmly welcoming those who visit

•By being connected in a group and a ministry

3. I Will Grow to be more like Jesus

•By attending faithfully

•By living a godly life

•By giving regularly

•By regularly reading, studying and applying God’s Word to my life

4. I Will Serve the ministry of my church

•By discovering my gifts and talents

•By being equipped to serve

•By developing a servant’s heart

5. I will Share the love of Jesus

•By looking for and seizing opportunities to share my hope in Christ

•By acts of compassion

•By building vital relationships with those not connected to Jesus or His church

•By loving all people in word and deed

**Appendix B**

**Leadership Agreement**

• I will pray for my own family and the families of others.

• I will pray for FBCW.

• I will faithfully prepare for my leadership assignments.

• I will serve those whom I shepherd to the best of my ability and encourage loving relationships between all.

• I will agree to be available to others in times of stress or need, to encourage one another, and meet other's specific needs.

• I will view myself as a guide rather than a controller.

• I will be loyal and supportive of my Pastor and church staff and encourage others to pray for them.

• I will fully engage with the church relationally, financially, spiritually, and encourage others to do the same.

• I will endeavor to keep a positive spirit by squelching gossip with truth and avoiding a negative, critical spirit.

• I will promote relational, theological, and value based unity in the church as well as a spirit of harmony.

• I will share openly and personally with others in order to build up closeness and intimacy.

• I will endeavor to handle conflict with love and patience.

• I am committed to keeping sensitive information shared confidential.

• If applicable, I will provide on-the-job training for my apprentice so they can develop the skills to lead.

• I will encourage times of fellowship on a regular basis.

• I will lead an exemplary Christian lifestyle and will be a positive influence to others around me.

• I will not teach or practice anything which is contrary to the core beliefs of FBCW as expressed in the FBCW Bylaws.

• I will notify my pastor or appropriate leader of acute conditions requiring pastoral care or counseling.

• I have completed the FBCW membership class, the Building Lives process and signed the FBCW membership covenant; and I will encourage others to do the same.

**Appendix C**

**FBC Wimberley Staff Agreement**

As a member of the FBCW staff, I commit to the following in order to honor Christ, who is the head of the organization, and to uphold the unity and effectiveness of our team

I commit to the building up of my colleagues through encouragement, support, affirmation, and prayer; desiring the best for them in their spiritual, emotional and ministry development. I will celebrate with them when they succeed and will stand by them when they fall, affirming both their abilities and calling to ministry.

I commit to actively listen with respect and courtesy and seek to understand the views and opinions expressed by other members of my team. When I disagree, I will do so with sensitivity and love, allowing for differences in thinking.

I commit to being accountable to my team-mates, inviting their honest and loving feedback and evaluation in my personal life and my ministry area.

I commit to promptly addressing interpersonal conflicts that may surface, dealing directly with the person(s) involved. If necessary, I will submit to the biblically defined conflict resolution process (Matthew 18:15-20).

I commit to actively participating in the decision making process of staff, supporting any initiative agreed to by the whole staff.

I commit to supporting my colleagues in discussion with anyone outside of staff and will encourage those who have a concern or issue with another staff member to go to them directly.

I commit to holding in confidence those things shared by fellow team members and will seek to contribute to an atmosphere of trust and safety that allows us to share openly.

I commit to cultivate a growing and healthy personal relationship with God.

I commit to being loyal to organization to which God has called me, being careful to speak only that which is helpful to the building up of others.

I commit, in the will of God, to relate to my team and FBCW in a way that would reflect a long-term commitment by working hard, giving faithfully, and serving with excellence.

This document does not create a contract of employment and it does not alter “Employment at Will” under Texas Law.