

CONSTITUTION
OF THE
FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH OF POMONA
2003

(Latest Revision November 23, 2003)

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A Statement of Christian Responsibility

Having been led, as we believe, by the Holy Spirit of God to receive Jesus Christ as our Lord and Saviour, and having been baptized in accordance with Christ's command, we do now, in the presence of God and our fellows members, solemnly enter into covenant with one another as one Body in Christ.

To engage ourselves regularly in prayer, worship, and the study of the Scriptures that we may grow in the image of our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ.

To remember our redemption in Christ; to pray for one another and serve one another in Christian love; to forgive, even as we have been forgiven of God, to seek reconciliation, according to Christ's command.

To serve this church with our time, our talents, and our possessions, mindful that we have been summoned to be doers of the Word and not hearers only.

To establish a proper example before our families at all times; to endeavor to educate our children in the principles and the duties of our faith, and to endeavor to maintain family and private devotions.

To walk uprightly before the world with dignity, courage, and integrity so that the light of God may shine through our lives before all men and encourage them to seek Him who is the Way, the Truth, and the Life; therefore, we shall not, with intent or deliberation, indulge in those things which might contribute to the moral or physical deterioration of ourselves, our fellowship, or our community.

We further covenant together that in order to carry out the principles of God's Word, we shall seek out a church home of like faith and practice whenever we are absent from this congregation, and, upon changing residence to any other community, shall promptly transfer our membership.

Believing in a loving, Sovereign God, and believing in the Deity of our Saviour, His miraculous birth, His peerless life, His atoning death, His powerful resurrection, His promised return to consummate history, and our essential oneness with others of like faith, we shall seek to love God with all our heart, soul, mind, and strength and to love our neighbor as ourselves. May God help us in these resolves.

Pastors
of
Pomona First Baptist Church
(Organized 1870)

Roy C. Fryer	1870 - 1878
J. J. Toombs	1879 - 1883
J. F. Moody	1884 - 1889
E. R. Bennett	1889 - 1896
R. J. Ward	1897 - 1900
C. J. Clatworthy	1900 - 1902
T. U. Cornish	1902 - 1906
J. F. Watson	1906 - 1909
W. F. Harper	1910 - 1918
J. H. Deere	1918 - 1922
Floyd Beckwith	1923 - 1927
Dr. Gordon Palmer	1928 - 1936
Dr. Frank M. Kepner	1937 - 1946
Dr. Hubert A. Davidson	1946 - 1950
Dr. Harold L. Fickett, Jr.	1950 - 1954
Dr. Edward B. Cole	1955 - 1983
Rev. Willis E. Lucas	1983 - 1992
Rev. Glenn K. Gunderson	1993 - Present

Constitution and Bylaws

Preamble

WE BELIEVE...

- ... that the Bible, composed of the Old and New Testaments, is inspired of God and is of supreme and final authority in faith and life.
- ... in the supernatural as the vital element in the revelation and operation of the Christian faith.
- ... in one God eternally existing in three Persons – Father, Son, and the Holy Spirit.
- ... that Jesus Christ was begotten of the Holy Spirit and born of the Virgin Mary, and that He is true God and true man and is the only sufficient Mediator between God and man.
- ... in the personality of the Holy Spirit and that His ministry is to reveal Christ to men in the regeneration and sanctification of their souls.
- ... that man was created in the image of God and that he sinned and thereby incurred spiritual death.
- ... in the vicarious death of the Lord Jesus Christ for our sins, in the resurrection of His body, His ascension into Heaven, and His personal, visible future return to the earth; and that salvation is received only through personal faith in Him.
- ... that baptism is immersion of a believer in water in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit setting forth the essential facts in the experience of the believer – death to sin and resurrection to newness of life.
- ... that the Lord's Supper is a commemoration of the Lord's death until He comes.
- ... that the New Testament Church is a body of believers thus baptized by immersion, associated for worship and fellowship, actively and redemptively involved in its servant-role whereby it seeks to win the lost, bring Christ's healing to the brokenness of mankind, to bind up the sores of its culture through evangelization, Christian education, world missions, and community concerns as led by the Holy Spirit.

