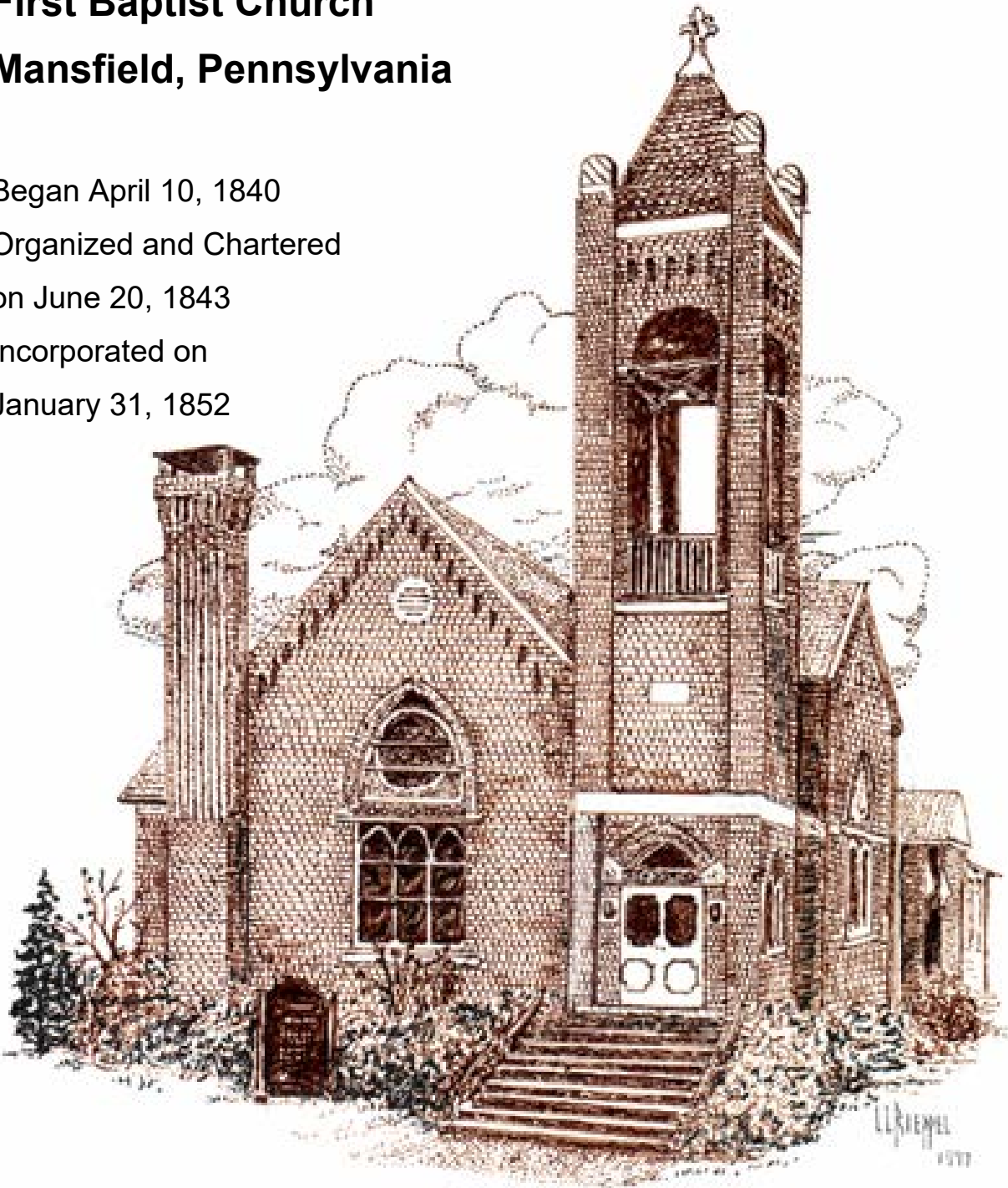


# First Baptist Church Mansfield, Pennsylvania

Began April 10, 1840

Organized and Chartered  
on June 20, 1843

Incorporated on  
January 31, 1852



Amendments were made June 2021. Copies of the Constitution (By-Laws)  
and policies are on file with the Church Records in the Archives of the church.

Policies begin on page 14

**The Constitution  
And  
Policies  
Of the First Baptist Church**

**North Main & Sherwood Streets  
Mansfield, Pennsylvania 16933 570-662-7862  
January 1, 2010, June 2021**

**With Amendments  
Policies approved as noted.**

# Constitution

## Article I, Name

The name of this Church shall be the First Baptist Church in Mansfield, Pennsylvania

## Article II, Mission Statement

"We invite and welcome all people to join us in following and growing in Christ, fulfilling our shared ministry and mission, locally and worldwide, for the worship and praise of God."

## Article III, Polity

The government of the church is vested in its members, who exercise the right of control in all its affairs. The church, while maintaining the traditional Baptist Independence of the local body, voluntarily seeks to be affiliated with other Baptist Churches by becoming a member of the Tioga Baptist Association, the American Baptist Churches of Pennsylvania and Delaware (ABCOPAD), and the American Baptist Churches in the United States of America. Believing in the essential unity of the Church, we support Christian cooperation with such bodies as the Mansfield Area Ministerium and the Pennsylvania, National and World Councils of Churches of Christ.

