

# FBC MONROE

A Washington Nonprofit Religious Corporation



Constitution and Bylaws  
Adopted February 16, 2020

---

# TABLE OF CONTENTS

PAGE	TITLE
1	Table of Contents

## CONSTITUTION

2	Purpose of the Constitution
2	Article I – Name
2	Article II – Church Purpose
3	Article III – Statement of Faith
3	Article IV – Government
3	Article V – Affiliations
4	Article VI – Adoptions and Amendments

## BYLAWS

5	Purpose of the Bylaws
5	Article I – The Officers of the Church
6	Article II – Selection of Church Officers
7	Article III – Church Membership
9	Article IV – Business Meetings
11	Article V – Ministry Teams and Ministry Leaders
12	Article VI - Pastoral Support and Advisory Council
13	Article VII – Church Discipline

---

# CONSTITUTION

## CONSTITUTION PURPOSE

We declare and establish this constitution to preserve and secure the principles of our faith and to govern the body in an orderly manner. This constitution is written for the First Baptist Church in Monroe, Washington to:

- 1 Satisfy the needs in our local church,
- 2 Exalt the Word and communicate truth,
- 3 Reflect the heart of our church, and
- 4 Provide a framework for future growth.

Although we acknowledge the need for a written constitution and bylaws, we declare our sole authority as the Holy Bible (2 Peter 1:19-21; 2 Timothy 3:16-17). We also declare our dependence upon the Holy Spirit of God to lead us (Galatians 5:18) and to reveal to our body the will of God for this church (1 Corinthians 2:10-13).

This document outlines principles of God's Word for the local church. The Holy Spirit promotes the following in supporting the church leadership in unity. Likewise, the Holy Spirit promotes the accountability and communication of the church leadership to the body. This document is not to be understood in the context of the people rule (Hebrews 13:17) nor that the church officers rule. Jesus Christ is the sole head of His body (Ephesians 1:22-23, 4:11-15) and the Great Shepherd of the church (1 Peter 2:25, 5:1-4).

## ARTICLE I – NAME

This body shall be known as the First Baptist Church of Monroe located at 17922 149th St. SE; Monroe, WA 98272-1102.

## ARTICLE II – CHURCH PURPOSE

1. We believe that the Scriptures teach five main purposes for a church of Jesus Christ.

**EVANGELISM:** To be a dynamic spiritual community, empowered by the Holy Spirit to share the gospel of Jesus Christ with as many people as possible in our church, community, and throughout the world (Luke 24:46-47).

**WORSHIP:** To be a community of believers who exalt God, with reverence, and awe through praise, prayer, and service to one another, responding in obedience to His leadership (John 4:23-24, Hebrews 12:28, 13:15-16).

**FELLOWSHIP:** To be a growing community of believers experiencing meaningful, loving relationships with God and fellow believers in order to stimulate one another to love and good deeds (John 13:34-35, 1 John 1:7, Hebrews 10:24-25).

**DISCIPLESHIP:** To help people experience a growing knowledge of truth through teaching and consistent contact with other believers through daily study of the Scriptures (Matthew 28:18-20, 2 Peter 3:18).

**MINISTRY:** To be a church that serves one another unselfishly as well as the people in our local community and in the world in Jesus' name (1 John 3:17-18, Luke 22:16, 1 Peter 4:10-11).

2. All of the above purposes are built upon the foundation of prayer (Acts 1:14, 2:42, Colossians 4:2), for Jesus said, "Apart from Me, you can do nothing" (John 15:5).

### ARTICLE III – STATEMENT OF FAITH

1. We believe that the Bible is the inspired Word of God and is the sole source of truth for all doctrine and practice, profitable for teaching, reproof, correction, and training in right living. (2 Tim 3:16).
2. This church subscribes to the doctrinal statement of the "Baptist Faith and Message" most recently adopted (currently June 14, 2000) by the Southern Baptist Convention.

