

FIFTH STREET BAPTIST CHURCH
CONSTITUTION AND BY-LAWS

Approved	March 14, 1965
Adopted	April 4, 1965
Revised	December 21, 2014

(ADD CORPORATE CHARTER INFO IF AVAILABLE)

For the more certain preservation and security of the principles of our faith, and to the end that this body may be governed in an orderly manner consistent with the accepted tenets of the Southern Baptist denomination and for the purpose of preserving the liberties inherent in each individual member of this church and the freedom of action of this body with respect to its relation to other churches of the same faith, we do declare and establish this constitution.

This congregation shall be known as the FIFTH STREET BAPTIST CHURCH. INC., KEY WEST, FLORIDA.

The Baptist Faith and message as adopted by the Southern Baptist Convention may 9, 1963 (JUNE 14, 2000) shall serve as the Articles of Faith.

The Church Covenant (contained in this document) and is expression of the hopes and purposes according to which our members should strive to live.

Section 1 - Policy. The government of this Church is vested in the body of believers who compose it. It is subject to the control of no other (organizational) ecclesiastical body, but it recognizes and sustains the obligations of mutual counsel and cooperation which are common among Baptist churches.

Section 2 - Doctrine. This Church receives the Scriptures as its authority in matters of faith and practice. Its understanding of Christian truth is in accord with the belief of the Baptist churches as indicated in the (Baptist Faith and Message) Articles of Faith.

BY-LAWS

ARTICLE I - DENOMINATIONAL POLICY

- Section 1. It shall be the policy of this Church, to the fullest possible extent consistent with the independent character of a Baptist church, to support all the missionary and benevolent undertakings of the Southern Baptist Convention, the Florida Baptist State Convention, and the Florida Keys Baptist Association, to who's doctrinal and missionary beliefs we declare our allegiance.
- Section 2. Consistent with this position, all officers and teachers of this Church, or members of church councils or committees, shall believe in and support the work of our Church and denomination, shall adhere to the beliefs of Southern Baptists, and be governed by the Church Covenant. All elected officials shall be church members. Failure to measure up to these standards shall be sufficient grounds for removal from office.

ARTICLE II - MEMBERSHIP

- Section I. Membership by Baptism. Any person publicly professing faith in the Lord Jesus Christ as Savior and declaring it as his purpose to follow Him as His disciple, may by a majority vote of the congregation at any church meeting, be received through baptism into full membership of this Church.
- Section 2. Membership by Letter. Members of other Baptist churches of like doctrine, who have been baptized according to the New Testament, may by a majority vote of the congregation at any church meeting, be received into full, membership of this Church upon receipt of letters of dismissal from those churches.
- Section 3. Membership by statement. Any person who has been baptized according to the New Testament, may, upon public statement of the facts and the vow of their faith and love to Christ, be received into full membership by a majority vote of the congregation at any of its church meetings.
- Section 4. Dismissal of Members. Any active member of our Church may be granted a letter of dismissal to unite with some other Baptist church where the member desires new membership. Any member who unites with any other church without such letter shall have his name dropped from the church roll.
- Section 5. Removals. When any member removes to a distance inaccessible to our Church, he shall supply the Church with his new address and move his membership within one year, providing there be a church of the same faith and order in the place to which he moves. In case there is no such church or there are circumstances which render it inadvisable to change, it shall be his duty to report to this church as often as once a year; either in person, by letter or by contribution. All absent members who do not report shall be placed on the inactive list.
- Section 6. Inactive Members. When a member fails to manifest any interest in the Church for a period of one year, showing no desire or intention of returning to the Church, such member shall automatically become what is designated as an inactive member.

People whose names are on the inactive list are not to be counted as members on any official report of our membership, and accordingly they are not entitled to vote in any business meeting of the Church. A letter of dismissal may be granted such a person but this letter will state that he is an inactive member.

It shall be the responsibility of the deacons, after due effort to re-establish the member's fellowship with the Church, to notify the Church Clerk of all such lapses of active membership; and the Clerk, having received such official instructions, shall place the name(s) on the inactive list.

In order for this matter to be systematically carried out, it shall be the responsibility of the deacons each October to thoroughly review the church membership roll, so that an attempt may be made to regain the interest of such members before their names are given to the Church Clerk. Upon being given any such names by the deacons, the Clerk shall immediately place them on the inactive list, report such action at the next business meeting of the Church, and notify such member(s) (if address is known). This entire matter shall be taken care of completely, if possible, by the first church business meeting in January.

