

November 1, 2015

CONSTITUTION AND BYLAWS

The First Baptist Church of Aztec, New Mexico

CONSTITUTION: PREAMBLE

We declare and establish this constitution to preserve and secure the principles of our faith and to govern the body in an orderly manner, consistent with the teaching of the Holy Bible. This constitution will preserve the liberties of each individual church member and the freedom of action of this body in relation to other churches.

I. NAME

This body will be known as The First Baptist Church of Aztec, New Mexico (also referred to as “The First Baptist Church”), a New Mexico Corporation, located at 700 Navajo Avenue, Aztec, New Mexico.

II. PURPOSE STATEMENT

To be a dynamic spiritual body of believers empowered by the Holy Spirit to share Christ within our Church, community, and throughout the world.

To evangelize unbelievers.

To train and equip believers.

To influence our society with the righteousness of Jesus Christ.

To be Christ-like in our daily living by emphasizing total commitment to the lordship of Christ.

III. STATEMENT OF BASIC BELIEFS

We affirm the Holy Bible as the inspired word of God and the basis for our beliefs. This church subscribes to the doctrinal statement of *The Baptist Faith and Message* as adopted by the Southern Baptist Convention in 2000. We voluntarily band ourselves together as a body of baptized believers in Jesus Christ personally committed to sharing the good news of salvation to lost mankind. The ordinances of the church are believer's baptism and the Lord's Supper.

IV. MARRIAGE, GENDER, AND SEXUALITY

We believe that God wonderfully and immutably creates each person as male or female. These two distinct, complementary genders together reflect the image and nature of God. (Genesis 1:26-27.) Rejection of one's biological sex is a rejection of the image of God within that person. A male is defined as “a human adult, minor, or emancipated minor who is born and presenting as a male, with XY chromosomes.” A female is defined as “a human adult, minor, or emancipated minor who is born and presenting as a female, with XX chromosomes.”

We believe that the term "marriage" has only one meaning: the uniting of one man and one woman in a single, exclusive union, as delineated in Scripture. (Genesis 2:18-25.) We believe that God intends sexual intimacy to occur only between a man and a woman who are married to each other. (1 Corinthians 6:18; 7:2-5; Hebrews 13:4.) We believe that God has commanded that no intimate

sexual activity be engaged in outside of a marriage between a man and a woman.

We believe that any form of sexual immorality (including, but not limited to, adultery, fornication, homosexual behavior, bisexual conduct, bestiality, incest, and use of pornography) is sinful and offensive to God. (Matthew 15:18-20; 1 Corinthians 6:9-10.)

We believe that in order to preserve the function and integrity of The First Baptist Church as the local Body of Christ, and to provide a biblical role model to The First Baptist Church members and the community, it is imperative that all persons employed by The First Baptist Church in any capacity, or who serve as volunteers, agree to and abide by this Statement on Marriage, Gender, and Sexuality. (Matthew 5:16; Philippians 2: 14-16; 1 Thessalonians 5:22.)

We believe that God offers redemption and restoration to all who confess and forsake their sin, seeking His mercy and forgiveness through Jesus Christ. (Acts 3:19-21; Romans 10:9-10; Corinthians 6:9-11.)

We believe that every person must be afforded compassion, love, kindness, respect, and dignity. (Mark 12:28-31; Luke 6:31.) Hateful and harassing behavior or attitudes directed toward any individual are to be repudiated and are not in accord with Scripture nor the doctrines of The First Baptist Church.

V. THE SANCTITY OF HUMAN LIFE

We believe that all human life is sacred and created by God in His image. Human life is of inestimable worth in all its dimensions, including pre-born babies, the aged, the physically or mentally challenged, and every other stage or condition from conception through natural death. We are therefore called to defend, protect, and value all human life. (Psalms 139.)

VI. FINAL AUTHORITY FOR MATTERS OF BELIEF AND CONDUCT

The statement of faith does not exhaust the extent of our beliefs. The Holy Bible itself, 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 The First Baptist Church's faith, doctrine, practice, policy, and discipline, Pastoral Staff and Deacons are The First Baptist Church's final interpretive authority on the Bible's meaning and application.

VII. CHURCH COVENANT

We, in the presence of God and this assembly most solemnly and joyfully enter into covenant with one another as one body in Christ, having been led as we believe by the Spirit of God to receive the Lord Jesus Christ as our Lord and Savior and, on the profession of our faith, having been baptized in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and the Holy Spirit. We engage, therefore, by aid of the Holy Spirit to walk together in Christian love; to strive for the advancement of this church in knowledge, holiness, and comfort; to promote its prosperity and spirituality; to sustain its worship, ordinances, discipline and doctrines; to contribute cheerfully and regularly to the support of the ministry, the expenses of the church, and the relief of the poor, and the spread of the gospel through all nations.

