

**ARTICLES OF INCORPORATION OF
THE FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH OF BROWNSDALE, MINNESOTA**
Revised and Adopted on January 9, 2022

ARTICLE I - CHARACTER

SECTION 1 - NAME

The name of this congregation of believers shall be “The First Baptist Church of Brownsdale, Minnesota,” hereinafter referred to as “the church” of “this church”. It is an incorporated non-profit, religious organization under the laws of the state of Minnesota (Statute #315.21).

SECTION 2 - CORPORATE OFFICERS

The officers of this corporation by whom its business will be governed shall be by a Board of Trustees hereinafter referred to as Deacons. The Pastor of the church shall be the presiding officer and “ex officio” of the Deacons. This is an autonomous, sovereign and indigenous Baptist church which is democratically controlled by and with the consent of its members. The policy and practices of this church are patterned after the churches of the New Testament.

SECTION 3 - ASSOCIATIONS

Being aligned in doctrine and in harmony with the Minnesota Association of Regular Baptist Churches and the General Association of Regular Baptist Churches, we, as an independent Baptist congregation, will maintain such fraternal fellowships and cooperation as long as we deem it is consistent with our faith and policy.

SECTION 4 - PURPOSE

Statement:

The ultimate purpose of this church is to glorify God. To accomplish this purpose, the church is committed to the work of the Great Commission: the making and maturing of disciples of Jesus Christ who are growing in Christ-likeness. In doing so, the church will maintain a compassionate spirit toward the unsaved at home and around the world while promoting a high moral standard in the community and society at large.

Detail:

The purpose of this church is to...

- A. Engage in evangelism: seeking the salvation of the lost through the preaching of the Gospel, personal witnessing, and missionary endeavors.
 - 1. Promote Baptist missions at home and abroad.
 - 2. Give training and incentive to a program of continuous witnessing under the direction of the Holy Spirit.
- B. Edification: strengthening believers through the preaching and teaching of God's Word.
- C. Fellowship: the mutual care of New Testament believers in the context of biblically loving relationships within an independent Baptist church.
- D. Worship: showing the greatness and goodness of God both corporately in regular public services and personally in individual spiritual service (consisting of, but not limited to: public proclamation of God's Word, song, prayer, and faithful recognition of the New Testament doctrines and ordinances)
- E. Teach and give example of faithful stewardship in time and money.

ARTICLE II - STATEMENT OF FAITH

The Word of God, in its entirety, is the basis and the foundation of this church and is summarized in the following:

1. Scripture

We believe that the Bible, sixty-six books in the Old and New Testaments, is the inerrant Word of God, verbally inspired in all parts, sufficient as our only infallible and authoritative rule of faith and life. By "inspired" we mean that God superintended human authors so that using their personalities they wrote the original writings without error, His revelation to humanity in the very words of His choosing. The Scriptures shall be interpreted according to their normal grammatical-historical meaning, and all issues of interpretation and meaning shall be determined by the Pastor. II Tim. 3:16-17; II Pet. 1:19-21, Psa. 119:160; Prov. 30:5-6.

2. The One True God

We believe in the one true God; perfect, infinite, and eternal in His being, holiness, love, wisdom, and power. He is separate from and above the world as its Creator, yet everywhere present in the world as the Upholder of all things. He is revealed to us as Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, distinct but without division of nature, essence, or being, and each having a distinct ministry in God's relation to His creation and people. It is the Trinity Whom we worship and serve. We exist for Him in Whom we have our being, Gen. 1:1; Ex. 15:11, Psa. 83:18; Matt. 28:19; John 10:30; 15:26.

- A. **The Father:** We believe that the Father, the first Person of the Trinity, orders and disposes all things according to His own purpose and grace. He is sovereign in creation, providence, and redemption. As Father, He is the sender of Jesus Christ, the Father of all creation, and the Father of believers in Christ, Psa. 145:8-9; I Cor. 8:6; John 3:16; Rom. 8:14-17.
- B. **The Son:** We believe that the Lord Jesus Christ is the second One of the Triune God, the eternal Word, and only begotten Son. Without any change in His Divine Person, He became man by miracle of the virgin birth and continues forever as both true God and true man, one with two natures. As man He was tempted in every way as we are, yet without sin. As the perfect Lamb of God, He gave Himself in death on the cross, bearing there the sin of the world and suffering its full penalty of divine wrath in our stead. He arose bodily from the grave as our great High Priest, He ascended into Heaven, there to appear before the face of God the Father as our Advocate and Intercessor, John 1:1-14; 3:16; Matt. 1:18-25; Gal. 4:4-5; Phil. 2:6-10; I Cor. 15:3-7; Heb. 4:14-16; I John 2:1-2.
- C. **The Holy Spirit:** We believe that the Holy Spirit is the third part of the Trinity and that He is equal in power and eternity with The Father and The Son. He is the agent in revelation and redemption. It is the Holy Spirit Who regenerates, forming a union with Christ that cannot be broken. He indwells, sanctifies and seals believers unto the day of redemption. The Holy Spirit also instructs and fills believers who daily surrender to Him, empowering them for service. We also believe that the Holy Spirit still, on occasion, performs miracles through believers to fulfill God's will in accordance with the teachings of scripture (John 14:16-17, 26; 16:7-14; I Cor. 12:13; Eph. 1:13-14; Rom. 8:26-30; I Cor. 12:4-11; 13:8-10).