An inactive member may be restored to active membership by the Church whenever such person shall indicate to the congregation at any church meeting a desire to be reinstated and give satisfactory assurance of intention to remain faithful to the Church.

(The church reserves the right to purge the name of any inactive member who shows no interest, indication or desire to return to active membership status after 1 year of inactivity from the church roll)

ARTICLE III - MEETINGS

Section 1. CHURCH YEAR. The church year shall run from (January 1) October 1 through (December 31) September 30 of each year. The church budget shall run from January 1 through December 31 of each year.

Section 2. BUSINESS MEETING.

a) Regular monthly business meetings of the church shall be held on Wednesday after the (third) second Sunday of (January, April, July and October unless hindered by scheduling or providence) each month. The business meeting held in October shall be the annual business meeting of the church.

b) The pastor, (deacon chair or vice-deacon chair) may call business meetings as they are required.

c) A special business meeting must be announced at (one) two successive church services before being called into session.

d) If the matter to be considered at a called business meeting is other than routine church business, notice shall be given publicly through the church bulletin, from the pulpit, or at any service preceding the meeting.

Section 2 – DEACONS

(a) The deacons shall constitute the Pastor's advisory council. Under his leadership, they shall oversee the affairs of the church. With the Pastor, they shall seek the highest spiritual good of the church. They shall assist the observance of Baptism and the Lord's Supper, and in such other duties as in general apply to the office or lay be hereafter specifically provided.

(b) The number of deacons shall vary depending upon the size of the congregation and the number of qualified men available to fill the office of deacon. However, the church shall attempt to have one deacon for each 20 members on the active church roll with an objective of a minimum of eight (8) and a maximum of twelve (12) for the first 200 members on the active roll. They shall be elected upon the basis of qualifications as set forth in the New Testament. Vacancies occurring among the active Deacons between regular annual election periods may be filled at any time by the vote of the church upon recommendation of the Nominating Committee.

(c) ELECTION

1. The Deacon Board will inform the Nominating Committee of the need.

2. The Deacon Board will give the Nominating Committee a list of men they feel are qualified.

3. At a business meeting, the congregation may give the Nominating Committee names of men they would like to nominate.

4. The Nominating Committee will select and bring a list of names to fill needed positions to the next business meeting. The congregation will vote to set aside men selected for deacon.

5. After a 90-day proving period, the men will be questioned by the congregation at a time determined by the Pastor and deacons.

6. Admission to the Deacon Board will be by secret vote of the congregation taken at the next business meeting.

7. The Ordination/Installation Service will follow at a time determined by the Pastor and deacons.

(d) The deacons shall elect annually, at their first meeting in (January) October, a chairman and clerk to serve for one year.

(e) Any member who has served as a deacon may, upon honorable retirement due to age or infirmity, be elected by the church, Deacon Emeritus. This office may be held for life with all the rights and privileges of the office, except that of voting in the meetings of the deacons.

(f) The deacons shall have responsibility for administration of the benevolence fund.

Section 4. TRUSTEES. There shall be at least three Trustees, who shall be empowered to execute deeds, deeds of trust, mortgages, and to transfer, assign and convey all church property or any part thereof upon officially recorded instructions of the church in business meetings. The Trustees shall see that adequate insurance is carried on the church property at all times. All powers and duties of the Trustees shall be conformable with the laws of the State of Florida. The term of office shall be one year.

Section 5. CHURCH CLERK. The duties of the Church Clerk shall be to keep a correct record of all proceedings of the regular and special business meetings of the Church. It shall be the Clerk's duty to supply two typewritten copies of the minutes of each business meeting; one copy for his own file, and one for the permanent church file. He shall sign letters of dismissal of members, and cooperate with the church office in keeping a correct roll of membership, and in keeping the records and papers that belong to the church.

Section 6. CHURCH TREASURER AND ASSISTANT TREASURER

(a) The Treasurer shall supervise the payment of all accounts consistent with the Budget of the church or special vote of the church, any exception to be made upon authority of the Stewardship Committee in accordance with Article V, Section 7, Paragraph b.

(b) An Assistant Treasurer shall also be elected to assist the Treasurer in all matters pertaining to this office.

(c) The Treasurer shall give a detailed and comprehensive written report of all receipts and disbursements, balances, etc., at each regular Church Business Meeting.

