CONSTITUTION

OF

THE FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH

HOBBS, NEW MEXICO

PREAMBLE

For the more certain preservation and security of the principles of our faith, and to the end that this body might be governed in an orderly manner, we do hereby establish this constitution.

ARTICLE I: Name

This body of believers in Jesus Christ shall be known as the First Baptist Church of Hobbs, New Mexico.

ARTICLE II: Purpose

First Baptist Church, Hobbs exists to magnify God through Spirit-filled worship, make disciples of Jesus Christ through sharing the good news of salvation in word and deed and equipping them to be mature ministers within Jesus’ Body, the church, and to be on mission in the world until Christ’s return.

This Purpose Statement is based on the following Scriptures:

***The Great Commandment***

**Matthew 22:37-40 7** And He said to him, "'YOU SHALL LOVE THE LORD YOUR GOD WITH ALL YOUR HEART, AND WITH ALL YOUR SOUL, AND WITH ALL YOUR MIND.' 38 "This is the great and foremost commandment. 39 "The second is like it, 'YOU SHALL LOVE YOUR NEIGHBOR AS YOURSELF.' 40 "On these two commandments depend the whole Law and the Prophets."

***The Great Commission***

**Matthew 28:18-20** 18 And Jesus came up and spoke to them, saying, "All

authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth. 19 "Go therefore and make

disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, 20 teaching them to observe all that I commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age."

ARTICLE III: Church Covenant

God established a covenant relationship, first with His people-Israel, and then a

new covenant with His people—the church.1 Therefore, as members of God’s covenant

family known as First Baptist Church, we commit ourselves to God and to one another to

be Christlike2 in our lives and relationships through the presence, guidance, and power of

God’s Holy Spirit.

We will love one another as Christ loved us,3 honor one another above ourselves,4

be kind and compassionate to one another,5 encourage and build up one another,6 comfort one another,7 and offer hospitality to one another.8

We will have a spirit of unity based on our common bond in Christ,9 be united in

mind and convictions,10 meet together regularly,11 have equal concern for each other,

suffer when one suffers and rejoice when another is honored,12 and consider others more

important than ourselves.13

We will use our God-given knowledge to instruct one another,14 use our spiritual

gifts to bless one another,15 use the Word of Christ to teach and admonish one another,16

and nurture one another toward spiritual maturity measured by the life and ministry of

Jesus.17

We will confess our sins to one another, pray for each other,18 warn those who are

idle, encourage the discouraged, help the weak, be patient with one another,19 forgive one

another as the Lord forgave us,20 and gently restore those who sin.21

We will not talk negatively about one another,22 not pass judgment on one

another, not put any stumbling block in one another’s way,23 not be morally impure, not

use obscenities, not be greedy,24 but we will be filled with the Spirit.25

We will let the light of godly lives shine together to bring glory to God.26

1. Heb.8:7-13; 9:15

2. 1 Peter 2:21

3. John 13:34

4. Romans 12:10

5. Eph. 4:32

6. 1 Thess. 5:11

7. 2 Cor. 1:4

8. 1. Peter 4:9

9. Eph. 4:3-6

10. 1 Cor.1:10

11. Heb. 10:25

12. 1 Cor. 12:25-26

13. Phil. 2:3

14. Romans 15:14

15. 1 Cor. 12:7

16. Col. 3:16

17. Eph. 4:13

18. James 5:16

19. 1 Thess. 5:14

20. Col. 3:13

21. Gal. 6:1

22. James 4:11

23. Romans 14:13

24. Eph. 5:3-4

25. Eph. 5:18

26. Matt. 5:16

ARTICLE IV: STATEMENT OF FAITH

Section 1. THE SCRIPTURES. The Holy Bible was written by men

divinely inspired and is the record of God’s revelation of Himself to man. It has

God for its author, salvation for its end, and truth, without any mixture of error,

for its matter. It reveals the principles by which God judges us; and therefore is,

and will remain to the end of the world, the true center of Christian union, and the

supreme standard by which all human conduct, creeds, and religious opinions

should be tried.

Section 2. God. There is one and only one living and true God. He is an

intelligent, spiritual, and personal Being, the Creator, Redeemer, Preserver, and Ruler of

the universe. The eternal God reveals Himself to us as Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, with

distinct personal attributes, but without division of nature, essence, or being.

1. God the Father. God as Father reigns with providential care over His universe,

His creatures, and the flow of the stream of human history according to the

purposes of His grace. He is all-powerful, all loving and all wise.