### ARTICLE IV – GOVERNMENT

1. We believe that the Lord Jesus Christ is the only head of the church (Colossians 1:18). Therefore no person, group, or outside agency will control the actions of this church. This includes pastors, deacons, ministry teams, ministry leaders, and church members.
2. Believing that the Lord Jesus has given us His Word (Psalm 119:105) and His Spirit (John 16:13) to guide us, we believe that the best way to determine His will is through a congregational form of government whereby each active member receives one vote. The biblical principle we are striving for is unity in all major decisions (Acts 6:5, 15:22), because in a multitude of counselors there is victory and safety (Proverbs 11:14, 24:6).
3. The church body invests its authority in the pastors for oversight and leadership (Acts 15:6, 21:17-18, 1 Peter 5:1-4). The pastors are given the charge to lead the church but are also accountable to the church (1 Thessalonians 5:12-13).
4. The church body also invests its authority in the deacons, ministry teams and Pastoral Support and Advisory Council to make appropriate decisions that need not come to the body for approval. These groups and individuals are also accountable to the church. Church members are encouraged to discuss questions or concerns directly with pastors, deacons, ministry teams or Pastoral Support and Advisory Council team members before bringing these concerns before the body in a business meeting (Matthew 18:15-17, Ephesians 4:15, Romans 15:14).

### ARTICLE V – AFFILIATIONS

1. Recognizing mutual benefit between the association of churches who are in agreement in faith and practice, and to encourage the spirit of fellowship and good will, we voluntarily affiliate with the

churches of the Puget Sound Baptist Association, the Northwest Baptist Convention, and the Southern Baptist Convention.

2. We also seek to cooperate with other local churches of like doctrine and practice within the community, operating in a spirit of unity rather than union, to reach our community with the gospel of Jesus Christ.

## ARTICLE VI – ADOPTION AND AMENDMENTS

### 1. Amendment

- a. This Constitution may be amended by a three-fourths (3/4) approval at any regular business meeting of the church.
- b. An amendment to this constitution must be submitted to the church in writing at a regular business meeting. At least two weeks must pass prior to the actual approving vote of the body.

### 2. Replaces Old Constitution

- a. Adoption of this constitution shall affect a repeal of all previously adopted Constitutions.

## BYLAWS PURPOSE

These Bylaws are written for First Baptist Church of Monroe, Washington to:

1. Define the officers of the church
2. State the selection process for officers of the church
3. Define church membership
4. Set guidelines for business meetings and general procedures
5. Define ministry teams and ministry leaders
6. Define Pastoral Support and Advisory Council
7. Set guidelines for church discipline

## ARTICLE I – THE OFFICERS OF THE CHURCH

The officers of this church shall be Pastors (Ephesians 4:11, 1 Timothy 5:17), and Deacons (1 Timothy 3:8-13) under the Lordship of Christ. The selection of these men must be approved by the body present at a regular or special called business meeting. It is expected that the officers of this Church shall maintain the highest possible standards of Christian conduct and service. All of these officers are accountable to each other and to the body.

### 1. The Lord Jesus Christ

- a. The Lord Jesus is the True Head of the Church. It must be required that every officer is living in submission to the Word of God (John 14:15) and under control of the Spirit of God (Galatians 5:22-23). Every officer of this church must be seeking the will of Christ for this body and not his own agenda. Jesus Christ is over all, in all, and through all (Romans 11:36, 1 Corinthians 8:6, Colossians 1:16-18).

### 2. Senior Pastor and Associate Pastors

- a. The Senior Pastor is given the charge to direct the church (Hebrews 13:17) to meet the God-given purposes by equipping the members for the work of the service (Ephesians 4:11-12).
- b. All pastors shall be accountable to meet and maintain the qualifications given for overseers in 1 Timothy 3:1-7 and elders in Titus 1:6-9, operating in the spirit of 1 Peter 5:1-4. The pastors are "shepherds" who follow the example of Christ in laying their life down for the sheep (John 10:11). They lead from a position of setting the example to the flock (1 Peter 5:3) and serving the body (Luke 22:26).

- c. The pastors' main responsibilities are to lead, feed, and care for the flock of God (Ezekiel 34:12-15, Acts 20:28, 1 Peter 5:2-3) under the direction of the Lord Jesus Christ, and equipping the saints for the work of the service (Ephesians 4:11-12).
- d. The church regards the office of Pastor, Elder, and Bishop as three ways of referring to a single position of leadership. The Scriptures equate the position of Elder with that of Bishop (Titus 1:5,7). Elders are commanded to Pastor/Shepherd and exercise oversight (1 Peter 5:1-2). Elders are described as overseers and commanded to Pastor Shepherd the church (Acts 20:28-31). The polity of the church will refer to this office simply as Pastor.

### 3. Deacons

- a. All deacons shall be accountable to meet and maintain the qualifications given in 1 Timothy 3:1-7 and Acts 6:1-7. Their main function is to assist the pastoral staff in caring for and ministering to the needs of the church family (Acts 6:1-4).
- b. The deacons shall establish and maintain a ministry to serve the needs of the body, especially those who do not have family to care for them (1 Timothy 5:3-10, Acts 6:1, James 1:27).
- c. Deacons will serve for one year and then may be reapproved (at any quarterly business meeting) by the church body for additional service.