3. Creation and God's Design

- A. **Creation:** We believe that the Genesis account of creation is literal and accurate history. The universe, all spirit beings, mankind, and all life were the special, immediate, and formative acts of God. Gen. 1-2; Col. 1:15-18; John 1:3.
- B. **Gender Identity:** We believe that the Bible clearly establishes human gender biologically, and that those genders are fixed, binary categories of male and female. We further believe that seeking to confuse, alter, or otherwise change these God-given genders (developed in the womb prior to birth) is a violation of God's design. Gen. 1:26-27; 5:12; Mark 10:6; 1 Cor. 6:9-10; Eph. 5:2-5; 1 Thess 4:3-8.
- C. **Marriage:** We believe that the Bible defines marriage as one man and one woman joined together by God. We further believe that sexual intimacy within marriage (as the Bible defines marriage) is a wonderful gift of God designed to be enjoyed. We believe any sexual intimacy outside of marriage is condemned in the Bible as a perversion of God's created order. The perversion of God's design for sexual intimacy includes, but may not be limited to, voluntary acts of adultery, polygamy, heterosexual sex for any unmarried person, homosexuality, lesbianism, bi-sexuality, incest, bestiality, pedophilia, and pornography. Gen. 1:26-27, 2:24, 19:5, 13; Lev. 18:1-30; Matt. 19:4-6; Eph. 5:31; Heb. 13:4; Rom. 1:26-29; 1 Cor. 5:1; 6:9; 1 Tim. 1:10
- D. **Ministry Roles:** We believe that God created man and woman as equal image-bearers of God, and thus both man and woman have equal access to salvation in Christ, spiritual enablement to live a godly life, and eternal reward in the future. We further believe that God has designed different roles for men and women to image Him. In the home, wives are to submit to and help their husbands. Husbands are to love and lead their wives. In the church, both man and woman are to participate but the Pastor and deacon are reserved for men only. Gen. 1:26-27, 2:18, 24; Gal. 3:28; Eph. 4:12-13; Rom. 8:29-30; Eph. 5:21-28, 33; 1 Cor. 11:3; 1 Tim. 2:8-15, 3:1-13; 2 Peter 1:3-4

4. Angels

We believe in the Biblical teaching of angels. Angels were created by God in a state of holiness. Angels are incorporeal, spirit beings, which have personality, a nature, and superhuman abilities. The numbers of angels are innumerable, and they serve God. In Scripture some of their activities are communicating messages, assisting in governmental functions, praising God, ministering to believers, and rejoicing over the conversion of sinners. Job 38:6-7; Luke 2:13; Eph 3:10; Col 2:10; Heb 1:14; 12:22

5. Satan

We believe that Lucifer, though created holy and perfect, through pride rebelled against God, becoming utterly depraved in character, the great adversary of God and His people, leader of all other evil angels, the deceiver, and god of this present world. His powers are strictly limited by the permissive will of God, who overrules all his wicked devices for good. Satan was defeated and judged at the cross. His final doom is certain. We are able to resist and overcome him only in the armor of God, by the blood of the Lamb, and through the power of the Holy Spirit, Col. 1:16; Gen. 3:1-7; II Cor. 4:3-4, 11:3; Eph. 2:1-4, 6:11-12; Isa. 14:12-17; Ezek. 28:11-19; Rev. 20:1-10.

6. Humanity

We believe that man was created in the image and likeness of God, but that in Adam's sin the race fell and thereby incurred not only physical death, but also spiritual death, which is separation from God. Man is born with a sinful nature and becomes a willful sinner with the first expression of personal choice and is totally unable to regain his former position. Man is, therefore, under just condemnation to eternal ruin in a literal hell, without defense or excuse before God, Gen. 1:26; 3:1-24; Eccl. 7:20; John 3:18-19; Rom. 1:20; 3:10-23; 5:12; Eph. 2:1-6, 12.

7. Salvation

We believe that salvation is wholly of God by grace based on the redemption of Jesus Christ, the merit of His shed blood, and not based on human merit or works. God's gift of salvation flows from His eternal plan and good pleasure. While man is responsible to repent and believe, it is God who graciously works to bring about our voluntary obedience to the gospel without coercion and in a manner beyond our comprehension, John 1:12; Acts 5:31: 11:18; 13:48; 16:20-33

- A. **The Gospel:** We believe that the Gospel needs to be proclaimed throughout the world. It involves the recognition that Jesus of Nazareth is the Christ. It also involves the acknowledgment that He died for one's own sin and rose from the dead. It requires placing one's trust in Christ (His Person) and His work (death and resurrection) for the forgiveness of sin and everlasting life. This is the Good News that is the remedy for the bad news of the fallen condition of each member of the human race, Matt. 28:18-20; Heb. 11:6; John 6:28-29; John 3:36; 8:24; 20:31, I Cor. 15:3-4; John 3:14-16.