Section 7. SUNDAY SCHOOL DIRECTOR. The Sunday School Director shall be elected by the church before (January 1) October 1 of each year. He shall have general supervision of the Sunday School, its conduct and direction, consistent with the church program. The Director, Pastor, and Nominating Committee shall nominate teachers and officers of the Sunday School to be approved by the church on or before (January 1) October 1st of each year. Vacancies thereafter shall be filled by the Nominating committee upon approval by the church.

Section 8. (DISCIPLESHIP) CHURCH TRAINING DIRECTOR. The Church Training Director shall be elected by the church before (January 1) October 1 of each year. He (They) shall have general supervision of the church training program. The Director, Pastor and Nominating Committee shall nominate leaders and officers of (Discipleship) Church Training to be approved by the church on or before (January 1) October 1st of each year. Vacancies thereafter shall be filled by the Nominating Committee upon approval by the church

Section 9. (MEN MINISTRY) BAPTIST BROTHERHOOD. The President and all other officers of the Brotherhood shall be elected by the (men's ministry) Brotherhood itself, and the names of these officers shall be presented to the Church each September by the Church Nominating Committee for its approval.

Section 10. (WOMEN MINISTRY) WOMANS: MISSIONARY UNION. The president and all other officers of the (women's ministry) W.M.U. shall be elected by the (women's ministry) W.M.U. itself, and the names of these officers shall be presented to the Church each October by the Church Nominating Committee for its approval.

ARTICLE IV – COMMITTEES

Section 1. Nominating Committee. This committee shall lead the church in filling all church elected leadership positions filled by volunteers. This committee shall consist of the Sunday School Director, Church Training Director, and 3 members at large. This committee shall bring before the church nominations for:

1. Deacons
2. Trustees
3. Church Clerk

4. Treasurer and Assistant Treasurer
5. Sunday School Director, teachers and officers
6. (Discipleship) Church Training Director, leaders and officers
7. (Men's ministry) Brotherhood officers
8. (Women's ministry) W .M.U. officers
9. Financial Secretary

and nominations for Chairman and members of the following committees:

-. Membership (OMIT)

10. Building and Grounds
11. Ushers (/Greeters)
12. Flower (Decoration)
13. Music
14. Stewardship
15. Social (Fellowship)
16. Counting
17. Media (Audio/video)
18. Bus (Van)
19. Daycare (Sunbeam)
20. Nursery
21. Children's Church
22. Youth
23. Nominating
24. Pulpit (as needed)
25. Special (as needed)

Section 2. Membership Committee. This committee shall visit each new member, with the purpose of encouraging him to be a regular in attendance at all services and programs of the church. This committee shall consist of 3 members. (OMIT THIS COMMITTEE -FILLED BY DEACONS)

Section 3. Building and Grounds Committee. This committee shall be charged with the up-keep of all church property and equipment. It shall determine necessary repairs and/or improvements, and authorize the same up to the limit of the budget approved for that purpose. Should the budget appropriation prove inadequate for such repairs and/or improvements the committee shall request from the Stewardship Committee a special appropriation for this purpose. This committee shall also employ and supervise the work of a custodian, within the limits of the budget. This committee shall consist of 6 members, including a Trustee, who shall act as chairman.

Section 4. Ushers/(Greeters). The ushers (/greeters) shall greet those who come to the services, seat the people, look after their comfort, distribute the bulletins and (guest) visitor's cards, and in any way possible help the congregation in their worship. This committee shall consist of 7 members.

Section 5. (Decoration) Flower Committee. This committee shall see that (decorations) flowers are available for the regular Sunday services and for any special occasions, such as the death of a member of our church or a member of one of its organizations. (Any) flowers provided for the regular services should be presented to someone who is ill, as soon as possible after the services. This committee shall have at least 1 member.

Section 6. Music Committee. This committee, with the Pastor, shall oversee the music of the church. It shall make any recommendations necessary for the improvement of the music of the church. It shall arrange for sufficient song books for worship services and choirs, and other equipment as needed within the limits of the budget. This committee shall consist of the choir directors, organists, pianists, and song leader.

Section 7. Stewardship Committee.

(a) This committee shall supervise and care for all offerings, regular and special. It shall submit a proposed yearly budget to the church at (a special called December) business meeting for the next calendar year. The proposed budget shall be voted on at a special called business meeting the first Sunday in December immediately following morning worship. It shall at all times keep informed of the financial standing and progress of the church.

(b) This committee shall control all deposits and withdrawals from the Current Expense and other accounts. In case of items not provided for in the budget, the committee shall meet and pass on such except that on items in excess of (\$200) \$50.00, the church must vote its approval. It shall see that all departments operate within their budgets, or if this is impossible, shall recommend such adjustments of the budget to the church as shall seem necessary.