## ARTICLE II – THE SELECTION OF CHURCH OFFICERS

It is desirable that the officers of this church shall be selected by the Holy Spirit (Acts 20:28). Therefore, all officers shall be approved by the current pastors, current deacons, and the active church membership for in many counselors our plans succeed (Proverbs 15:22).

### 1. Senior Pastor

- a. A Pastor Search Team shall be formed at the recommendation of pastors and the Pastoral Support and Advisory Council to the body (Proverbs 11:14). When possible, this team should consist of approximately 5-7 members, with representation from pastors, deacons, and members at-large. This team shall attempt to represent a general cross section of the church in age, gender, and other characteristics. This team will first be selected and approved by the Pastoral Support and Advisory Council and brought before the church body for final approval in a business meeting. The purpose of this team shall be to endeavor to find God's choice for this position (Acts 20:28), and recommend that man to the body for approval. This team must strive to know this man thoroughly, as the qualifications for pastor are more about who he is than what he does (1 Timothy 3:1-7). Because of this, it is desirable to train up future pastors from within the church body.

## 2. Associate Pastors

- a. Associate Pastors will be selected in the same manner as the senior pastor stated above, with the senior pastor directing this search team. The only exception to this process is when the pastor(s) believe that God has already placed a man within the body to serve as a pastor or ministerial staff member. In this case, the pastor(s) may recommend this person directly to the congregation for approval.

## 3. Deacons

- a. The selection process for deacons shall begin with recommendations from the body to the leadership based upon the biblical qualifications of 1 Timothy 3:8-13 and Acts 6:1-5. Once recommended, the man nominated will have the opportunity to affirm or decline the nomination before his name is brought before the body for final approval.

# ARTICLE III – CHURCH MEMBERSHIP

The difference between members and “attenders” can be summed up in one word: covenant. While becoming a Christian means a covenant with Christ, becoming a church member means a covenant to other Christians in this body. It is also a covenant to participate in and be accountable to the church and its leadership.

## 1. Becoming a Member

Any person may present themselves to the senior pastor for membership in this body. To become a member of First Baptist Church, there are four requirements:

- a. The person must have accepted Christ as their Lord and Savior
- b. The person must have followed the Lord in Biblical Baptism\*
- c. The person must believe that God is leading them to unite with this church family. The Scripture says that “God has placed the members, each one of them, in the body, just as He desired” (1 Corinthians 12:18).
- d. The person has read and acknowledged the responsibilities of church membership as listed below.

\*Exceptions (e.g. for health reasons) allowed at discretion of the church body.



#### 4. Termination of Membership

- a. Membership shall be terminated in the following ways:
  - i. Death of the member
  - ii. Transfer to another church
  - iii. Exclusion by action of this church
  - iv. Removal by request of the member
  - v. Refusing to adhere to the responsibilities of membership
  - vi. Become inactive as defined below

#### 5. Inactive Membership

- a. A member shall be considered inactive if there is no record of their attendance or any contribution to the Church in any way during the past twelve months, except in cases of illness or physical disability or military service, or except in special cases as determined by church leaders.
- b. The Pastor and/or Office Staff will bring a list of any newly marked inactive members to the Pastoral Support and Advisory Council for their review.

### ARTICLE IV – BUSINESS MEETINGS

#### 1. Purpose of Business Meetings

The purpose of business meetings are as follows:

- a. Communication
  - i. It is essential that the general church body be made aware of the happenings of the church. The regular business meetings give the opportunity for pastors, deacons, ministry teams and leaders to communicate to the body concerning their respective area of ministry. The business meeting also allows any active church member to propose a motion for consideration at the next church business meeting.
- b. Accountability
  - i. It is essential that the church leaders and ministry leaders be held accountable by the church for their actions as they have been empowered by the church for leadership and service. The regular business meetings give the opportunity for members of the body to ask questions of those who have given reports.

c. Decision

- i. Although the church delegates the authority for decision making to its leaders and ministry teams, the following decisions must be brought before the church for approval:
  1. Purchasing or the sale of the church property
  2. Entering into a building program
  3. Selection and termination of church officers (pastors and deacons), and ministerial staff
  4. Official affiliation or withdrawing from affiliation from any fellowship
  5. Amending constitution or bylaws
  6. Ordination of Ministers
  7. Annual church budget
  8. Authorization of spending on major items not covered in annual budget
- ii. Each member should submit themselves to the Word of God (Colossians 3:16) and the Spirit of God (Ephesians 5:18) with the goal of coming to a unified decision that reflects the will of God for the church family (Acts 15:22).
- iii. A quorum of ten percent (10%) of the active roll of the church membership, age eighteen years of age and older, with a three-fourths (3/4) approval at the business meeting of the church is required on all the above items a through h above. All other items require a majority vote for approval. If a quorum does not show up, the business meeting will be held the following week, and if a quorum does not show up again, the business meeting will be held the following week and whoever shows up constitutes the quorum.