- B. **Individual Soul Liberty:** Every individual, whether a believer or an unbeliever, has the liberty to choose what he believes is right in the religious realm. No one should be forced to assent to any belief against his will. Baptists have always opposed religious persecution. However, this liberty does not exempt one from responsibility to the Word of God or from accountability to God Himself. (Romans 14:5, 12; 2 Corinthians 4:2; Titus 1:9)
- C. **Regeneration:** We believe that regeneration is a supernatural work of the Holy Spirit by which the divine nature and divine life are given through the Word of God to the believer who has responded in faith to the divine provision of salvation, John 3:3-7; Titus 3:5; John 5:24; Rom. 10:13-17.
- D. **Justification:** We believe that justification is the judicial act of God in which He declares sinners to be righteous and acceptable before Him. This is done based on Christ's death on the cross in the place of sinners, which is verified by His resurrection from the dead. This righteousness is apart from any virtue or work of the sinner and involves the placing of our sins on Christ and the imputation of Christ's righteousness to us as believers, Matt. 1:21; 20:28; Rom. 5:9-11; Col. 1:20-22; Heb. 9:11-14, 24-28; Isa. 53:4-12; II Cor. 5:21.
- E. **Sanctification:** We believe that every believer is sanctified or set apart unto God by justification and is therefore declared to be holy and is identified as a saint. This sanctification has to do with the believer's standing before God, not his or her present walk or condition. We believe that there is also a progressive sanctification that is a work of the Holy Spirit. Through this process of sanctification, the state of the believer is brought closer to the standing he enjoys in justification. This sanctification progresses if the believer is yielded to the Holy Spirit's control. It is carried on in the hearts of believers by the power of the Holy Spirit through the Word of God, watchfulness, and prayer. There is no complete victory over our fallen, sinful nature in this life, but the Holy Spirit does provide for victory over sin. We believe that complete sanctification will be the experience of every believer when finally, in the presence of Adonai. With soul and spirit united in the resurrected body, the Believer will be free from every trace or effect of sin and rebellion, I Cor. 1:2, 30; 6:11; Acts 20:32, Heb. 3:1; 10:10, 14; I Pet. 1:2.
- F. **Eternal Life:** We believe that God promises eternal life to those who place their faith in Christ. The benefits for the believer of an unbreakable union with Christ and a standing as joint-heir with Him include being kept by God's power and being secure in Christ forever. By the Spirit's power, all who are truly born again will continue in their commitment to Christ, His gospel, and the essential truths of biblical Christianity.

Christ's death, resurrection, and endless life secure absolutely for the believer the resurrection of the physical body, an eternal home with Christ, and endless fellowship with God, John 3:14-18; I John 2:3-6, 5:10-12,16-17; Matt. 28:20; John 10:28-30.

8. The Church

- A. **The Body of Christ:** We believe all who place their faith in Jesus Christ are immediately placed by the Holy Spirit into the body of Christ, which is the church. All members of this spiritual body should assemble and identify themselves in local churches, I Cor. 12:12-13; Eph. 1:22-23; 3:21; 4:11-16; 5:25-27; II Cor. 11:2; Heb. 10:25.
- B. **The Local Church:** We believe that a New Testament church is a local assembly of born-again, baptized believers united in organization to practice New Testament ordinances; to meet together for worship, prayer, fellowship, teaching and a united testimony; and in carrying out the Great Commission, Acts 2:41-42; Matt. 28:19-20.
- C. **The Autonomy of the Local Church:** We believe in the local church. It is to be free, with the right of self-government. It should cooperate with other churches of like faith and practice in the unity of all true believers, Matt. 18:17; Acts 6:1-5; 13:1-3.
- D. **The Priesthood of All Believers:** We believe that Christ is our Great High Priest and through Him every born-again person has direct access into God's presence without the need of a human priest. The believer has the personal right and responsibility to study the Scriptures and interpret them as he is guided by the Holy Spirit, John 14:6; Heb. 4:12-16; II Tim. 2:15.
- E. **The Ordinances**
 - 1. We believe that Believer's baptism is the immersion in water, in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, to show faith in the crucified, buried, and risen Savior, picturing our death to sin and resurrection to a new life. Baptism is prerequisite to the privileges of church membership.
 - 2. In the Lord's Supper, the death of Christ is remembered by partaking of the bread and the "fruit of the vine", preceded by prayer. The Lord's Supper is observed only by true followers of Christ ("close" communion), Rom. 6:3-4; Matt. 28:19-20; Acts 2:41; Matt. 26:26-30; I Cor. 11:23-30.

