**Addendum to First Baptist Hobbs Bylaws (3/2021)**

**Affiliation**

FBC Hobbs is a member of the Southern Baptist Convention and our beliefs align with the doctrinal positions outlined in the SBC 2000 Faith and Mission message.

**Final Authority for Matters of Belief and Conduct**

The statement of faith in our Constitution and Bylaws does not exhaust the extent of our beliefs. The Bible itself, as the inspired and infallible Word of God speaks with final authority concerning truth, morality, and the proper conduct of mankind and is the sole and final source of all that we believe. For purposes of First Baptist Church Hobbs faith, doctrine, practice, policy, and discipline, the pastor, pastoral staff, and deacon team are First Baptist Hobbs final interpretive authority on the Bible’s application. All decisions regarding interpretation of the Bible should conform to the doctrine of godliness propagated in the Bible (1 Timothy 6:3). False doctrines that permit ungodliness are to be rejected.

**Statement of Faith / We believe:**

**God**

There is only one true and holy God who is the creator and sovereign over all creation. This eternal triune God reveals Himself to us as Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. God is all powerful and all knowing; and His perfect knowledge extends to all things, past, present, and future.

**Salvation**

Salvation involves the redemption of the whole man and is offered freely to all who accept Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord, who by His own blood obtained eternal redemption for the believer. In its broadest sense salvation includes regeneration, justification, sanctification, and glorification. There is no salvation apart from personal faith in Jesus Christ as Lord.

**Scripture**

The Holy Bible was written by men, divinely inspired, and is God's revelation of Himself to man. It is a perfect treasure of divine instruction. It has God for its author, salvation for its end, and truth, without any mixture of error, for its matter. Therefore, all Scripture is totally true and trustworthy.

**Mankind**

Man is the special creation of God, made in His own image. God created mankind both male and female as the crowning work of His creation. By his free choice man sinned against God and brought sin into the human race. Through the temptation of Satan man transgressed the command of God and fell from his original innocence. As descendants of Adam, mankind is sinful by nature and action, and therefore in need of God’s grace if he is to have a relationship with His creator.

**Family**

God has ordained the family as the foundational institution of human society. It is composed of persons related to one another by marriage, blood, or adoption. Marriage is the uniting of one man and one woman in covenant commitment for a lifetime. The husband and wife are of equal worth before God since both are created in God's image. Marriage is God's unique gift to reveal the union between Christ and His church and to provide for the man and the woman in marriage the framework for intimate companionship, the channel of sexual expression according to biblical standards, and the means for procreation of the human race. Children, from the moment of conception, are a blessing and heritage from the Lord. Parents are to demonstrate to their children God's pattern for marriage. Parents are to teach their children spiritual and moral values and to lead them, through consistent lifestyle example and loving discipline, to make choices based on biblical truth. Children are to honor and obey their parents.

**Church**

A New Testament church of the Lord Jesus Christ is a local congregation of baptized believers who exercise their spiritual gifts, rights, and privileges invested in them by His Word, and seek to extend the gospel to the ends of the earth.

**Last Things**

God, in His own time and in His own way, will bring the world to its appropriate end. According to His promise, Jesus Christ will return personally and visibly in glory to the earth; the dead will be raised; and Christ will judge all men in righteousness. The unrighteous will be consigned to Hell, the place of everlasting punishment. The righteous in their resurrected and glorified bodies will receive their reward and will dwell forever in Heaven with the Lord.

**Missions**

It is the duty and privilege of every follower of Christ and of every church of the Lord Jesus Christ to endeavor to make disciples of all nations. It is the duty of every child of God to seek constantly to win the lost to Christ by verbal witness undergirded by a Christian lifestyle, and by other methods in harmony with the gospel of Christ.

**Stewardship**

God is the source of all blessings, temporal and spiritual. Christians are under obligation to serve Christ with their time, talents, and material possessions; and should recognize all these are entrusted to them to use for the glory of God and for helping others.