**ARTICLE I
NAME**

This organization shall be known as the First Baptist Church of Pomona, the name as stated in the Articles of Incorporation dated February 23, 1884.

**ARTICLE II
MISSION STATEMENT**

The mission of the church shall be the advancement of the Kingdom of God through the bringing of people into a personal relationship with Jesus Christ, the developing of Christian character, and the equipping of people to change their world for Christ.

**ARTICLE III
INSTITUTIONAL COOPERATION**

The First Baptist Church of Pomona shall be affiliated with the Area IV of Region XV, American Baptist Churches of the Pacific Southwest; with American Baptist Churches USA headquartered in Valley Forge, Pennsylvania.

**ARTICLE IV
MEMBERSHIP**

Section 1. QUALIFICATIONS:

Any person seeking membership may be received if they are in agreement with the church's Statement of Faith and the Mission Statement in Article II upon approval of the Board of Ministry Deacons.

Section 2. CATEGORIES OF ADMISSION:

There are four (4) categories of admission to membership in the First Baptist Church of Pomona. They are:

- a. Profession of Faith in Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord, followed by baptism. Baptism is to be by immersion, unless immersion is precluded by a disability in which case some other form of baptism will be accepted.
- b. Transfer of Letter (membership) from some other church of like faith and order.
- c. Statement of Christian Experience and previous baptism by immersion (unless immersion was precluded by a disability).

- d. Restoration to full membership may be accomplished on the request of any former member so long as they meet the QUALIFICATIONS (Section 1), fall within one of the CATEGORIES (Section 2) and are approved for restoration by the Board of Ministry Deacons. No further action is required.

Section 3. COMMITMENT OF MEMBERS:

The members of this church shall seek to live faithful, Christian lives which are exemplary in conduct and consistent with the teachings of the Bible.

Section 4. DISMISSAL OF MEMBERS:

Members may be dismissed upon approval of the Board of Ministry Deacons under the following categories:

- a. Letter of Transfer to another Baptist church.
- b. Personal Request to be removed from the membership.
- c. Dismissal due to church discipline.

ARTICLE V PASTOR AND STAFF

Section 1. RESPONSIBILITIES

The Pastor shall preach the Gospel, administer the ordinances, watch over the membership, promote the spiritual interests of the church, and organize and develop its strength for the best possible service. It shall be the Pastor's task to delineate and direct or delegate responsibility for the same and the activities of all church employees. Finding and employing successors for vacated full-time ministerial positions or the creation of new full-time positions as needed are the responsibility of the Pastor with approval of the Trustee Deacons. Dismissal of any staff shall be by recommendation of the Pastor and ratification of the Trustee Deacons.

Section 2. BOARDS AND COMMITTEES

The Pastor shall be an ex officio member of all boards and committees. The Pastor may designate this responsibility to an individual staff minister.

ARTICLE VI OFFICERS AND BOARDS

Section 1. THE MODERATOR.

The Moderator shall preside at the meetings of the Advisory Deacon Board, the Executive Committee, and at the business meetings of the church. The Chairman of the Board of Service

Ministry Deacons and/or Trustee Deacons shall serve as first and second vice moderators respectively. The Moderator shall serve as an ex officio member of all boards and committees of the church.

Section 2. THE CLERK.

The Church Clerk, who may be a staff member, shall keep accurate minutes of the business proceedings of the church and meetings of the Advisory Deacon Board and its Executive Committee. The Clerk shall make available to the membership copies of the church constitution and changes thereto, and shall keep an up-to-date copy in the files. The clerk shall maintain a file of all books, minutes, and other documents in the business office of the church.

Section 3. THE TREASURER.

The Treasurer shall be a resource person to the bookkeeper and administrator for all financial matters pertaining to church records, taxes, assessments, etc. The Treasurer shall be elected by the congregation and shall be an ex officio member of the Board of Trustees.

Section 4. THE ADVISORY BOARD OF DEACONS.