## Article IV, Doctrine

The Church recognizes the Bible as the sufficient rule of faith and practice, and holds that living in accordance with the teachings of Jesus Christ is the true test of fellowship. Each member shall have the undisturbed right to follow the word of God according to the dictates of his/her own conscience, under the enlightenment of the Holy Spirit. The following statement of faith, therefore, is not a test but an expression of the great spirit in which the Church interprets the Word of God.

**Faith** -- We believe in God, the Father, infinite in wisdom, goodness and love; and in Jesus Christ, God's Son, our Lord and Savior, who for us and our salvation, lived and died and rose again and lives forevermore; and in the Holy Spirit, who takes of the things of Christ and reveals them to us, renewing, comforting, and inspiring the souls of God's people.

**Covenant** -- We are united in striving to know the will of God as taught in the Holy Scriptures and in our purpose to walk in the ways of the Lord, made known or to be made known to us. We hold it to be the mission of the Church of Christ to proclaim the gospel to all people, exalting the worship of the one true God, and laboring in the process of knowledge, the promotion of justice, the reign of peace, and the realization of one human family. Depending, as did our predecessors, upon the continued guidance of the Holy Spirit to lead us into all truth, we work and pray for the transformation of the world into the kingdom of God, and we look with faith for the triumph of righteousness and the life everlasting.

## Article V, Membership

### Section 1: Admission to Membership

**A. Members** shall be those persons received into membership by any of the following methods, subject in each case to the recommendations of the Diaconate and the vote of the church;

**By Baptism** -A confession of faith in Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior, and baptism by immersion.

**By Letter**-A, transfer of a letter from another Baptist Church or another church practicing immersion of believers.

**By Experience** - Anyone who has been immersed but for a sufficient reason cannot present a letter from another Church, may be received upon statement of Christian experience.

**By Restoration** - Any person who has lost membership for any reason may be restored to membership upon expressing a desire to unite with the Church.

**B. Associate Members**- shall be those received into membership by experience or by letter from another Church where profession of faith has been made, but the mode of baptism was not immersion.

**C. Student Membership** - may be inferred on a student at Mansfield University by request, in order to establish a closer tie of Christian fellowship. Student membership shall be without voting privileges. Student membership shall cease upon termination of student status.

### Section 2: Status of Membership

**A. Active Membership** shall be those who seek to fill the spiritual duties of the Christian faith, attending the services of the church, giving for its support and benevolence, and sharing in its organized work. Only active members shall be reported.

**B. Inactive Membership** shall be those members, resident or non-resident, who for two years or more have not fulfilled the duties of active members, who have not communicated with the Church, and who have not responded positively to approaches by the Diaconate, and they shall be notified of the Inactive status. An inactive member may be restored to the active list by the Diaconate

C. Publication of current membership lists, Active and Inactive, shall be made each year with the Annual Reports.

D. Permanent records of membership information shall be maintained at the Church.

### Section 3: Termination of Membership

#### By Death

**By Letter**-Any member in good standing who desires a letter of dismissal and recommendation to any other Church may receive it upon his/her request and upon recommendation of the Diaconate and vote of the Church. The Church to which membership is requested shall be named in the request, and the letter shall be sent to the Pastor or Clerk of that Church. 4.

## **By Disinterest -**

- (1) Members whose addresses have been unobtainable for two years or more may be recommended for removal and dismissal by vote of the Church.
- (2) Members on the Inactive List for more than one year, who have made no response to at least three attempts to renew interest during that period, may be recommended for removal and dismissed by vote of the Church.
- (3) Exception may be made in such cases as those away from home and persons whose families are still active in the church.

## **Article VI, Services and Meetings**

### **Section 1: Worship**

- A. The Church shall conduct regular services for public worship, prayers, religious education, evangelism, and fellowship, and such other services as are necessary to promote the Kingdom of God.
- B. The Lord's Supper shall be observed at least quarterly or on such other occasions as the Church may decide from time to time, and shall be open to all believers in the Lord Jesus Christ as the Savior of the world.

### **Section 2: Meetings**

- A. An Annual Meeting shall be held in January to receive in writing comprehensive reports of Officers, Committees, Boards, and organizations to transact business, and to adopt the annual budget. The date shall be set by the Advisory Board and announced at the previous Church Business meeting.
- B. Business Meetings of the Church shall be held twice per year, Spring and Fall to transact and to receive reports. The date shall be set by the Advisory Board and announced at the previous stated meeting.
- C. Special Meetings may be called by the Pastor, Moderator, Advisory Board, Board of Trustees, Diaconate, or by written request of ten Active Members. Notice shall be given at Sunday morning services, posted at the Church and/or on social media on two successive Sundays preceding such meetings.
- D. Meetings for action on accepting new members or transfers of letter may be held at the call of the Pastor and upon recommendation of the Diaconate in conjunction with regular worship services or at any other regular meeting of the Church.

### **Section 3: Rules and Regulations**

- A. Quorum** - A majority of active members present shall constitute a quorum.
- B. Voting** - Only Active members shall be permitted to vote, and a majority of such members present and voting at any business meeting shall decide any question presented, unless otherwise provided for in the Constitution.
- C. Official Year** - the official year of the Church shall be the calendar year. 5.