**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. (Ps. 139.)

**Statement on Marriage and Sexuality**

We believe that God wonderfully and immutably creates each person as male or female. These two distinct, complementary sexes together reflect the image and nature of God (Gen. 1:26-27). Rejection of one’s biological sex is a rejection of the image of God within that person.

We believe the term “marriage” has only one meaning: the uniting of one man and one woman in a single, exclusive union, as delineated in Scripture (Gen. 2:18-25). We believe that marriage between one man and one woman, for life, uniquely reflects Christ’s relationship with His Church (Eph. 5:21-33). We believe that God intends sexual intimacy to occur only between a man and a woman who are married to each other (1 Cor. 6:18; 7:2-5; Heb. 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 adultery, fornication, homosexual behavior, bisexual conduct, bestiality, incest, pedophilia or use of pornography) is sinful and offensive to God (Matt. 15:18-20; 1 Cor. 6:9-10).

We believe in order to preserve the function and integrity of First Baptist Hobbs as the local Body of Christ, and to provide a biblical role model to First Baptist members and the community, it is imperative that all persons employed by First Baptist in any capacity, or who serve as volunteers, agree to and abide by this Statement on Marriage, Gender, and Sexuality (Matt 5:16; Phil 2:14-16; 1 Thess. 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; Rom 10:9-10; 1 Cor 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 First Baptist Hobbs NM.

**Marriage and Wedding Policy**

There are few things as joyous as celebrating a wedding! Here is what you need to know about hosting your wedding at First Baptist Hobbs Church.

God established marriage as a sacred covenant between one man and one woman to reflect Christ’s relationship with His Church (Eph. 5:21-23). In keeping with biblical teaching, the Church requires the following for any couple seeking to celebrate a marriage at the Church:

* *Faith* – Both bride and groom must have a personal relationship with Jesus Christ (2 Cor. 6:14).
* *Celibacy* – The engaged couple must live separately before their wedding day. Sexual intimacy is to be celebrated exclusively within marriage (1 Thess. 4:3).
* *Man / Woman Monogamy* – Marriage is a sacred union of one man and one woman. First Baptist Hobbs does not recognize, nor will it take part in, any ceremony that does not meet this basic criteria (Gen. 2:24; Matt. 19:4-5).
* *Premarital Counseling* – We highly encourage the engaged couple to participate in pre-marital counseling for no less than 3 sessions with the pastor and/or staff prior to the wedding ceremony. Please schedule at least one hour for each session to allow adequate time for premarital counseling.
* *Church Membership/Attendance* – Either the bride or groom [or their parents] must be [members/ regular attendees] at the Church. *[This provision is optional and is not required should the church choose to allow its facilities to be used for weddings of members of the community who are not members of the church.]*

Because the Church believes that marriage is designed to be a life-long union, the Church does not take part in remarriages except under the following circumstances:

* *Death –* The former spouse is deceased (Rom. 7:2; 1 Cor. 7:39).
* *Marital Unfaithfulness* – The former spouse committed adultery against the spouse seeking remarriage (Matt. 5: 32, 19:3-9).
* *Desertion* – The spouse seeking remarriage was deserted by an unbelieving spouse (1 Cor. 7:15).

Finally, for any weddings celebrated inside or outside the Church, the pastors and staff of First Baptist Hobbs shall only officiate weddings and solemnize marriages between one man and one woman.

**Church Membership Policy**

We believe that to carry on the religious mission of the church, 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 who associate with the church as members should abide by and agree to the following statements and conduct themselves in accordance with them:

**Faith Relationship with Jesus Christ**

Every member of this church must first and foremost have a relationship by faith with Jesus Christ. Each member having placed their personal faith in Christ for the forgiveness of his/her sin agrees to follow Christ’s teachings and live as believers are directed to live as specified in the Bible.