1. God the Son. Christ is the eternal Son of God. In His incarnation as Jesus Christ

he was conceived of the Holy Spirit and born of the Virgin Mary. Jesus perfectly

revealed and did the will of God, taking upon Himself the demands and

necessities of human nature and identifying Himself completely with mankind yet

without sin. He honored the divine law by His personal obedience, and in His

death on the cross He made provision for the redemption of men from sin. He

was raised from the dead with a glorified body and appeared to His disciples as

the person who was with them before His crucifixion. He ascended into heaven

and is now exalted at the right hand of God where He is the One Mediator,

partaking of the nature of God and of man, and in whose Person is effected the

reconciliation between God and man. He will return in power and glory to judge

the world and to consummate His redemptive mission. He now dwells in all

believers as the living and ever present Lord.

1. God the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit is the Spirit of God. He inspired holy men

of old to write the Scriptures. Through illumination He enables men to

understand truth. He exalts Christ. He convicts of sin, of righteousness and of

judgment. He calls men to the Savior, and effects regeneration. He comforts

believers, and bestows the spiritual gifts by which they serve God through His

church. His presence in the Christian is the assurance of God to bring the believer

into the fullness of the stature of Christ. He enlightens and empowers the believer

and the church in worship, evangelism, and service.

 Section 3. Man. Man was created by the special act of God, in His own image, and

is the crowning work of His creation. Through the temptation of Satan and by man’s free

choice man sinned against God. Man brought sin into the human race; whereby his

posterity inherit a nature and an environment inclined toward sin. Only the grace of God

can bring man into His holy fellowship and enable man to fulfill the creative purpose of

God.

 Section 4. Salvation. Salvation involves the redemption of the whole man, and is

offered freely to all who accept Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior, who by His own blood

obtained eternal redemption for the believer. In its broadest sense salvation includes

regeneration, sanctification, and glorification.

1. Regeneration is a work of God’s grace whereby believers become new

creatures in Christ Jesus.

It is a change of heart wrought by the Holy Spirit through conviction of sin, to which the sinner responds in repentance toward God and faith in the Lord Jesus Christ.

1. Sanctification is the experience, beginning in regeneration, by which the

believer is set apart to God’s purposes, and is enabled to progress toward

moral and spiritual perfection through the presence and power of the Holy

Spirit dwelling in him.

1. Glorification is the culmination of salvation and is the final blessed and

abiding state of the redeemed.

All true believers endure to the end. Those whom God has accepted in Christ,

and sanctified by His Spirit will never fall away from the state of grace, but shall

persevere to the end.

Section 5. The Church. A New Testament church of the Lord Jesus Christ is a

local body of baptized believers who are associated by covenant in the faith and

fellowship of the gospel, committed to His teachings, exercising the gifts, rights, and

privileges invested in them by His Word, and seeking to extend the gospel to the ends of

the earth.

This church is an autonomous body, operating through democratic processes

under the Lordship of Jesus Christ. In such a congregation members are equally

responsible.

The New Testament speaks also of the church as the body of Christ, which

includes all of the redeemed of all the ages.

Section 6. Baptism and the Lord’s Supper. Christian baptism is the

immersion of a believer in water in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit.

It is an act of obedience symbolizing the believer’s faith in a crucified, buried, and risen

Savior, the believer’s death to sin, the burial of the old life, and the resurrection to walk

in newness of life in Christ Jesus.

The Lord’s Supper is an act of obedience whereby believers in Jesus, through

partaking of the bread and the fruit of the vine, symbolically memorialize the death of the

Redeemer and anticipate His second coming.

Section 7. The Lord’s Day and Last Things. The first day of the week is

the Lord’s Day. It commemorates the resurrection of Christ from the dead and should be

employed in exercises of worship and spiritual devotion, both public and private, and in

works of necessity and mercy.

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.

Section 8. Evangelism and 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. Missionary effort, rooted in the love

for God and others, is expressly and repeatedly commanded in the teachings of Christ. It

is the duty of every child of God to seek constantly to win the lost to Christ by personal

effort and by all other methods in harmony with the gospel of Christ.

Christ’s people should, as occasion requires, organize such associations and

conventions as may best secure cooperation for the great purposes of the Kingdom of

God. Such organizations have no authority over one another or over the churches. They

are voluntary and advisory bodies designed to elicit, combine, and direct the energies of

our people in the most effective manner for the spread of the gospel.

Section 9. Stewardship. God is the source of all blessings, temporal and

spiritual; all that we have and are we owe to Him. Christians have a spiritual debtor ship

to the whole world, a holy trusteeship in the gospel, and a binding stewardship in their

possessions. They are therefore under obligation to serve Him with their time, talents,

and material possessions.