## **Article VII, Elections**

### **Section 1: Dates**

Officers, Board, and Committee members shall be elected at the November Business Meeting. New Officers shall be confirmed during the last Sunday of December (unless that is Christmas Day, in which case of January 1.) All Officers, Board, and Committee members shall assume duties on January 1 and continue in office until their successors are elected and appointed.

### **Section 2: Nominations**

The Nominating Committee (appointed by the Advisory Board) shall prepare a slate of persons for each office to be filled. Such nominations shall be printed and available at the church no later than two Sundays prior to the November Business Meeting. It shall be the privilege of any member present and qualified to vote to place in nomination the name of any eligible person for any office. No person shall be nominated without his/her prior consent.

### **Section 3: Qualifications**

All officers shall be members of this Church in good standing and, with the exception of the Pastor, shall be elected at the November Business Meeting. The Church shall have the power to remove from office any elected official for good and sufficient reasons.

### **Section 4: Vacancies**

A. Officers - In case of a vacancy, the Advisory Board may appoint someone to serve until the next election.

B. Board Members. When a vacancy occurs on a Board, the remaining members shall appoint a member to serve until the next election. In case of an extended absence of at least three months, the Board may appoint someone to serve until the member returns.

C. Committee Members - A vacancy on a committee for which the members are elected shall be filled in the same manner as the boards. A vacancy on a committee with appointed members shall be filled by the body that made the original appointments.

D. Resignations - Voluntary resignations shall be submitted in writing to the Moderator. Failure to perform the duties of office for three months or to attend three successive meetings without prior excuse shall constitute a resignation from office.

### **Section 5: Tenure**

Terms of office may be renewable. The offices of Treasurer and Financial Secretary are renewable for the sake of continuity.

## **Article VIII, Officers**

### **Section 1: Pastor**

- A. The Pastor shall have oversight of the entire work of the Church; he/she shall be an ex-officio member of all Board and Committees, shall preside at all meetings of the church for worship unless other provision is made by the Diaconate, and shall perform all duties ordinarily devolving upon a Pastor of the Church.
- B. The Pastor shall be a regularly ordained Baptist Minister whose credentials are recognized by the American Baptist Church, USA.
- C. The Pastor shall be a believer in and preacher of the Gospel and of the basic doctrines of faith held by Baptists. He/she shall cooperate with the local organized work of the denomination and with American Baptist Churches, USA, as well as with other united efforts on behalf of the Kingdom in the community.
- D. Termination of Pastorate - the term of office may be ended upon at least 60 days' notice on the part of the Pastor or the Church or by mutual agreement. Termination shall be voted at a regularly called business meeting, notice of such meeting and its purpose having been read during worship on two successive Sundays prior to the meeting. A majority vote of the resident active membership shall make termination valid.

### **Section 2: Moderator and Vice Moderator**

- A. The Moderator shall be elected for a term of one year to preside at the business meetings of the Church and at meetings of the Advisory Board.
- B. He/she shall be responsible for informing Advisory Board members of their membership and responsibilities on this Board.
- C. He/she shall call reorganization meetings of elected Board and Committees no later than December 15.
- D. To be eligible for this office, candidates must have held an elected office in the Church. E. A Vice Moderator may be elected to carry out the duties of the Moderator in his/her absence.

### **Section 3: Church Clerk**

The Church Clerk shall be elected for a term of one year to keep a record of the proceedings of the Business Meetings of the Church and the Advisory Board, maintain a complete list of all its members, make out the annual reports to the denomination with the required statistics, and attend to all the duties customarily devolving upon a Church Clerk.

### **Section 4: Financial Secretary and Assistant**

- A. The Financial Secretary shall be elected for a term of one year to receive, record, and deposit all monies received at Church services through the Church School and all mission contributions. An annual statement of total contributions shall be given to each person.
- B. An Assistant Financial Secretary shall be elected for a term of one year to carry out the duties of the Financial Secretary under his/her direction and/or in his/her absence.

## **Section 5: Treasurer and Assistant**

- A. The Treasurer shall be elected for a term of one year to be custodian of the money belonging to the Church, and any endowment or Trust Funds. The Memorial Fund and the Benevolence Fund are excepted.
- B. The Treasurer shall without vote or further authority pay out of the Church funds available for the purpose all authorized salaries, fixed charges, interest and recurring bills such as electric, water, etc. and shall pay other bills after they have been approved by the Board of Trustees.
- C. He/she shall give a financial report at every regular Business Meeting and a complete, detailed report at the Annual Meeting, and submit financial records for the annual audit.
- D. He/she shall be an ex-officio member of the Board of Trustees.
- E. An Assistant Treasurer shall be elected for a term of one year to carry out the duties of the Treasurer in his/her absence and under his/her direction. Also the Assistant Treasurer shall be the custodian of and responsible for the Joint Account, keeping accurate records of donors and receipts and dispensing funds under the direction of the various Boards and Committees involved, subject to audit.