The Advisory Board of Deacons shall consist of all the church officers and members of the individual deacon boards. It shall act as a coordinating body for total church program, church policy, and church-wide recommendations to go before the membership. It shall establish an Executive Committee composed of the chairpersons of each individual Deacon board plus the church officers (Moderator, Treasurer, and Church Clerk), and Pastor. In the absence of a pastor, the full-time pastoral leadership shall choose a representative for the Executive Committee. The Executive Committee shall bring such business as appropriate and constitutionally required before the Advisory Board of Deacons.

The Moderator shall serve as Chairman and the Church Clerk as Secretary of the Advisory Board of Deacons and its Executive Committee.

The Advisory Board of Deacons shall meet at least quarterly or as needed. The Advisory Board of Deacons may meet in closed session to deal with confidential matters as determined by the Executive Committee.

The Executive Committee shall meet as needed and when called by the Pastor, the Moderator, or upon request of one of the individual deacon boards.

At the time when the church is without a pastor, the Executive Committee of the Advisory Board of Deacons, on behalf of the Advisory Board of Deacons, shall meet as often as necessary to coordinate the activities of the church.

- a. The Board of Ministry Deacons shall consist of at least eighteen (18) deacon and eighteen (18) deaconess members. They shall assist the Pastor in his work and with him consider all applications for church membership and all requests for dismissals. They shall cooperate with the Pastor in all types of visitation and in the care of the sick, needy, and distressed members of the church. With the Pastor, they shall disburse the Deacons Fund to assist the needy. They shall prepare for and assist in the observation of the ordinances of the church. They shall oversee the teaching and worship ministries of the church. They shall have responsibility in all matters pertaining to the Christian education program of the church. They shall prayerfully investigate and bring to a conclusion all matters of spiritual and moral discipline in relation to the membership that are not specifically related to another board's jurisdiction. Included in the elected membership of deacon and deaconess members shall be those who are particularly equipped to help direct the Christian education process. The Ministry Board of Deacons shall appoint committees to oversee the above functions.
- b. The Board of Trustee Deacons shall consist of at least twelve (2) members. In addition, the Senior Pastor, Moderator, Church Administrator, and Treasurer shall be voting, ex officio members, except in such matters as are delegated to the elected Trustees only under the laws of the State of California. They shall supervise and maintain the grounds, buildings, and equipment. They shall make no contract affecting the real estate of the church except as provided in the Constitution. They shall work jointly with the Pastor in creating full-time ministerial positions on the staff, filling staff vacancies, and dismissing staff personnel. They shall carefully establish budget controls and supervise all financial activities, accounts payable, financial projects, budgeting, auditing, and financial records of the church. They shall receive from the ministerial staff a proposed budget for the ensuing year. They shall study and recommend the budget to the church congregation for their approval at the annual church business meeting.
- c. The Board of Mission Deacons shall consist of at least twelve (12) members. They shall assist the Pastor or his ministerial staff appointee in supervising the Missions Education program of the church and shall make recommendations to the Board of Trustee Deacons for the annual missions budget, as well as recommendations on special mission projects. They shall promote the advancement of a mission's vision within the church.

ARTICLE VII COMMITTEES

Section 1. NOMINATING COMMITTEE

The Nominating Committee shall consist of nine (9) members. Each of the three boards shall

appoint two (2) members to the Nominating Committee. Such appointments shall be made at the first regular board meeting of the year. The Moderator shall appoint three members-at-large for one year. Also, the ministers will be ex-officio, non-voting members of the Nominating Committee. The Nominating Committee shall seek suggestions from available sources with regard to names of prospective candidates for elective office. As vacancies occur during the year, the Nominating Committee may make appointments to fill the vacant position until the next church election. It shall furnish each prospective nominee a written statement of duties and responsibilities of the position to which they may be elected. Appointed Nominating Committee members may not serve more than two consecutive years.

Section 2. ADDITIONAL COMMITTEES

The individual deacon boards of the church may establish and/or dissolve other committees for specific purposes within their areas of responsibility. Such committees will be responsible to the board which established them. Provision would be made for liaison with the appropriate board, Moderator, staff, or Executive Committee of the Advisory Board.