Section 8. (Fellowship) Social Committee. This committee shall be charged with the duty of coordinating the (fellowship) social activities of the church, as needed. It shall be in charge of the kitchen and equipment, and responsible for its use. This committee shall consist of (at least 3)5 members.

Section 9. Counting Committee. This committee shall be responsible for the counting, recording, and depositing in the bank, of all collections of the church with exception of the benevolence fund in accordance with Article IV, Section 2, Paragraph g. This committee shall consist of at least 5 members.

Section 10. Media Center. This committee shall review books, assist in processing books, and encourage people to avail themselves to the use of the Media Center. This committee shall consist of 3 members; Director of Media Center, Chairman of Music Committee, and a third person to act as Audio Visual Director.

Section 11. (Van +) Bus Committee. This committee shall be responsible for the operation and maintenance of the church buses. It shall see that adequate insurance is carried at all times. In cooperation with the Sunday School Director this committee shall establish and maintain regular Sunday morning routes and special routes such as Vacation Bible School, youth trips, etc. This committee shall consist of at least (3) 5 members.

Section 12. Daycare Committee (Sunbeam). This committee shall oversee the operation of the daycare ministry (Sunbeam Christian School). This committee shall consist of Pastor (principal) and/or program administrator, Director of Daycare, Bible Study Director, Church Training Director, Bookkeeper of the Daycare, Deacon Representative, Church treasurer, parent representative and 2 members at large.

Section 13. Nursery Committee. This committee shall be in charge of the nursery and provide nursery workers during the services. This committee shall consist of at least 3 members including the Nursery Coordinator who shall act as chairman.

Section 14. Children's Church Committee. This committee shall be responsible for Children's Church (grades 1-3)(4) during the Sunday morning worship service. This committee shall consist of at least 3 members.

Section 15. Youth Committee. This committee shall coordinate all youth activities. This committee shall consist of the Youth Director who will act as chairman, the Sunday School Youth Division Director, Church Training Youth Leader, and Mission Youth Leaders.

- Section 16. Church Council. This committee, with the leadership of the Pastor will plan and coordinate the activities of the church. This committee will meet with the Pastor at such times and as often as he considers best. This committee shall consist of the Chairman of Deacons, Sunday School director, (Discipleship) Church Training Director, Director of (women's ministry) W.M.U., Director of the Brotherhood (men's ministry), Chairman of the Stewardship Committee, and the Church Secretary and all other ministry chairs.
- Section 17. Pulpit Committee. This committee shall be responsible for locating and investigating candidates and making recommendations to the church concerning the calling of a pastor. This committee shall consist of 5 members, including Chairman of Deacons, Sunday School Director, (Discipleship) Church Training Director and other members to be elected by the church.
- Section 18. Audio-Visual Sound. This committee shall provide lights and sounds for all services -regular or special. They shall make sure that all equipment is in good working order. They shall see to repairs of said equipment and order new equipment as necessary and when resources become available. They shall assign persons and train them to operate sound and light equipment properly. They shall be available for practices before performances or special events. They shall make sure someone is in the sound booth at all times during services.
- Section 19 Special Ministries. This committee shall evaluate and recommend future participation in special opportunities for ministry as one-time or annual events.
- Section 20 Special Committees. Special committees shall be appointed by the Pastor or elected whenever necessary to attend to any matters requiring church action and not falling within the scope of any regular committees.

ARTICLE V – FINANCIAL POLICIES

- Section 1. Tithes and offerings shall be recognized as our only plan of finance. All members shall be encouraged to give at least a tenth of their income to the church according to the Scripture.
- Section 2. The Unified Budget System shall be our method of finance, and there shall be only one Treasury in the church.
- Section 3. The Sunday School shall be used to promote our financial program through the use of offering envelopes and stewardship education.
- Section 4. No special offerings shall be taken in the church or in any department of the church, except for revival meetings, the 4 annual offerings (State, Home, and Foreign Missions and Florida Baptist Children's Home) and the Benevolence Offering received when the Lord's Supper is observed - (OMIT), and such as the church may authorize.
- Section 5. In the interest of sound business policy, the following measures shall be observed:
- (a) All bills and obligations of the church and its organizations shall be paid by countersigned check.
 - (b) All offerings, regular and special with exception of the benevolence fund in accordance with Article IV, Section 2, Paragraph g, shall be counted by not less than 2 members of the counting committee.
 - (c) The Counting Committee shall make and sign in triplicate report all funds received, safeguard and deposit this money and deliver the original report slip to the church office for the files with a copy of the deposit slip received by the bank, a copy to the Pastor, and a copy to the Treasurer.
 - (d) The Financial Secretary shall be responsible for posting all individual gifts on a personal permanent file for income tax purposes. This person must be of the highest Christian character to keep all records confidential. The Financial Secretary will also be responsible for presenting receipts quarterly, and/or annually at the end of the year.
 - (e) There shall be an annual audit of all books pertaining to the church funds, and a report made to the church.