## **Article IX, Boards**

### **Section 1: Advisory Board**

- A. The Advisory Board shall consist of the elected Officers of the Church, the chair of regular Boards and elected Committees, and presidents of auxiliary organizations, and the Pastor. The Moderator shall serve as the chair of the Board, and the Clerk shall serve as Secretary.
- B. It shall be the function of the Advisory Board:
1. To propose to the Church a tentative program including major objectives for the coming year.
  2. To advise and assist the Officers, Boards, and Committees of the Church in the performance of their duties.
  3. To prepare an annual budget to be received for discussion at the November Business Meeting and final vote at the Annual Meeting, and to be responsible for an annual stewardship emphasis.
  4. To transact emergency business not elsewhere provided for in the Constitution.
  5. To appoint the Nominating Committee prior to June 30 and the Auditing Committee at least 30 days before the Annual Meeting.
  6. Each member will present a written report to the Church Clerk.
- C. No fundraising shall be conducted without the consent of the Advisory Board.
- D. The Advisory Board shall meet at least four times a year. It shall establish its own mode of procedure. Special meetings may be called by the Moderator or the Pastor.

## **Section 2: Diaconate**

The Diaconate shall consist of five elected members, two of whom shall be elected annually to serve for three years. The Pastor shall be a member ex-officio,

- A. The Diaconate shall appoint ushers and members of the Chancel Committee, The Diaconate shall properly instruct the appointees concerning their duties and see to it that their responsibilities are properly discharged.
- B. The Diaconate shall assist the Pastor in matters concerning the spiritual welfare of the Church and shall assist in the operation and observance of the Lord's Supper and Baptism.
- C. They shall be responsible for membership outreach, training for membership, recommendation for membership, and request for transfer. They shall revise the Church membership roll annually.
- D. They shall cooperate with the Pastor in visiting members of the Church. When the Pastor is absent from a worship service, the Diaconate shall be responsible for securing pulpit supply and worship leadership as needed.
- E. The Diaconate shall meet at least ten times each year.

## **Section 3: Trustees**

- A. The Board of Trustees shall consist of five elected members, two of whom shall be elected annually to serve three years. The Treasurer and Pastor are members ex-officio.
- B. The Trustees shall be the legal agents of the Church. They shall have custody of all Church property and shall be responsible for maintenance and improvement.
- C. The Board shall exercise financial oversight, working with the Treasurer to assure prompt and orderly payment of bills and signing authority to make purchases. No one shall enter into contracts in the name of the Church except the Board of Trustees. Purchases and contracts outside the provisions of the current budget require approval (See Policies #7, A. 5 Use of the Trust Fund.)
- D. The Board shall have oversight of the invested funds of the Church, selecting the most advantageous terms, and receiving reports from the Treasurer. (See Policies Section #7, A. Trust Fund.)
- E. The Board shall be responsible for the hiring of all salaried personnel except the Pastor, based upon the recommendation and guidance of the Board or Committee to whom the employee will be responsible.
- F. The Board shall meet at least ten times each year.

## **Section 4: Christian Education**

- A.** The Board shall consist of at least three elected members, one of whom shall be elected annually to serve three years. The Pastor is a member ex-officio.
- B.** The Board shall select all literature used and shall assign assembly and training classes for the various departments and classes, and supervise leadership training.
- C.** They shall meet as needed.

## **Section 5: Missions**

- A. The Board of Missions shall consist of three elected members, one of whom is elected annually to serve three years. The Pastor is a member ex-officio.
- B. This Board shall prepare and administer the mission budget of the Church, and the Treasurer shall disburse Mission funds under their direction. The Board shall seek to increase interest and giving to total work of the American Baptist Churches, USA.
- C. It shall be responsible for the promotion of special events to emphasize and support missions, and be responsible for conducting the four annual American Baptist Mission Offerings.
- D. The Board shall meet at least four times each year as needed.

## **Article X, Committees**

### **Section 1: Pastoral Relations Committee**

The Pastoral Relations Committee shall consist of: the Chairperson of the Diaconate, who shall chair this committee, one Deacon appointed annually by the Diaconate; and three members elected one each year to serve three-year terms. The Committee shall be as broadly representative of the congregation as possible. It shall meet at least quarterly and shall be accountable to the Diaconate.

The Pastoral Relations Committee shall foster constructive communications between the congregation and its pastoral leadership and implement the congregation's responsibility for its Pastor's professional leadership, conflict management, ministerial compensation, continuing education, ministerial enlistment, and recruitment (as part of the Pulpit Committee)

When the Pastor's position is vacated, the Committee shall review the Pastor's job profile to ensure that it is up to date and ready to use. Upon approval by the Board of Deacons, the job profile shall be given to the newly formed Pulpit Committee.

## **Section 2: Pulpit Committee**

- A. If the office of Pastor becomes vacant, the Church shall elect from two to four persons to serve with the Pastoral Relations Committee as the Pulpit Committee. The Pulpit committee shall elect its own chairperson. It shall be the duty of this committee to take the necessary steps to secure a Pastor.
- B. The Committee shall notify the Regional Executive Minister (or Area Minister) and seek his/her guidance and cooperation in the placement process.
- C. The Committee shall investigate the merits of every person under consideration in regard to personal character, education, ministerial record, references, and preaching ability in determining fitness for the pastorate of this Church. When a suitable candidate is selected, the Committee shall recommend the candidate to the Church for consideration. Only one final candidate shall be selected and presented to the Church at one time.
- D. If the candidate is approved and accepts, the Committee will make arrangements for the Pastor's coming, reception, and installation. If the candidate is rejected or refuses the call, the Committee will continue to function as before.