2. Guidelines for Business Meetings

a. Spirit

- i. A spirit of love and unity shall be the heart of all business meetings (Philippians 2:3-4, 14-15). All meetings shall be run in this spirit for the common purpose of discovering God's will for the church (Acts 15:6-29). Only when sin prevents such a meeting shall Robert's Rules of Order, Newly Revised be followed. However, our church shall strive not to use these secular methods for maintaining order, but rely upon the grace of our Lord Jesus to keep us all in the right spirit, even if we are in disagreement.

b. Moderator

- i. The appointed representative shall lead the meeting.

c. Regular business meetings

- i. Business meetings should be scheduled no less than quarterly. These meetings shall be well publicized in advance to encourage attendance.

d. Special Business Meetings

- i. The leadership may request a special business meeting to consider matters of a specific nature which needs to be addressed prior to the next regularly scheduled meeting. Two (2) week's notice must be given for these meetings. The notice shall include the subject, the date, time and place, and it must be given in such a manner that all members have opportunity to know of the meeting, such as a verbal announcement and bulletin notice for two Sundays.

e. Concerns

- i. The business meeting is not the place to bring up issues of church leadership, ministry teams, or another member in front of the entire church body without first attempting to resolve the issue privately.

## ARTICLE V — MINISTRY TEAMS AND MINISTRY LEADERS

The church leadership shall establish such standing ministry teams, as may be deemed necessary to carry on the various phases of the church efficiently and effectively.

1. In general, ministry teams are established where the responsibility for decision making and ministry is best left in a multitude of counselors, rather than a ministry leader. Ministry teams shall have the freedom to express different points of view and disagree in a spirit of love and respect, with the goal of coming to a unified decision that best reflects the will of God for the church. All ministry teams are accountable to the church and its leadership for their actions and decisions.
2. Each ministry team shall strive to consist of approximately 3 to 5 active church members (with a minimum of 3) unless otherwise designated. Each ministry team shall have an appointed leader, approved by the pastors.
3. As a general guideline, team members should serve for a term of one year, from January 1<sup>st</sup> to December 31<sup>st</sup>. In most cases, active members of the team will be given the opportunity to commit to another year of service at the end of their term of commitment. Exceptions might include a team member who is disrupting the meetings, or to make room for new members to serve. New members may be added to the team with church leadership approval throughout the year as needed. Members may step off the team at any time, although an exit interview should be conducted by a church leader to ensure the reason behind the resignation.

#### 4. Ministry Teams

With the exception of the Finance Team, the church leadership along with support from the church body shall decide what ministry teams are needed to support the functions and ministries of the church. It is not the intent of this document to specify what those teams are and what their responsibilities will be.

##### a. Finance Team

- i. The Finance Team shall be responsible for developing policies and procedures relating to the handling of all church finances. This team also has responsibility for formulating and administering the annual budget, and presenting it to the church. Finance team members can serve for four years consecutively, and then will be encouraged to rotate off the team to allow others to serve. In general, family members/relatives will not be allowed to serve together at the same time on this team.

#### 5. Ministry Leaders

- a. Certain ministries within the church will fall under the general care of one individual. These ministries include such things as: Worship Leader, Ushers and Greeters, Sunday School Teachers, Sound Room, and Youth Ministry. In each case, leaders are encouraged to surround themselves with others who can offer support and counsel for their ministry.
- b. Leaders are approved by the pastors and affirmed by the church at a business meeting
- c. Leaders are accountable to the church and its leadership for their actions and ministries.

### ARTICLE VI — PASTORAL SUPPORT AND ADVISORY COUNCIL

A Pastoral Support and Advisory Council will be established as an advisory body for the pastors to consult with on matters affecting the activities of the church. This can include decisions about ministry related or non-ministry related (e.g. building related improvements) activities.