- F. **Two Offices:** The Bible mandates only two offices in the church—Pastor and Deacon. The three terms “pastor,” “elder,” and “bishop” (or “overseer”), all refer to the same office. The offices of Pastor and deacon exist within the local church, not as a hierarchy outside or over the local church. (1 Tim. 3:1–13; Acts 20:17–38; Phil. 1:1)
- G. **Separation of Church and State:** God established both the church and the civil government, and He gave each its own distinct sphere of operation. The government’s purposes are outlined in Romans 13:1–7 and the church’s purposes in Matthew 28:19 and 20. Neither should control the other, nor should there be an alliance between the two. Christians in a free society can properly influence government toward righteousness, which is not the same as a denomination controlling the government. (Matt 22:15–22; Acts 5:17–29)

9. Things to Come

- A. **Death:** We believe that at death, the soul of the believer passes into the presence of Christ and remains in conscious joy until the resurrection of the body. After death, the souls of unbelievers remain in conscious misery in a literal hell until the second resurrection when, reunited with their body, they shall appear at the Great White Throne Judgment, Luke 23:43; II Cor. 5:6-8; Phil. 1:23; I Thess. 4:13-18; Luke 16:29-31.
- B. **The Rapture of the Saints and the Tribulation:** We believe that the blessed hope of the believer is the personal, pretribulational, premillennial return of Christ to rapture the church, His body. God’s righteous judgments will then be poured out on an unbelieving world during the Tribulation, the last half of which is the Great Tribulation. The climax of this fearful era will be the physical return of Christ to the earth in great glory, Titus 2:13; I Thess. 4:13-18; Jude 14,15; Rev. 19:11-16.
- C. **The Second Coming and the Millennium:** We believe that the return of Christ to earth to establish His reign for one thousand years is the concluding event of the Great Tribulation. Israel will be saved and restored as a nation. Satan will be bound, and the curse will be partially lifted from the physical creation. Christ’s reign will be characterized by harmony, justice, peace, righteousness and long life, Rev. 19:11-16; Isa. 65:17-25; Ezek. 37:21-28; Rev. 20:1-3; Ezek. 36:33-38.
- D. **The Judgment of Satan and the Lost:** We believe that Satan will be released after the one-thousand-year reign of Christ, and that he will deceive the nations of the earth and lead them to a final rebellion against God and His people. This will lead to Satan’s final defeat and judgment, resulting in the casting of him and his forces into the lake of fire to be tormented forever. At the Great White Throne Judgment, the physical

bodies and the souls of unbelievers will be reunited, and they will be judged. The lost will be cast into eternal, conscious punishment, Rev. 20:7-15; Matt. 25:41.

- E. **Eternal State of the Saved:** We believe that after the final judgments, there will be a new heaven and new earth. Saints will enjoy eternal, conscious, joyous fellowship with God and with one another.

ARTICLE III - MEMBERSHIP

SECTION 1 - THE MEANING OF MEMBERSHIP

- A. Membership in First Baptist Church of Brownsdale conveys privileges and rights. Not only does membership provide the believer with a sense of belonging, but it gives him or her a ready means of identifying his or her beliefs and position before the world. Membership also provides a basic qualification for service in the church, the holding of any office, and participation in church business affairs.
- B. Membership involves serious responsibility and commitment to the cause and testimony of Jesus Christ. Members should therefore refrain from worldliness that detract from that testimony, give occasion for stumbling to other believers, or hinder the member's own spiritual growth and service, John 17:15-17; I Cor. 6:12, 8:13; Col. 3:1-3; Heb. 12:1; and I John 2:15-17. Despite the occasional failure of some members to live in accordance with their high calling in Christ, the membership at large should have a testimony before God and man of living holy lives. By joining, each member consents to the necessity of avoiding worldliness, seeks to remove each manifestation of it from his own life, encourages fellow believers to live godly lives, aids in the restoration of fallen brethren, and jealously guards his or her own reputation and that of the Church body.
- C. Each member should gladly lend his or her wholehearted support not only to his or her own area of service and concern, but to the total church program. Only when each member fulfills his or her own special role and cooperates with the entire ministry of the church can the purpose of the church be realized.

SECTION 2 – QUALIFICATION FOR MEMBERSHIP

- A. Each candidate for membership of First Baptist Church must meet certain qualifications to become a member:

1. Be a professing and practicing believer in the Lord Jesus Christ;
 2. Be able to give clear testimony of his or her conversion;
 3. Have been baptized by immersion after conversion, and
 4. Believe the Confession of Faith and agree to abide by this Constitution and Member's Covenant.
- B. Each candidate for membership of First Baptist must give satisfactory evidence in his or her life of having been born again (John 3:3) and must meet one of the following conditions:
1. If he or she holds membership in a church of like faith, it must be confirmed by contact with the former church that he or she is a member in good standing.

 2. If he or she does not hold membership at another church, they must either have been baptized at First Baptist Church, or must provide evidence of baptism by immersion after conversion. Prior to becoming a member, each potential member must meet with the Pastor and Deacons for confirmation of the above qualifications.

SECTION 3 – STATUS OF MEMBERS

- A. Active: To be considered an active member of the church in good and regular standing, a member must attend at least one regularly-scheduled service quarterly and not be under church discipline. These attendance requirements do not apply to shut-ins, missionaries serving in other areas, those who spend brief periods out of state, and other exceptions which may be approved by the Deacons. Only active members who have reached their eighteenth birthday have voting privileges.
1. Associate Members: Associate Members are not eligible to vote nor hold an elected office, but otherwise have all the privileges and responsibilities of a regular member. Candidates for associate membership shall follow the same procedure as regular members when applying for church membership. Examples of this type of membership are as follows:
 - a. Individuals who are living in the area on a temporary basis for education or employment may be members of another church of like faith and practice. These may be students, missionaries, those in Christian ministries, or military personnel.
 - b. There may be other, unusual, circumstances in which individuals may become an associate member while maintaining their membership at another church.