## **Section 3: Music Committee**

- A. The Music Committee shall consist of three elected members, one of whom shall be elected annually for three years. The Choir Director, Organist, and Pastor are members ex-officio and shall have voting rights. Substitute musicians will also serve as ex-officio members with voting rights.
- B. The Committee shall select music personnel (Choir Director, Organist, etc. to be hired by the Trustees and appoint unsalaried leadership as necessary. The Committee shall advise on all matters pertaining to the music program of the Church, and shall cooperate with the Choir Director, Organist, and Pastor in this program. It shall prepare and administer the music budget of the Church.

## **Section 4: Memorial Committee**

- A. The Memorial Committee shall consist of two elected members, one of whom shall be elected annually to serve for three years, plus one member appointed from the Board of Trustees, and one member from the Board of Deacons. The Pastor and Assistant Treasurer are members ex-officio.
- B. This Committee shall be responsible for all memorial gifts received by the Church. They, in consultation with the Church and with the donors and families involved where possible, shall determine and establish appropriate memorials. A permanent and clear record of each memorial gift shall be made. (See Assistant Treasurer - Article VIII, Section 5E, Page 8.)

## **Section 5: Nominating Committee**

A. The Nominating Committee shall consist of at least three members appointed by the Advisory Board prior to June 30. The Committee shall, after careful consideration, present the names of members to be elected by the Church to fill vacancies of Officers, Board members, and Committee members as required in this Constitution.

B. The Committee is responsible for explaining carefully the official duties of its nominees to said offices. No one shall be nominated without his/her consent.

## **Section 6: Auditing Committee**

The Auditing Committee shall consist of at least two members appointed by the Advisory Board at least 30 days prior to the Annual Meeting. The Committee shall audit all books and all accounts of the Church and make a faithful and correct report to the Church sixty days following the Annual Meeting.

## **Section 7: Chancel Committee**

The Chancel Committee shall consist of two or more members appointed by the Diaconate. This Committee shall provide suitable decorative arrangements for worship services and for all occasions when appropriate. This Committee also shall be responsible for arranging and caring for sanctuary decoratives, including banners, collection plates, and paraments.

## **Section 8: Ushers**

The ushers shall be appointed by the Diaconate. Upon arrival at services, they shall check that sanctuary lights are on, lights over the organ and baptistry, that the sound system is turned on, and, when appropriate, candles on the altar are lighted. They shall look after the seating of the people at the services of the church and receive the offering. At the end of the service, candles are extinguished, and lights are turned off when the congregation leaves.

# **Article XI, Auxiliary Organizations**

## **Section 1: Church**

All organizations related to the Church and using the facilities are regarded as integral parts of the Church and under its general jurisdiction.

## **Section 2: Community**

A. There shall be two representatives elected to serve the Mansfield Food Pantry Board for a term of three years.

B. There shall be two representatives elected to serve terms of three years on the Board of United Campus Ministry at Mansfield University; the Pastor is an ex-officio member of The Campus Ministry Board.

### **Section 3: Denomination**

A slate of delegates shall be elected at the November Business Meeting to serve terms of one year. From this slate may be secured those who will represent the Church at business meetings of the Tioga Baptist Association, the Region, and the American Baptist Biennial Meeting.

#### **Article XII, Amendments**

This Constitution may be amended at any regular or called Business Meeting of the Church by a two-thirds vote of those members present and voting, and that notice of each such proposed change, stating the purpose of the change, shall have been given from the pulpit at the morning worship service on two successive Sundays prior to the meeting. Also, proposed changes shall be printed and mailed to the membership at least two weeks prior to the date of the meeting.

#### **Article XIII, Rules of Order**

Robert's Rules of Order shall govern the business proceedings of this Church in all cases where they are not inconsistent with this Constitution.

#### **Article XIV, Dissolution**

In the event this Church dissolves or terminates, after paying all outstanding obligations, all remaining assets will be distributed exclusively for religious or charitable purposes, as determined by the members remaining at the time of dissolution.

**First Baptist Church of Mansfield, Pennsylvania**  
**Policies**

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(Information in parentheses indicates the most recent action taken on that policy.)

## **Section #1: Conduct of Business**

### **A. Minutes**

Church Business Meeting Minutes are to be kept separate from Advisory Board Minutes (two notebooks)

### **B. Mailing List**

The Mailing List shall be used only for projects of our own Church (Adopted; Church 5/2/1973)

### **C. Church Policies**

A Church Policies Book shall be maintained in duplicate, one with the Church Clerk and one copy with the Pastor. When Policies are adopted by the Church or Advisory Board, the Clerk shall make copies for the Policy Books. When Boards or Committees make policies affecting the church, they first shall recommend to the Advisory Board for approval, to the congregation for a vote if necessary, and then entered into the Policy Books (adopted Advisory Board 10/13/2004)

### **D. Pastor**

At the close of stated Church Business Meetings, there shall be a time of sharing concerns with the Pastor present. If members of the congregation have concerns they prefer to share indirectly, they may do it through the Pastoral Relations Committee members, who are constituted as a channel for getting such concerns to the Pastor as well as sharing the Pastor's concerns with the Church Family. (Adopted: Church 10/13/2004)

## **Section #2 Christian Education**

### **Camps and Conferences**

The Board of Christian Education, within budget constraints, will approve payment of one-half of the registration costs of American Baptist-sponsored camps and conferences for any member or active participant in our congregation. The Board will maintain a budget line item for this purpose (Adopted Board of Christian Education, 5/1/1996)

## **Section #3: Diaconate**

### **A. Member Emeritus**

This honorific may be conferred on those whose membership is being transferred to another congregation after having been an Active Member of this congregation for twenty years or more and having served in offices of this church and/or its auxiliary organizations.