#### 1. Council Members

- a. As a minimum, the council members will consist of the pastors, the pastoral staff, the administrative staff, deacons and each of the ministry team leaders. The purpose for this selection is for the pastor to seek consultation from members of the body who are invested in the growth and ministries of the church and whom have a strong understanding of the needs within the church body. Additional church members may be requested to be a council member based upon their involvement with the activities of the church. Those additional members can be brought to the council for acceptance at the request of the pastor or an existing council member. It is expected that the council members would change to reflect those that are actively engaged in the activities of the church. Since the council members are

based on engagement, there is no minimum or maximum time identified for those serving on the council.

## 2. Council Leadership

- a. The leadership of the Pastoral Support and Advisory Council should consist of one to three council members (non-pastoral or administrative staff) who are asked to lead the Council to continually work in harmony with the Pastor(s) and with the Council members to strive to accomplish the plans of the shared leadership. The leader(s) should be voted on once a year.

## 3. Council Meetings

- a. Council meetings will be requested at the discretion of the pastor as needed or by the council leadership. Any council member can bring proposed agenda items to the pastor for consideration to bring before the council. Though the council may vote on proposals that are presented to them, the voting is only intended to help the pastors understand how those in leadership feel the church should proceed. The voting is not binding. The church should receive communications from the pastor or pastoral staff concerning the activities of the Pastoral Support and Advisory Council.

# ARTICLE VII — CHURCH DISCIPLINE

The Scriptures encourage the local church to exercise discipline in order to ensure that sin does not damage the entire body (1 Corinthians 5:4-7, Galatians 5:9). It is the responsibility of the church to judge itself rightly (1 Corinthians 5:12, John 7:24) and to admonish one another (Romans 15:14). This must begin with the church leadership holding each other accountable to maintain a standard of godliness as an example for all to follow (1 Peter 5:3). In general practice, the leaders of the church are also called to keep an eye on those who cause dissensions within the body (Romans 16:17), to rebuke those who continue in willful sin (1 Timothy 5:19-20), to admonish the unruly (1 Thessalonians 5:14), and to reject someone who is factious or a heretic after a first and second warning (Titus 3:10-11). The responsibility for church discipline falls mainly upon the pastors of the church (Ezekiel 34:16, 1 Corinthians 4:21, 2 Corinthians 13:1-2, 1 Timothy 5:1-2, 3 John 9-10).

## 1. Necessary Discipline

- a. The pastors will look into any matter of church discipline when a member's sin can potentially impact the entire body (Matthew 5:29-30, Galatians 5:9), or when a member is sinning openly before the body (1 Corinthians 5:1, 1 Timothy 5:19-20). As a general guideline, member's private sins that do not impact the body are not subject to discipline from leaders of the church. The exception to this guideline is when a person is in a leadership position, such as an officer of the church, or a ministry leader.
- b. As a general guideline, new believers will be given ample time for the Holy Spirit to convict them of their sin (John 16:8) and transform them by renewing their mind in the truth (Romans 12:2) before church discipline is initiated.

## 2. Discipline of Members

- a. When the leadership of the church deems discipline necessary, the first step will be to for a church leader to approach the member individually (Matthew 18:15). The spirit of this meeting must always be one of love (1 Timothy 5:1-2) in a spirit of gentleness with the goal of biblical restoration (Galatians 6:1, James 5:19).
- b. Should the member not repent from his or her sin which is affecting the body, then a second meeting shall occur with other leaders involved (Matthew 18:16, 2 Corinthians 13:1). Again, the spirit of this meeting must always be one of love and gentleness with the goal of biblical restoration.
- c. Should the member still not repent from his or her sin, then the person will be removed from leadership or possibly from the membership (Titus 3:10-11, Matthew 18:17, 1 Corinthians 5:4-5, 13, 2 Thessalonians 3:14). The discipline shall be brought before the entire church family only if deemed necessary by the pastors.
- d. The spirit towards the person who has been disciplined must always remain one of Christian love and reconciliation (Galatians 6:1), even if the member does not repent (2 Thessalonians 3:15, Matthew 18:17) and is no longer part of the church membership.
- e. Should the person repent in the future, the full hand of love and fellowship will be extended to him by the leaders of the church (2 Corinthians 2:6-8). Others will also be encouraged to reaffirm their love for the person. However, ample time must be given before the person is restored to any type of leadership position within the body.
- f. Any person who approaches a church officer with a concern about another will be encouraged to go to that person first (Matthew 18:15) and seek a resolution. The leadership of the church will not look into the matter unless the person in question is in leadership of the church, or the sin has the potential to be used by the enemy against the body. In general, more than one verbal witness is required to receive an accusation against an officer of the church (1 Timothy 5:19).