- B. Inactive: Failure to attend the services as stated above shall be sufficient grounds for the dropping of the name from active and placing it on the inactive roll. Names shall be carried on the inactive roll for six months. During this time, every effort shall be made by the Pastor and Deacons to re-establish the member's fellowship with the church. If the member shows no interest, the Deacons may recommend to the church that the name be dropped from the church roll.

SECTION 4 – RECEPTION OF MEMBERS

The names of those recommended by the Deacons for church membership may be presented and voted on at a regular church service or any regular business meeting.

SECTION 5 – DUTIES OF MEMBERS

- A. Each member is expected to conduct himself or herself in daily life to give evidence of being possessed by the Spirit of Christ and agreeing with the Confession of Faith.
- B. Each member should regularly attend services of the church.
- C. Each member is expected to volunteer to serve within the limits of his or her God-given gifts and abilities.

SECTION 6 - DISCIPLINE AND RESTORATION OF MEMBERS

In all matters of discipline or doctrinal heresy, this church must adhere faithfully to the teachings in Matt. 18:15-17, and all differences between members must be settled by this rule. In case of gross and flagrant violation of Christian conduct forbidden in Scripture, and after restoration is diligently sought through Christian counsel by the Pastor and the Deacons, the accused may, upon recommendation of the Deacons and the two-thirds vote of the church, be dismissed from church membership for conduct unbecoming to a Christian. Prior to the vote of the church the accused shall be advised by letter of the pending action and given a final opportunity to repent of sin, ask for forgiveness, and be restored to fellowship.

SECTION 7 – TERMINATION OF MEMBERSHIP

The name of any member shall be removed from the church roll when one of the following conditions exist:

- A. Active members who join a church of like faith and practice shall be granted, upon request, letters of transfer.
- B. Any member wishing to unite with a church other than the above (Section 7A) shall be granted a certificate of standing to date. No church action is required.
- C. Upon death.
- D. In the case of active members who request that their membership be dropped from First Baptist Church without having joined another church of like faith and practice or who have serious unresolved issues, church action is required.
- E. Continuous inactivity as described under Section 3. Church action is required.
- F. Dismissal as described in Section 6. In cases requiring church action, there shall first be a recommendation to the church presented by the Deacons at any regular church service or any regular business meeting.

ARTICLE IV -CHURCH OFFICES

SECTION 1 - OFFICES OF THE CHURCH

- A. The two (2) offices of the church as described in the New Testament are Pastor and Deacon.
- B. In addition the Church Clerk and Treasurer shall be elected offices. Other offices may be elected as needed.
- C. All officers of the church shall be members for at least six months (except pastoral staff), or as approved by action of the church, and must subscribe wholeheartedly to the Confession of Faith and the Bylaws.
- D. All offices (except pastoral staff) shall assume duties following the Annual Meeting. (see Article VI,2,A)
- E. All staff salaries and benefits will be reviewed annually by the Deacons. Any changes shall be recommended to the church as part of the budget at the Annual Meeting.

SECTION 2 - PASTOR

- A. The qualifications of the Pastor include the following:
1. His personal and family life must conform to the principles found in I Tim. 3:1-7; Tit. 1:5-9; and I Pet. 5:1-4.
 2. He must subscribe to the Confession of Faith and must support the Bylaws of the church.
 3. He must be mature. He should have completed at least an undergraduate degree (preferably from a Bible College/University).
 4. He must be a natural born male heterosexual. It is recommended he be married.
- B. The Pastor shall be called at a special or regular meeting of the church, public notice of such action having been given from the pulpit two Sundays immediately preceding the date of the meeting and a favorable vote of three-fourths (3/4) of the ballots cast shall be necessary for his election.
- C. The Pastor shall continue in office until he resigns or until his ministry is terminated at a special meeting called for that purpose in the following manner. A special meeting of the church shall be called by the Deacons upon two-thirds (2/3) vote of the Deacons for taking a vote of confidence; or by petition of 30% of adult membership in good standing. Notice of such a meeting shall be given on two successive Sundays immediately preceding the meeting. At such meeting the head deacon or someone designated by them shall state that a vote of confidence has been called for and shall proceed to take a vote by ballot. A majority vote of the necessary quorum present having reached the age of eighteen shall be necessary to give a vote of confidence, which shall mean that the ministry of the Pastor shall continue. Should the vote of confidence not be sustained, it shall thereby be due notice to the Pastor that his term of office shall cease immediately. The Deacons shall, at their discretion, have authority to pay him for a period not to exceed two (2) months.
- D. The Pastor shall give to the church at least one (1) month's notice of the termination of his duties. The resignation of the Pastor may be submitted to the church at any regular service and a vote by the church is not necessary to make it effective.
- E. The Pastor shall have charge of the spiritual welfare of the church. He shall moderate the business meetings of the church. The Pastor will be an "ex-officio" member of all church committees, boards, and organizations. All officers of the church shall work under the Pastor's direction and guidance. Acts 20:28; II Tim. 4:2; I Pet. 5:2; Heb. 13:17; Col. 1:28

- F. The duties of the Pastor, in addition to those outlined in other portions of these Bylaws, including Pastor's time away from the church, shall be written in the Manual of Policies and Job Descriptions.