### **B. The Bud Vase**

#### **1. Baby in the Church Family**

A flower may be placed in the bud vase on the pulpit, and a bulletin announcement made as soon as possible after a child is born/adopted in our Church family.

#### **2. Death in the Church family.**

A flower may be placed in the bud vase, and a bulletin announcement shall give details.

3. The Pastor shall notify the Chancel Committee or designee when a flower is needed. When appropriate, the flower shall be given to the family after worship. Appropriate artificial flowers shall be kept on hand for cases with short notice.

## C. Benevolence Fund

In order to respond in a timely fashion to needs in the Church family and community, There shall be a Benevolence Fund.

**1. Purpose:** The Benevolence Fund shall be confidentially used (a) to express our Christian concern and financial assistance when appropriate in times of crisis, (b) for gifts to special persons or projects on behalf of the Church, (c) to help families suffering temporary reversal of circumstances, and (d) to aid transients when necessary.

**2. Funding:** The Benevolence Fund shall be supported through (a) offerings for this purpose; (b) gifts made for designated purposes, the donors remaining anonymous if desired, and (c) other contributions, bequests, etc. received to fulfill the purpose of the fund.

**3. Responsibility:** The custody and dispersal of the Benevolence Fund shall be under the direction of the Diaconate.

a. The Diaconate shall determine in general what experiences meet the purpose of this fund and the amounts given.

b. They shall assign to the Pastor and one or two representatives the approval of special gifts from the fund.

c. The Benevolence Fund shall be maintained as part of the Joint Account by the Assistant Treasurer.

## D. Celebration Fund

In order to help our Church be more inviting and welcoming for our greater Church family, the Diaconate shall keep an active calendar of birthdays, anniversaries, and noteworthy special events that we may recognize all persons in a manner more akin to family. The "calendar" may appear in the abbreviated form (listing) in the Tower Topics and bulletin and be posted on a bulletin board in Griffiths Annex. Ages would not be listed for birthdays; just the date.

**1. Funding:** To cover expenses incurred for celebration a Celebration Fund shall be established for those who wish to contribute. The fund shall be administered according to the existing policy on the Benevolence Fund.

**2. Personal Milestones:** are worthy of celebrations by our Church family, lifting up significant birthdays, anniversaries, and achievements for a shared observance.

a. Each individual couple should notify the Church, filling out a 3x5 card for the Deacons with the dates of birthdays and anniversaries, and advise the Deacons about upcoming celebrations so that they may be celebrated in a timely manner.

b. The Church will respect the wishes of those who do not desire to be so honored (Adopted Church, 5/14/2003)

## Section #4: Child Protection and Sexual Ethics Policies

### Child Protection Policy Summary

1. The First Baptist Church of Mansfield (FBC) seeks to provide a safe and secure environment for the children under 18 years old who participate in our programs and activities. By implementing these practices, our goal is to protect the children within FBC programs from incidents of misconduct or inappropriate behavior. A detailed Child Protection Policy adhering to current child protection laws will be maintained on file with FBC by the Advisory Board and Pastor to be reviewed and updated in accordance to state and federal guidelines.
2. FBC will adequately screen the applications of persons, paid or volunteer, desiring to work with children participating in all church programs, including participants in any daily or temporary childcare programs. A criminal background check and child abuse registry check shall be required for all children's worker positions, both employee and volunteer workers. No one who has been convicted of a crime involving misconduct with children will be allowed to work with children. Completing a work or volunteer application authorizes the church to conduct these checks. It is the policy of the church to report any incident of child abuse or neglect toward any child in the church.
3. All applicants must acknowledge in writing that they understand the church's Child Protection Policy and that they agree to abide by it. This requirement will be met by having applicants sign the Acknowledgement of Receipt form.

### Sexual Ethics

1. The First Baptist Church of Mansfield, together with the American Baptist Churches of Pennsylvania and Delaware, affirms its long-standing commitment to ensuring and maintaining an atmosphere free of all forms of sexual abuse, sexual misconduct, and sexual harassment. We define sexual harassment as unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature. Such behavior is an affront to God and human dignity, is inconsistent with Church policies and practices, is prohibited by law, and will not be tolerated.
2. The policy statement above was adopted by the Church at the Annual Meeting, February 2, 1994; it is now operative. It is intended as a standard for the Pastor and all staff persons, paid or volunteer. It should also apply to the personal relationships of each of us as Members of this congregation.
3. Any breach of this policy should be brought to the attention of the offending party in Christian concern. Matthew 18: 15-17, gives Jesus' plan of reconciliation; it is the procedure that should be followed, involving the Pastor and Diaconate as necessary. If you have any questions about the interpretation of any part of the Policy, please discuss it with the Pastor or Deacon.