We also engage to maintain family and personal devotions: to faithfully educate our children in the word of God, to seek the salvation of our family and acquaintances; to walk circumspectly in the world; to be just in our dealings, faithful in our engagements, and exemplary in our behavior; to avoid all tattling, backbiting and excessive anger; to abstain from the sale of and use of intoxicating drinks as a

beverage; and to be zealous in our efforts to advance the kingdom of our Savior.

We further engage to watch over one another in brotherly love, to remember one another in prayer, to aid one another in sickness and distress, to cultivate Christian sympathy in feeling and Christian courtesy in speech, to be slow to take offense, but always ready for reconciliation and mindful of the rules of our Savior to secure it without delay.

We moreover engage that when we remove from this place, we will as soon as possible unite with some other church where we can carry out the spirit of this covenant and the principles of God's Word.

VIII. RELATIONSHIPS

The government of this church is vested in the body of believers who compose it. Persons duly received by the members will constitute the membership.

All internal groups created and empowered by the church will report to and be accountable only to the church, unless otherwise specified by church action.

This church is subject to the control of no other ecclesiastical body, but it recognizes and sustains the obligations of mutual counsel and cooperation, which are common among Southern Baptist Churches. Insofar as is practical, this church will cooperate with and support the San Juan Baptist Association, the Baptist Convention of New Mexico, and the Southern Baptist Convention.

IX. UPON DISSOLVEMENT

Should The First Baptist Church of Aztec ever cease to be a Southern Baptist Church, all proceeds and assets will be surrendered to the Baptist Foundation of the Baptist Convention of New Mexico, after all legal debts or obligations have been satisfied.

X. CONSTITUTIONAL AMENDMENTS

Any proposed amendment or amendments shall be presented in written form at a regular business meeting with time for discussion. A copy of the proposed amendment or amendments shall be furnished to each member family. If such a copy has not been accepted by each member family from the church office, the member family will be notified by United States Postal Service Mail or by digital electronic means if the church office has on file an email address for the member family. Notice of the proposed amendment, or amendments, shall also be posted on the church website. The proposed amendment, or amendments, shall be voted upon without discussion at the following regular or special called business meeting and considered adopted if approved by three-fourths vote of members present and voting.

**BYLAWS:
The First Baptist Church of Aztec, New Mexico**

I. CHURCH MEMBERSHIP

Section 1. General

This is a sovereign and democratic Southern Baptist Church under the lordship of Jesus Christ. The membership retains unto itself the exclusive right of self-government in all phases of the spiritual and temporal life of the church.

The membership reserves the exclusive right to determine who will be members of this church and the conditions of such membership.

Section 2. Candidacy

Any person must offer him/herself as a candidate for membership in this church at any worship service. After counseling by the Pastor and/or Deacons, such a candidate may be presented to the church at any regular business meeting for membership in any of the following ways:

1. By profession of faith and baptism by immersion.
2. By promise of a letter of recommendation from another Southern Baptist Church.
3. By a statement of prior conversion experience and baptism in a church of like faith and order.

Should there be any dissent as to any candidate, such dissent will be referred to the Pastor and/or Deacons for investigation and the making of a recommendation to the church within thirty (30) days. A three-fourths vote of the church members present and voting will be required to elect such candidates to membership.

Section 3. Rights of Members

1. Every member of the church is entitled to vote at all elections and on all questions submitted to the church in conference, provided the member is present.
2. Every member of the church may participate in the ordinances of the church as administered by the church.

Section 4. Termination of Membership

Termination of membership will be determined by death or church action in the following ways:

1. Transferring to another Southern Baptist Church,
2. Exclusion by action of this church,
3. Erasure upon written request or proof of membership in another church.

Section 5. Discipline

It will be the practice of this church to emphasize to its members that every reasonable measure will be taken to assist any troubled member. The attitude of members toward one another will be guided by concern for redemption rather than punishment. Should some serious condition exist (which would cause a member or staff member to become a liability to the general welfare of the church) the Pastor, Deacons and/or Personnel Team will take every reasonable measure to resolve the problem in accord with Matthew 18. If it becomes necessary for the church to take action to exclude a member, a majority vote of the members present at a business meeting is required; and the

church may proceed to declare the person to be no longer in the membership of the church. A spirit of Christian kindness and forbearance will encompass all such proceedings. The church may restore to membership any person previously excluded, upon evidence of the person's repentance and reformation and by three-fourths vote of the members present at a business meeting.

II. BYLAW ADMENDMENTS

Any proposed amendment or amendments shall be presented in written form at a regular business meeting with time for discussion. A copy of the proposed amendment or amendments shall be furnished to each member family. If such a copy has not been accepted by each member family from the church office, the member family will be notified by United States Postal Service Mail or by digital electronic means if the church office has on file an email address for the member family. Notice of the proposed amendment, or amendments, shall also be posted on the church website. The proposed amendment, or amendments, shall be voted upon without discussion at the following regular or special called business meeting and considered adopted if approved by three-fourths vote of members present and voting.