SECTION 3 - DEACONS

- A. The church shall elect Deacons to serve its members. The number of Deacons shall be determined by the congregation upon recommendation by the Pastor and Deacons. Each deacon shall serve for a term of three years and may be re-elected for successive terms if the church so chooses. The qualifications of the deacon include the following:
1. His personal and family life conforms to the pattern found in I Tim. 3:8-13; Titus 1:5-9; and Acts 6:1-6.
 2. He must be a natural born male heterosexual. It is recommended that he be married.
 3. He must agree to the Confession of Faith and must support the Bylaws of the church.
 4. He has reached the age of 20. He must have been a member of First Baptist Church for at least six months.
- B. The general duties of the Deacons include:
1. Election from their number of a head deacon and secretary. The Pastor may serve as moderator.
 2. Discharge of duties relating to membership, finance, and property.
 3. Serving as a Nominating Committee that presents annually to the church nominees for its various offices.
 4. Determination of the duties and qualifications for each appointed office of the church.
 5. Serving as a Pulpit Committee when a vacancy in the pastorate occurs.
- C. Duties of the Deacons relating to membership shall be:
1. To interview all prospective members concerning their personal faith in Jesus Christ and to recommend to the church those whom they feel should become members of the church.
 2. To provide each new candidate for membership with a copy of the church's Bylaws.
 3. To examine the church roll to bring it up to date (see Article II, Section 7) and to serve the church bringing recommendations relative to church discipline (see Article II, Section 6).

4. To assist in making members and visitors feel welcomed at each service of the church.
5. To perform a shepherding ministry for members of the church that the Pastor places under his care. This care will include prayer, social contact, and practical help.

D. Duties of the Deacons relating to financial affairs shall be:

1. To prepare an annual budget for presentation to the church.
2. To ensure that all church accounts are audited annually.

E. Duties relating to property shall be:

1. They shall serve as trustees of this church, representing this corporation as its agent. It shall be the duty of the trustees to handle legal matters and to be responsible for the care and upkeep of the physical properties of the church. They shall not have authority to sell, lease, give away, or dispose of church property valued in excess of \$1000; not to mortgage or encumber the same with debt to exceed the amount above except as the church shall order the same by corporate act.
2. To prepare recommendations regarding the insurance of the church.
3. To maintain the general oversight and care of all properties. Deacons make recommendations concerning needed improvements and repairs.
4. To make judgments related to emergency or unanticipated issues regarding the repair, or maintenance of the facility. When such issues exceed \$1000, church approval is required.
5. To grant permissions for the use of the buildings.

F. Selection of Deacons: Deacons shall be selected from among the congregation by election, Acts 6. After careful and prayerful consideration of the Biblical requirements and qualifications of Deacons as found in 1 Tim. 3:8-13, the voting members of the congregation will select men they believe qualify to serve in that office. The congregation will be given a ballot containing the names of all men from among them who are eligible to serve as deacon. Voting members shall select the number of men needed to fill the open deacon positions. Those who have been selected by the congregation and screened by the Deacons will be contacted to determine their willingness to serve. Selected Deacons will be appointed and contacted in order from the highest votes received to the lowest.

G. Removal of Deacons: In the event a deacon's life gives evidence of failure to maintain his qualifications for office or if he is negligent in his duties as a deacon, a special congregational meeting for considering his removal from office may be called upon

the recommendation of two-thirds of the other Deacons. The failure of the deacon to sustain a majority vote of confidence would result in his immediate removal from office.

SECTION 4 - Church Clerk - (See Manual of Policies and Job Descriptions)

SECTION 5 - Church Treasurer - (See Manual of Policies and Job Descriptions)

SECTION 6 - Financial Secretary - (See Manual of Policies and Job Descriptions)

SECTION 7 - SUBSIDIARY OFFICERS

The positions of Sunday School Superintendent and Head Usher shall be appointed by the Pastor and Deacons. These positions will be created and filled at such time as the ministry of the church requires it.

SECTION 8 - CHURCH STAFF

- A. When the services of paid personnel, other than the Pastor, to include an associate Pastor, are needed, the church shall hear the recommendation of the Deacons (setting forth the title of the position, the functions to be performed, and the pay and benefits) and may authorize the creation of such positions.
- B. The church shall then look to the Pastor to recommend to the Deacons the person to be employed in the position created. Upon the approval of the Deacons, the person would be employed for the position. In addition, pastoral staff appointments must be approved by a two-thirds ($\frac{2}{3}$) vote of the church. The term of office shall be unlimited. The same procedure shall be followed for securing replacement in the event of a vacancy, if the Pastor or Deacons deem the services are needed at the time of the vacancy.
- C. The services of a person employed under this policy may be terminated by the Pastor. When the Pastor dismisses the person, knowledge of this shall be made available to the Deacons.
- D. All paid personnel, commonly known as the staff, are directly responsible to the Pastor in the performance of their duties. Loyalty to the church and its leadership is expected. They must subscribe without reservation to the Confession of Faith and must support the Bylaws of the church.