ARTICLE VIII MEETINGS

Section 1. MEETINGS OF WORSHIP AND TEACHING

- a. The church shall meet regularly each Sunday for worship and the teaching of God's Word. Other worship services may be scheduled at the discretion of the Pastoral staff.
- b. The church shall meet for the observance of the Lord's Supper as often as the Pastor and Board of Ministry Deacons deem it wise. Normally, the ordinance will be observed on the first Sunday of the month.
- c. The church shall meet regularly in small groups for prayer, Bible study, Christian instruction, and training.

Section 2. BUSINESS MEETINGS

- a. The annual meeting of the church shall be held at a date to be determined by the Moderator and the Pastor.
- b. Special business meetings may be called at any time by the Pastor, or Moderator, or the Advisory Board Of Deacons, or upon written request signed by at least one hundred (100) members of the church. Notice of such meeting and the purpose for which it is called shall be given from the pulpit at least one week in advance of the date of the meeting.
- c. The quorum shall be determined at the convening of the meeting only and shall prevail through adjournment of the meeting. Arrival and/or departure of members during a meeting at which a quorum has been determined to be present shall not effect the establishment of a quorum for the purposes of conduct of announced items of business.

- d. All members age 18 and above shall be considered part of the quorum and be eligible for voting at all business meetings.
- e. For the purchase, sale, or encumbrance of property, a three-fourths affirmative vote of all members duly qualified, present, and voting shall be required. Such proposed action shall be announced from the pulpit at least one week before the voting and a letter announcing such proposed action shall be mailed to all church members two (2) weeks prior to the meeting date.
- f. For the purchase, sale, or encumbrance of property, the quorum shall be a number of members duly qualified and present, equal to double the number of Advisory Board members. In the event that a quorum is not present for such a meeting, a new business meeting shall be scheduled at least two weeks later at which the quorum shall be composed of the number of duly qualified members present, according to Item c in this section.
- g. Robert's Rules of Order shall govern the business meetings of the church.

ARTICLE IX ELECTIONS

Section 1. ANNUAL ELECTIONS.

The annual election of church officers and Board Members shall be held in November or December.

Section 2. PROCEDURE.

- a. At the annual election, the Nominating Committee's report will be read. Nomination may be made from the floor providing the consent of such nominees has been given. In the case of two or more nominations for an office, such vote shall be by ballot; otherwise vote may be by voice vote.
- b. Officers and Board members shall begin their terms January 1.
- c. Unexpired terms may be filled by the Nominating Committee with ratification of the Executive Committee of the Advisory Board of Deacons.

Section 3. TERM OF OFFICE

- a. The following church officers shall be elected for a term of one (1) year: Moderator, Treasurer, and Church Clerk.
- a. Members of the Advisory Board of Deacons shall be elected for a term of three years.
- b. The election of members of the Ministry Deacons, Trustee Deacons, and Mission Deacons shall be accomplished by electing one third of the respective board members annually. They shall be members of this church in good standing and regular in church attendance. Should sufficient cause be shown, the Pastor or Moderator has the power to remove from office any officer or board member with ratification by the Executive Committee of the Advisory Board.
- d. No person shall hold more than one elective church position at any time.

- e. Board members may serve one three-year term. Following this, a member is ineligible for reelection until the lapse of one year.
- f. Members who are selected to fill unexpired terms of office of one year or less may be elected to a full three-year term at the end of the unexpired term.
- g. Officers may serve three consecutive one-year terms. The maximum number of consecutive years any individual may serve in any combination of offices is three years. Following this, they are ineligible for reelection for one year.
- h. The maximum number of consecutive years an individual may serve in any combination of boards is four years.

ARTICLE X CALLING AND DISMISSING A PASTOR

Section 1. PULPIT COMMITTEE.