Every Christian is under obligation to seek to make the will of Christ supreme in

his own life and in human society. Means and methods used for the improvement of

society and the establishment of righteousness among men can be truly and permanently

helpful only when they are rooted in the regeneration of the individual by the saving

grace of God in Christ Jesus. In order to promote these ends Christians should be ready to

work with all men of good will in any good cause, always being careful to act in the spirit

of love without compromising their loyalty to Christ and His truth.

Section 10. Religious Liberty. God alone is Lord of the conscience, and He

has left it free from the doctrines and commandments of men, which are contrary to His

Word or not contained in it. The state owes to every church protection and full freedom

in the pursuit of its spiritual ends. In providing for such freedom no ecclesiastical group

or denomination should be favored by the state more than others. Civil government

being ordained of God, it is the duty of Christians to render loyal obedience thereto in all

things not contrary to the revealed will of God. A free church in a free state is the

Christian ideal, and this implies the right of free and unhindered access to God on the part

of all men, and the right to form and propagate opinions in the sphere of religion without

interference by any civil power.

ARTICLE V: Polity

As an autonomous Church under the lordship of Jesus Christ, the government of

this church is vested in the body of believers who compose it. It is subject to the control

of no ecclesiastical body within or without its members, but it recognizes and sustains the

obligations of mutual counsel and voluntary cooperation with other bodies of believers as

it deems appropriate.

ARTICLE VI: Membership & Leadership

Membership in this church is granted by the body as provided in the bylaws to

those who have been born anew to a living hope through a personal faith in God’s Son,

the Lord Jesus Christ, by the Holy Spirit and who have been baptized according to the

Scriptures and who desire to live a Christian life and promise to support the mission,

ministries and purposes of the church faithfully, sharing in both its fellowship and

obligations.

The leadership of the church shall be determined by the body and may include,

but not be limited to, the following staff and officers: Senior Pastor, Associate Pastor of

Worship and Senior Adults, Associated Pastor of Students, Ministry Assistants, Deacons,

Trustees, Ministry Team leaders, and organizational leaders of all types (i.e. Bible Study,

discipleship, men’s and women’s ministries, etc.). These leaders are ultimately

responsible to the entire church and shall be selected and serve in accordance with

guidelines set forth in the by-laws of the church.

ARTICLE VII: Amendment and Oversight

Section 1. Occasion. In light of unknown future circumstances it is necessary

that this document be able to be amended and/or supplemented in order to allow the

Church to address contemporary issues. Consequently, it is the intent of this section

(Article VII) to allow the Church to amend this Constitution and to add additional

sections dealing with constitutional matters as may arise in the future. Amendments or

additions to this document may be considered only when there are compelling

circumstances that demand attention and only after prayerful consideration has been

given to the circumstances.

Section 2. Procedure. In the event the above stated conditions of Section 1

have been met, the process to amend and/or add supplemental provisions to this

Constitution will be as follows:

A. An active, authorized committee or ministry group of the Church, seeing a

definite need for change in the document and after much prayerful

consideration and discussion, is to submit a written request for consideration

of the change desired to the deacon body and/or the pastor. Consideration of

the request will then be given in detail by the deacon body and with the advice

and consent of the pastor, if available; arrangements will be made to proceed

with the action upon the request.

B. Following approval to proceed by the deacon body, an announcement of the

 proposed change will be made in every service of the Church for a period of

two (2) weeks. The announcement will also contain the designated date and

time for an open discussion of the change to be held by the Church, preferably

in the Wednesday evening mid-week service. The date to be set for this

consideration in the mid-week service will not be less than two (2) weeks

following the date of the first announcement of the desired change in a regular

service of the church.

C. At the time of the open discussion as stated above, all interested parties will

 be allowed to speak for or against the proposed change under regular

 parliamentary rules and with equal time requirements imposed by the

 moderator and approved by the Church as it shall see fit.

D. Following the open discussion mentioned above, announcement will be made

 of a time to vote on the proposed change in a regular Sunday morning worship

 service of the Church without discussion, the date being set for this vote to be

 no less than one (1) week following the open discussion meeting as described

 above.

E. At the time of the vote as described above, an affirmative vote of 75% of the

 voting members present in the regular Sunday morning worship service will

 be required to change this constitution. Voting shall be by a show of hands,

 and should questions arise in that service as to the required percentage having

 been achieved, a vote by written ballot shall be taken and the percentages

 verified by the pastor and the chairman of the deacons acting jointly.

F. After these procedures have been successfully completed, this constitution

 shall be legally amended and/or expanded as the case may be to address the

 situation and/or situations causing the request for change.

 G. It shall be the policy of this church that annually we shall celebrate officially

 “Constitution Day.” This will be done at the pastor’s discretion and will be

 held to teach the congregation the importance of our church constitution and

 its requirements.

Adopted 10/14/2007