**Code of Conduct Policy**

All persons connected with First Baptist Hobbs are deemed to be part of First Baptist Hobbs’ ministry community and include (e.g. employees, volunteers, board members, students, parents of students, etc.) These individuals shall hereinafter be referred to as ministry community members.

**Policy Inclusions.** This ministry’s code of conduct is rooted in its sincerely held religious beliefs and is consistent with the following:

1. The Ten Commandments (Exodus 20:2-17)
2. The Great Commandments as stated by Jesus Christ (Matt. 22:37-40)

**Personal Conduct.** All ministry community members must conduct their personal affairs so there can be no opportunity for unfavorable reflections upon the Christian beliefs and mission of the ministry, either expressed or implied. The use of common sense, good ethical standards and discretion will guide all who are called into community with the ministry in proper conduct. Failure to maintain reasonable standards is subject to discipline, up to and including termination, from the ministry community. It is expected that all members of our ministry community will conduct themselves in a manner consistent with biblical standards, values, and character.

**Rules of Conduct.** In every organization where many people interact on a regular basis, some specific rules and policies are necessary to establish acceptable standards of conduct, assure fair treatment of all members of the community, and enhance the smooth operation of the organization. Ministry community members are expected to become familiar with and abide by the standards outlined in this policy. The purpose of these rules is to maintain a community environment that protects the safety and dignity of each community member without placing unreasonable restrictions on anyone.

Ministry community members are expected to model appropriate behavior and conduct both on and off-campus and model relationships that demonstrate a growing Christ-likeness manifested in a lifestyle that serves and gives itself to reconcile others. Ministry community members are also expected to model appropriate language on and off-campus and model speech that demonstrates a growing Christ-likeness (Ephesians 5:4). Ministry community members shall maintain appropriate attitudes of concern for others. Problems concerning ministry community members’ roles, relationships, and professional conduct should first be handled directly with the person involved. If a satisfactory resolution cannot be concluded, the matter should move up the relevant chain of responsibility. Specifically, ministry community members shall respect the integrity and confidences of other community members and those outside of our community attending any of our ministry’s functions. Ministry community members are expected to operate within their respective roles.

In summary, Christian ethics demand that ministry community members act in love and integrity, in confidentiality, and in alignment with the mission/purpose of this ministry.

**Inappropriate Conduct**. Violation of ministry rules and policies may result in an oral warning, a written warning, and/or termination of a member’s role in the ministry community. There is **no** requirement that discipline be progressive or that a warning be given prior to demotion or any other disciplinary action, including discharge from the ministry community. Set forth below are some **examples** of misconduct which will not be tolerated by the ministry. This list is **not exhaustive** and examples are not listed in order of seriousness.

1. Engaging in any activity which a ministry community member knows, or has reason to know, will adversely affect the mission of the ministry.
2. Engaging in criminal conduct.
3. Using abusive language on the church campus.
4. Engaging in sexual acts and/or relationships outside the confines of biblical marriage between one man and one woman.
5. Dating, or otherwise becoming romantically involved with, anyone under legal age.
6. Deliberate damage or destruction of any ministry property or the property of any ministry community member.
7. Wearing unprofessional or inappropriate styles of dress (including dressing in such a way as to willfully reject one’s sex assigned at birth (Gen. 1:27)).
8. Committing a fraudulent act or a breach of trust under any circumstances.
9. Engaging in behavior that suggests a willful violation of the religious beliefs and practices of the ministry including engaging in sexual acts and/or relationships outside the confines of biblical marriage between one man and one woman and rejection of one’s sex assigned by God at birth.

If a ministry community member has any doubt about whether certain conduct will constitute behavior that suggests a willful violation of the religious beliefs and practices of the ministry, the community member should ask an appropriate ministry leader.

**Statement on Church Discipline**

The threefold purpose of church discipline is to glorify God by maintaining purity in the local church (1 Cor. 5:6), to edify believers by deterring sin and promoting purity (1 Tim. 5:20), and to promote the spiritual welfare of the offending believer by calling him or her to return to a biblical standard of doctrine and conduct (Gal. 6:1).