- E. Each staff member must understand that continuance of his or her ministry is subject to either the Pastor or, in the event of a vacant pastorate, the Deacons.

ARTICLE V - CHURCH ORDINANCES

SECTION 1 - BAPTISM

Those professing saving faith in Jesus Christ as personal Lord and Savior, having expressed their desire to be obedient in following the Lord in Baptism shall be baptized, by the Pastor or some person authorized by the church, by single immersion in water in accordance with the Scriptural teaching. Immersion shall be a prerequisite to church membership (See Article III, Section 2).

SECTION 2 - LORD'S SUPPER

The Lord's Supper shall normally be served by the Pastor and Deacons to the believers who are walking obediently to the Lord on the first Sunday of each month, when possible, except by special arrangement of the Pastor. The Lord's Supper may be observed at a special occasion as directed by the Pastor. The elements of the Lord's Supper shall be unleavened bread and unfermented grape juice. The Lord's Supper shall not be served outside of a church meeting.

ARTICLE VI - MEETINGS

SECTION 1 - PUBLIC WORSHIP

The regular services of this church shall be:

- A. Discipleship Hour/Small Group
- B. Sunday Morning Worship
- C. Sunday Evening Worship set by leadership

SECTION 2 - BUSINESS

All business meetings shall be opened with prayer and conducted decently and in order. Normally, the Pastor shall be the presiding officer. If he is absent, or, if in the judgment of the Deacons they feel another moderator should be elected, either the head deacon or another member of the church shall be nominated by the Deacons and elected by the congregation as the first order of business.

The moderator shall determine the rules of procedure according to his sense of fairness and common sense, giving all members a reasonable opportunity to be heard on a matter. The moderator is the final authority on questions of procedure, and his decision is final and controlling. The following order shall generally be observed at church business meetings:

1. Devotions and/or Prayer
2. Reading of minutes
3. Reception of members
4. Dismissal of members
5. Report of officers
6. Reports of standing committees
7. Reports of special committees
8. Unfinished matters
9. Election of officers
10. New matters
11. Adjournment
12. Benediction/Prayer

A. Annual Business Meeting

The Annual Business Meeting shall be held in the second or third week of January. This meeting will be announced from the pulpit and in the church bulletin for two Sundays prior to the date of the meeting. The slate of nominees for church offices shall be presented and voted upon in the Annual Meeting. The new positions take effect immediately following the meeting. (see Article IV,1,D) The proposed budget for the following fiscal year shall be presented by the Deacons to the church membership for approval.

The financial corporate year shall extend from January 1 through December 31. At the completion of the fiscal year, written reports will be submitted by the various church departments, committees, organizations, Church Clerk, and Treasurer. These shall be assembled and distributed in the form of an Annual Report at the meeting.

B. Quarterly Business Meeting

Quarterly business meetings shall be held during the month following the quarter (April, July, October, January). The January meeting shall be designated as the Annual Business Meeting and shall take the place of the fourth Quarterly Business Meeting.

C. Special Business Meeting

Special business meetings for the business that cannot wait for a regular business meeting may be called by the Pastor or the Deacons. All such meetings shall be publicly announced from the pulpit on the Sunday preceding.

ARTICLE VII - QUORUM

- A. A quorum shall consist of 20% of the active members who are of voting age and shall be required for all church business meetings. Church action shall be determined by the majority of those voting except as otherwise specified in these Bylaws.
- B. Only active members who have attained the age of eighteen years shall be entitled to the right to speak or vote at any regular, special, or annual business meeting of the church.
- C. In the event of a national/state/or local government order or some emergency (medical pandemic/unrest/crisis), when a quorum is not possible, then the Pastor(s) and Deacons may, on behalf of the church, make decisions of financial or policy that would be in the best interest of the church. Any decision made during this time must be disclosed to the membership (in a properly called business meeting) at the first opportunity of meeting following the restriction of what was done on behalf of the church. This is to be used only in a time in which it is impossible to meet due to restrictions and quorum is not possible. (Example of Covid-19 of 2020 with pandemic restrictions by Governor and Federal Guidelines.)

ARTICLE VIII - NOMINATIONS & ELECTIONS

Any member of this church desiring to suggest a nominee for any office may do so in writing to the Nominating Committee by the appointed time. If approved, the name(s) will then be added to the ballot for voting at the Annual Meeting. Nominations will not be accepted from the floor. The slate of nominees for the church offices shall be presented and voted upon by ballot at the Annual Elections of Officers in January.

ARTICLE IX - COMMITTEES/TEAMS

The Pastor and Deacons are authorized to create any committee deemed desirable to the furtherance of the church's activities and are authorized to appoint individuals and assign responsibilities to the committees.