(f) No purchase shall be made except those authorized in the budget upon proper authorization by the heads of the departments, committee chairmen, or Pastor, as well as any other purchases which shall be decided upon by the church except as provided in Article V, Section 7, Paragraph b. Those making purchases are subject to the guidelines and policies as stated in the "finance" guidebook.

ARTICLE VI -CHANGES IN POLICIES

The By-Laws of this church may be altered or amended or rescinded by the members of the church at any regular business meeting called for that purpose, provided that proper notice has been given at a previous regular business meeting, and provided also that such proposed changes have been submitted to the deacons for their consideration prior to bringing it to the church for action. The deacons may express approval or disapproval but final action is subject to the vote of the church. All such proposed alterations or amendments of the By-Law must receive the affirmative vote of two-thirds majority of the members present and voting at such meeting.

ARTICLE VII -MISCELLENEOUS

Section 1. This set of By-Laws, when adopted by the church shall take place of all other rules or regulations heretofore in effect. In all parliamentary matters, Roberts Rules of Order shall govern.

Church Covenant of
Fifth Street Baptist Church

Having been led, as we believe by the Spirit of God, to receive the Lord Jesus Christ as our Savior and, on the profession of our faith, having been baptized in the name of the Father, and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, we do now, in the presence of God and this assembly, most solemnly and joyfully enter into covenant with one another as one body in Christ

We engage, therefore, by the aid of the Holy Spirit to walk together in Christian love; to strive for the advancement of this church in knowledge, holiness and comfort; to promote its prosperity and spirituality; to sustain its worship, ordinances, discipline and doctrines; to contribute cheerfully and regularly to the support of the ministry, the expenses of the church, the relief of the poor and the spread of the gospel through all nations.

We also engage to maintain family and secret devotions; to religiously educate our children; to seek the salvation of our kindred and acquaintances; to walk circumspectly in the world; to be just in our dealings, faithful in our engagements, and exemplary in our deportment; to avoid all tattling, backbiting, and excessive anger; to abstain from the sale and use of intoxicating drinks as a beverage; to be zealous in our efforts to advance the kingdom of our Savior.

We further engage to watch over one another in brotherly love; to remember one another in prayer; to aid one another in sickness and distress; to cultivate Christian sympathy in feeling and Christian courtesy in speech; to be slow to take offense, but always ready for reconciliation and mindful of the rules of our Savior to secure it without delay.

We moreover engage that when we remove from this place we will, as soon as possible, unite with some other church where we can carry out the spirit of this covenant and the principles of God's Word.

Addendum regarding Marriage and Sexuality

"We believe that the term 'marriage' has only one meaning and that is marriage sanctioned by God which joins one man and one woman in a single, exclusive union, as delineated in Scripture and the 2000 version of the "Baptist Faith and Message". It is the practice of this church to sanction and perform only marriages based on this belief."

"We believe that God intends sexual intimacy to only occur between a man and a woman who are married to each other. We believe that God has commanded that no intimate sexual activity be engaged in outside of a marriage between a man and a woman".

"We believe that any form of sexual immorality, such as adultery, fornication, homosexuality, bisexual conduct, bestiality, incest, pornography or any attempt to change one's sex, or disagreement with one's biological sex, is sinful and offensive to God"-

"We believe that in order to preserve the function and integrity of the church as the local Body of Christ, and to provide a biblical role model to the church members and the community, it is imperative that all church members and employees should abide by and agree to this Statement on Marriage and Sexuality and conduct themselves accordingly".

"We believe that God offers redemption and restoration to all who confess and forsake their sin, seeking His mercy and forgiveness through Jesus Christ.

"We believe that every person must be afforded compassion, love, kindness, respect, and dignity. Hateful and harassing behavior or attitudes directed toward any individual are to be repudiated and are not in accord with scripture nor the doctrines of the church."