## **Section #5: Pastor**

### **A. Job Profile**

1. There shall be a Pastor's Job Profile developed and maintained by the Pastoral Relations Committee and the Diaconate. The profile shall be used by the Pastoral Relations Committee for reference when dealing with any pastoral problems and as a guideline when evaluating pastoral performance.
2. When the Church is seeking a new Pastor, the profile shall be reviewed and then made available to any candidate. (Approved Diaconate 3/19/90)

### **B. Continuing Education**

In order to earn the expected Continuing Education Units per year, the Pastor, with the approval of the Diaconate, shall be allowed one week of time and a budgeted amount of money each year for Continuing Education. These shall be cumulative up to three years to provide for a more expensive course of study. (Adopted: Diaconate 6/11/96)

### **C. Sabbatical Leave**

1. The Church may provide for a sabbatical leave every seventh year of the Pastor's tenure, when requested and approved, arranging for an Interim ministry and regular compensation. The length of the leave and costs of the pastor's tuition, travel, room, and board would be negotiable.
2. Written request for such leave shall be submitted to the Pastoral Relations Committee and referred with recommendation to the Diaconate for negotiation and approval at least sixty days in advance. Details, such as goal or purpose, dates and locations, and school or sponsor, shall be included as appropriate. The Church shall have final approval.
3. Responsibility for sabbatical arrangements for the Church and the Pastor shall be lodged with the Diaconate.
- 4- A written report on the sabbatical experience shall be made to the Church within three months after completion of the leave.

### **D. Sickness and Disability**

1. In the event that the Pastor is disabled by illness and/or accident and unable to perform the responsibilities required, the Church agrees to amend benefits with those available through Social Security and the Ministers and Missionaries Benefit Board in order to safeguard the well-being of the Pastor and his/her family.
2. If the period of disability is for three months or less, the Church agrees to continue full salary and benefits. If the period of disability extends beyond three months, the Church agrees to work with the M&M Board to make an application for disability benefits and reach an agreement for ministry and remuneration, which would safeguard the interests of both Pastor and Church. (Adopted: Church 5/2/90)

### **E. In the Pastor's Absence**

1. If the Pastor is unable to be in the pulpit, either through health, vacation, or attendance at a conference, the Deacons may contact the Regional Minister to obtain a list of substitutes from the ABCOPAD regional recognized pulpit speakers and or Academy of Christian Training and Service (ACTS) graduates not presently serving a church, Pastors who have been previe at the Church's current rate of supply preaching.

2. If the office of Pastor becomes vacant, in addition to following the Constitution for the formation of a Pulpit Committee, the Board of Deacons shall arrange for an Interim who can fill more than a short-term need. Pastor for the duration of the search. The Regional Minister also has a list of Pastors in the ABCUSA Recognized Pulpit Speaker program or the ABCOPAD Refirement Program,

interim period. a. The Deacons need to decide (a) if the services of a full-time Pastor are required during the search or (b) if an arrangement of a part-time pastor is sufficient for the

b. A compensation agreement should be made that is within the Church's budget. To provide a full-time interim, the Transitional Ministers Program receives an amount

equal to the compensation of the current Pastor.

c. Duties of an Interim Pastor, part-time or full-time, should be determined by the Deacons and the Advisory Board. consultation with the Pastoral Relations Committee and approved by the Board of

d. The Pastoral Relations Committee should review the Pastor's Job Profile to ensure that it is up to date and ready to use. Upon approval by the Board of Deacons, the Job Profile shall be given to the newly formed Pulpit Committee. (Adopted: Church 5-14-2003)

## **Section #6: Pulpit Committee**

### **A. Compensation Package**

1. For Budget purposes, until a new agreement is reached with a new Pastor, the previous compensation package shall be projected in the budget.

2. The Pulpit Committee shall negotiate, at the appropriate time, a compensation package, in good faith, in the best interest of both parties.

### **B. Procedures**

The Regional Minister will outline the necessary steps for the Pulpit Committee to utilize the resources of the Region, including an introspective Church Profile to be used for a match of available pastors in the search area.

### **C. Budget**

1. An operating budget of \$1,000 shall be set aside for expenses incurred by the Pulpit Committee and added to as necessary. An itemized list shall be reported and bills submitted to the Church Treasurer for payment. The Committee shall work in the best interest of the Church in accomplishing their task of finding a new Pastor, and in consultation with the Regional Minister to determine appropriate expenses. However, approval of the Pulpit Committee for these expenses shall be synonymous with approval of the Church. No other approval shall be necessary.

2 All expenses with any candidate should be discussed and agreed upon prior to any visit. Only those agreed-upon expenses shall be reimbursed, and with appropriate documentation.