The Lord Jesus Christ has entrusted the local church with the authority and responsibility to discipline members for flagrant sin or serious doctrinal error, with the goal of the restoration of the offender. This discipline is entrusted to the Pastoral Staff and Deacon Team and is to follow the biblical pattern as set forth in Matthew 18:15-20; 1 Corinthians 5; 2 Corinthians 2:7-8; Galatians 6:1; 2 Thessalonians 3:6; Titus 3:10-11; and 2 John 7-11. Any member of this church who practices or affirms a doctrine or conduct that, in the judgment of the Pastoral Staff and Deacon Team, is opposed to the teaching of the Word of God, or is threatening to the testimony of this church, or is divisive to the body, shall be subject to church discipline.

Discipline will follow the said biblical pattern and is an effort to bring the individual to repentance and protect the church from unrepentant sin. Discipline may involve exclusion from participation in ministry and communion, as well as dismissal from the fellowship of this church. An individual may be disciplined by the Pastoral Staff and Deacon Team short of dismissal from the fellowship, as they deem appropriate for the specific circumstance (for example, an individual may remain in certain circumstances a member of this church but be denied the privilege of serving in a particular ministry). The Pastoral Staff and Deacon Team, as is required by Scripture, may report to the congregation the names of those who have lost membership by reason of church discipline as described in Matthew 18:15-20.

**Statement on Mediation**

Members of the church agree to submit any legal dispute with the church for mediation before a mutually agreed-upon mediator, or if none can be agreed upon, one selected by Peacemaker Ministries. Lawsuits between believers, or threats of lawsuits between believers, are a matter of grave concern for the church, are contrary to biblical and church teaching, and mediation is an effort to resolve disputes in a biblical fashion (1 Cor. 6: 1-7).

Mediation will be governed by the *Rules of Procedure for Christian Conciliation* of the Institute for Christian Conciliation (ICC Rules), unless modified as stipulated by the parties. In particular, subject to the more detailed provisions of the ICC Rules, mediator(s) will attempt to assist us in reaching a voluntary settlement of any disputes through mediation. The confidentiality of the mediation process will be protected, and these matters will not be discussed with people who do not have a necessary interest in them. If settlement can be agreed upon, the conciliators may, at their discretion, issue an advisory opinion. Neither the opinion, nor any communications exchanged in the mediation process, will be admissible for any purpose in any subsequent legal proceeding.

**Church Facility Use Policy**

The Church’s facilities were provided by God’s benevolence and the sacrificial generosity of its members. All Church property is consecrated and set apart to worship God (Col. 3:17), and therefore is to be used exclusively to glorify God and edify the Body of Christ. Although the facilities are not generally open to the public, the Church makes its facilities available to members and non-members on a case-by-case basis as a witness to its faith, in a spirit of Christian charity, and as a means of demonstrating the Gospel of Jesus Christ in practice.

The Church’s facilities may not be used for activities that contradict, or are inconsistent with, the Church’s beliefs. This restricted facility use policy is necessary for two reasons:

First, the Church may not in good conscience materially cooperate in activities or promote beliefs that are contrary to its faith (2 Cor. 6:14; 1 Thess. 5:22).

Second, the Church must present a consistent public witness to the community through its stewardship of its property.

Allowing facilities to be used in a way that contradicts the Church’s statement of faith would have a severe, negative impact on the message that the Church strives to promote and could cause confusion and scandal to Church members and the community. Therefore, only events that are consistent with the Church’s religious beliefs, as determined by pastor, pastoral staff, and /or deacon team, shall be permitted.

**Miscellaneous**

In the event of any conflict or discrepancy between the original **Hobbs First Baptist** **By-Laws** dated (2/10/08) and the additions made in this **Addendum to First Baptist Hobbs By-Laws** dated (3/01/21) the **Addendum** shall take precedence.

**(Approved 5-16-2021 Special Business Meeting)**