All actions by church committees shall be subject to review by the Deacons and the Pastor. At least one deacon shall be assigned to each committee, to represent and report back to the Deacons. No committee meeting shall be considered valid without a two-thirds majority present. Church membership is required for those serving on the committees. The term of office on any committee is one year. Several committees consist of specific office holders and persons holding elected or appointed positions. Committee composition and duties are delineated in the Manual of Policies and Job Descriptions. A list of committees are given below which may or may not be functional at the level of the church's growth. The Deacons shall approve any committees listed (or form others) for the practical function of the church. Some of the committees listed are ordered by the Bylaws to function no matter what stage of growth.

- | | | |
|-----------------------|----------------------------|-----------------------|
| 1. Outreach Team | 4. Guest Service Team | 7. Kitchen Committee |
| 2. Christian Ed. Team | 5. Nominating Committee | 8. Pulpit Committee |
| 3. Worship Team | 6. Building & Grounds Team | 9. Missions Committee |

ARTICLE X - ORGANIZATIONS

- A. Subsidiary organizations may be established as a part of the church's overall program when advisable. All such organizations shall be governed by these Bylaws and responsible to the Deacons and the church. Officers must be members of the church and be approved by the Deacons.
- B. Duties (see Manual of Policies and Job Descriptions)
- C. Number: The number of organizations shall be as deemed necessary to fulfill the ministry of the church.

ARTICLE XI - FINANCIAL POLICY

SECTION 1 – Raising Funds

First Baptist Church is supported by the gifts and offerings of God's people. All monies shall be deposited as directed by the Church Treasurer weekly. When church functions are held, any expenses may be defrayed by a special/love offering, or payment within the established budget of the church.

SECTION 2 – Special Offerings and Designated Gifts

All special offerings shall be given to the person or group that is announced before the offering is taken. First Baptist Church only takes special offerings and accepts designated gifts for individuals, organizations, or projects that agree with the position and plans of the church, and that have been approved by the Pastor(s) and Deacons.

ARTICLE XII - MISSIONS

As one aspect of this church's purpose of engaging in evangelism, to fulfill the Great Commission as set forth in Matthew 28:19-20, is through the support of Baptist mission agencies and missionaries serving at home or abroad. The determination of those agencies and missionaries are delineated in the church's Missions Policy.

ARTICLE XIII - LICENSING & ORDINATION

SECTION 1 - LICENSING

Upon recommendation of the Deacons and Pastor, the church may license any man who previously has shown by his faith, spiritual abilities, and qualifications, that he is called of God to preach the Gospel of Christ, and/or serve in full time church ministry or occupation. The man will have first been examined by the Deacons and Pastor. The license shall be received by a church vote at any regular or called business meeting. The duration of the license shall be indefinite or until annulled or revoked by the church members. A license can be annulled or revoked as the church deems sufficient.

SECTION 2 - ORDINATION

The church shall have the power to ordain any candidate who, after satisfactory examination of his faith, call to the ministry, experience, and doctrinal belief, shows himself

thus set apart by God. By church action, a council of messengers (a Pastor and two from each church would be best) from churches of like faith and practice will be invited and called together for the purpose of examination. The council will only constitute a tool in assisting the church. The church is the only one who will decide to proceed with ordination or not. The church is the ordaining body. The ordination will proceed with a majority vote by the voting membership present at any regular or called business meeting.

SECTION 3 - REVOKING OF LICENSE OR ORDINATION

It shall be the responsibility of the church, as directed by the Lord and His Word, to revoke a license or ordination if an individual is found guilty of serious spiritual, doctrinal, or moral turpitude. The defendant shall have the right to appeal to the church within sixty days after the decision in which it bestowed such action.

ARTICLE XIV - AMENDMENTS

These Bylaws may be changed or amended at any Quarterly or Annual Business Meeting provided that notice of such change has been publicly announced and posted at least one month prior to the business meeting. A three-fourths (3/4) majority vote of the membership quorum present is required of such an amendment of change.

ARTICLE XV - INTERPRETATION

The Pastor(s) and Deacons shall serve as the final interpreting body for both the Bylaws and Manual of Policies and Job Descriptions.

ARTICLE XVI - DISSOLUTION

Should the need arise for the dissolution of The First Baptist Church of Brownsdale Minnesota, the same shall be accomplished in full compliance with the requirements and terms of the State of Minnesota (Statute #315.12), and the United States Internal Revenue Service Code 1954, Article 501, Section C-3. After all its financial debts have been satisfied, the church's remaining assets shall be assigned to one or more ministries of like faith and practice, by vote of the congregation. No profit shall ever accrue to the benefit of any

individuals from the assets, holdings, or other transactions in which this corporation may become involved.

ARTICLE XVII - MANUAL OF POLICIES & JOB DESCRIPTIONS

SECTION 1 - PURPOSE

The purpose of this manual shall be to describe in detail the duties of officers and committees of this church. It will also define the policies governing the function of individuals, committees, and organizations within the church body.

SECTION 2 - ADDITIONS OR REVISIONS

All additions or revisions to this manual must be approved by the Deacons. At the discretion of the Deacons, issues of significant importance or of a controversial nature may be presented to the church at any regular or called business meeting for disposition.

ARTICLE XVIII - EFFECT & CANCELLATION

These Articles and Bylaws shall take effect from and after its adoption by this church, and thereupon all previously existing Articles and By-Laws shall stand repealed and void.