### 3. Recognized Expenses:

- a. Automobile. In fulfilling their duties, it is necessary for the Committee to see and hear a candidate. When the Committee travels, mileage (at the current IRS rate) and meals and lodging, when necessary, shall be reimbursed by submitting receipts and an itemized list to the Treasurer. When the candidate travels, such as to a neutral pulpit or to visit this area, mileage is a reimbursable expense.
- b. Airfare. It may be more economical to transport a candidate and a spouse than it would be to transport an entire Pulpit Committee. The best rates possible should be obtained and agreed upon prior to the trip. Tickets may be paid ahead of time to get the best rates.
- c. Meals and Lodging. Meals for the Committee and meals for the candidate and family may be an appropriate expense. During a visit to the area, meals and/or lodging for a candidate may be arranged at homes of Committee members where possible, or be a reimbursable expense. Lodging for Committee members when on a visit outside this area is reimbursable.
- d. Telephone. When possible, all phone calls to candidates, references, and others should be made from the Church Office. A log of long-distance calls shall be kept, and the Treasurer shall be given a copy. All calls made from other phones are reimbursable when conducting interviews. with receipts. Use of a speaker phone is essential when the Committee is

## **D. Moving**

1. When a new Pastor is called, the Church will pay some or all of the moving expenses; the amount should be set and agreed upon. Depending on the distance, to get the Pastor and his/her family to Mansfield. A cap
2. A moving contractor who is local to the new Pastor should be contacted for a quote on a move and should also be contacted. the move. Local contractors who work nationally have, in the past, given the best rates
3. All expenses should be agreed upon and contracted prior to any move. (Adopted: Church 5/14/13)

## **Section #7 Missions**

### **Payout Policy**

Each monthly remittance shall be sent to the Region Office at Valley Forge by the sixth of the month, and shall include a designation for one or more Specifics, the remainder of the month's receipts going toward United Mission Basics. Money from Annual Offerings and special gifts shall be forwarded with the proper designation. Special Projects shall be paid out at the discretion of the Missions Board.

(Adopted: Church 6/11/1996)

## **Section #8: Finances**

### **A. Trust Fund/ABEC Invested Funds**

1. Established originally with the George Meyers estate bequest, a fund was set up to handle gifts and bequests. It was supervised and maintained by the Board of Trustees according to established Financial Policy. Those funds have been used and transferred to American Baptist Extension Corporation (ABEC) investments.
2. The Treasurer shall share investment information with Trustees monthly, and as appropriate, with the Church members at Church Business meetings.

### **Financial Policy**

The allocation of gifts will be decided by the Trustees in the following order: (1) Specific requests of donor; (2) Consideration of the remaining balance of the intermediate fund compared to the current needs of the Church; (3) Consideration of the remaining balance of the intermediate funds compared to approved Church projects within 1 to 5 years, while remembering that this fund holds tricted endowments for which the corpus must remain in the fund in perpetuity; and (4) If funds enot needed in the short-term portfolio or intermediate-term fund, the gift will be added to the g-term portfolio to be available for future generations of the Church. (Adopted: Church 11/7/07)

### **B. Bequests**

1. Bequests given as memorials shall be handled through the Memorial Committee. A bequest given with no memorial designation shall be handled through the Board of Trustees.
2. Bequests for specific projects shall be used for such purposes only upon approval of the Memorial Committee and/or the Board of Trustees. Family donors should be consulted.
3. Bequests with no memorial designation shall be placed in an Investment Fund according to established Financial Policy.
4. If for some reason a bequest for a specific project chosen by the donor seems to be inappropriate, the decision to accept or reject the bequest shall be referred to the Advisory Board by the Memorial Committee or the Board of Trustees.

## **Section #9: Property**

### **A. Furniture**

We shall not loan any church furniture except upon approval of the Board of Trustees.

### **B. Building Use Schedule**

1. All activities related to the program of the Church are free to use the building.
2. At the discretion of the Trustees and Pastor, others are welcome to use the building on the following basis and for the following donations:
  - a. Griffiths Annex or Classrooms:  
for a meeting: \$20  
for a brought meal: \$30  
for room, kitchen, dishes, and all: \$75  
for a wedding reception, funeral, or other event: non-member \$250  
inactive member \$150
  - b. Donations for the use of the Sanctuary:  
for inactive or non-members \$100
  - c. Donation toward expenses  
for a meeting \$25  
for a service of Baptism by another Church: \$75
  - d. Custodian fees: \$10 per hour, \$20 minimum
  - e. Fees are added when both Sanctuary and Annex are used for an occasion, and shall be paid to the Church in care of the Financial Secretary.
  - f. Scheduling shall be done in consultation with the Pastor.
  - g. Non-members and outside groups will be charged a \$100 security deposit, to be returned upon satisfactory inspection. Trustees may require the presence of a Church member to supervise the use of the facilities. (Adopted: Church 5/14/03)
  - h. At the discretion of the Trustees and Pastor, fees may be waived in public interest.

### **C. Church Records**

1. All records of the Church, Minutes of the Boards, financial accounts, and so forth, are in the Church building. the property of the Church. Those records not in current use shall be stored by the Advisory Board.
2. Maintenance, storage, and use of the Church Minutes shall be the responsibility of the
3. Historic records (Church minutes, Roll, Constitution) shall be maintained in as safe a manner

as possible to avoid the dangers of fire, theft, and deterioration. Microfilm of Genealogical Society. The oldest records shall be stored separately; a copy is on file with the Pennsylvania

4. Other artifacts that help tell the story of our Church (photographs, slides, programs, booklets, etc.) shall be maintained carefully and made available for study and information as appropriate under the direction of the Pastor.

5- Association Annuals: Since the Church has a collection of Tioga Baptist Association annual reports complete from 1842, this collection shall be added to each year and (Approved: Advisory Board 1/2/91) maintained along with the Church's own historical records. The Advisory Board shall be responsible for the maintenance, use, and disposition of this collection.



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