- a. When it is necessary to call a pastor, the Moderator shall request the Trustee Deacons and the Mission Deacons to appoint one representative from each respective board to the Pulpit Committee. He shall request the Board of Ministry Deacons to appoint two representatives to the Pulpit Committee. The Moderator shall also request the Executive Committee of the Advisory Board of Deacons to appoint five members at-large to the Pulpit Committee. Of these five, three shall be persons who hold no elected church office at the time of their appointment. The Moderator shall, without delay, call the Pulpit Committee together for organization.
- b. It shall be the duty of the Pulpit Committee to prayerfully initiate and complete the search for a new Senior Pastor. The search shall include the following steps:
 - i. Analyze the current needs and future directions of the church.
 - ii. Develop a list of candidates. Candidates from outside the American Baptist denomination must agree with the church's Statement of Faith.
 - iii. After appropriate consideration of the candidates and a suitable candidate is found, the committee shall present its recommendation to the Advisory Board of Deacons. If approved by the Advisory Board of Deacons, the recommendation shall go before the church for action.

Section 2. CALLING A PASTOR

- a. The calling of a pastor shall come before the church at a regularly-called business meeting (notice of such meeting and its purpose having been read from the platform on two preceding Sundays). Only one candidate shall be presented at a time. A three-fourths vote, by ballot, of all qualified members present and voting shall be necessary to extend a call.
- b. The Pastor shall be called for an indefinite period of time. The relationship of the pastor and church may be dissolved by mutual consent after reasonable notice.

Section 3. DISMISSING A PASTOR.

When it seems necessary to dismiss the pastor, the Executive Committee of the Advisory Board of Deacons, absent the pastor, shall prayerfully consider such action. If a two-thirds majority of the Executive Committee feels that such a procedure is necessary, they shall request the Moderator to call the Advisory Board of Deacons to receive the recommendation. If the

Advisory Board of Deacons votes by a two-thirds majority of members present and voting to dismiss the Pastor, its recommendation, if necessary, shall go to the church for final action. Notice for such meeting and its purpose shall be given for two preceding Sundays from the platform. A two-thirds ballot vote of all members present and voting shall be necessary to dismiss the Pastor. Before each step set forth in this section, the Pastor shall be notified of the anticipated action by the Moderator and be given the opportunity to resign.

Section 4. INTERIM LEADERSHIP

In the event of the resignation or dismissal of the Senior Pastor, the Executive Committee of the Advisory Board will appoint a Ministry Steering Committee comprised of the following:

1. Either the Moderator or another member of the Executive Committee of the Advisory Board of Deacons. This appointed person shall chair the Ministry Steering Committee.
2. One member-at-large appointed from the congregational membership or the Advisory Board of Deacons.
3. Two staff members appointed by the staff and ratified by the Executive Committee of the Advisory Board of Deacons.

In the event that there are ministry issues related to interim leadership that cannot be resolved by the Steering Committee, the issue will be presented to the Executive Committee of the Advisory Board for resolution.

ARTICLE XI CHURCH-SPONSORED ORGANIZATIONS AND ACTIVITIES

Section 1. OFFICERS

The teacher(s), president, and treasurer of all adult and youth organizations shall be members of this church in good standing.

Section 2. CONSTITUTION AND BYLAWS

Constitutions and bylaws of such organizations shall not conflict with the Constitution of this church and such organizations must have a liaison with a ministerial staff member. The activities and functions of such organizations must be consistent with the mission and purpose of the church.

Section 3. MEETINGS

Meetings of such organizations shall not conflict with meetings of the church.

Section 4. OFFERINGS AND PROJECTS

Special offerings and projects shall be approved by the Board of Trustee Deacons prior to their initiation and all funds will be routed through the church treasury. It is the responsibility of the staff liaison to inform such organizations of this requirement.

**ARTICLE XII
AMENDMENTS**

This Constitution may be amended or changed at any regular or called business meeting of the church by a two thirds vote of those present and voting, provided that a quorum is present and that notice of such amendment(s) shall have been given from the platform on two preceding Sundays and the proposed changes are clearly posted in the lobby of the church for study at least two Sundays prior to the vote.

**ARTICLE XIII
ADOPTION OF CONSTITUTION**

By the adoption of this constitution of the church, the membership hereby rescinds all previous constitutions, bylaws, amendments, etc.