

Implementing Policies of First Baptist Church, Los Alamos

Amended January 30, 2011
First Baptist Church, Los Alamos
2200 Diamond Drive
Los Alamos, New Mexico 87544

Article I.	Name.....	2
Article II.	Purpose.....	2
Article III.	Statement of Faith.....	2
Article IV.	Church Covenant.....	2
Article V.	Polity and Relationships	3
Section 1.	Governance	3
Section 2.	Accountability.....	3
Section 3.	Outside Relationships	3
Section 4.	Denominational Affiliation.....	3
Article VI.	Church Membership	4
Section 1.	New Members.....	4
Section 2.	Training and Counseling for New Members	5
Section 3.	Privileges of Members	5
Section 4.	Termination and Restoration of Membership.....	5
Article VII.	Church Officers and Staff.....	6
Section 1.	Pastor.....	6
Section 2.	Trustees	6
Section 3.	Deacon Council.....	6
Section 4.	Recording Secretary.....	7
Section 5.	Treasurer	7
Section 6.	Ministerial Staff	7
Section 7.	Non-Ministerial Staff	7
Section 8.	Staff Policies	8
Article VIII.	Teams and Committees	8
Section 1.	Ministry Teams	8
Section 2.	Support Teams	8
Section 3.	Standing Committees	9
Section 4.	The Church Council.....	9
Article IX.	Ordinances.....	10
Section 1.	Baptism	10
Section 2.	Lord’s Supper.....	10
Article X.	Church Meetings	10
Section 1.	Worship Services	10
Section 2.	Special Services	10
Section 3.	Business Meetings	11
Article XI.	Financial Operations	11
Article XII.	Amendments.....	12
Article XIII.	Dissolution of the Church.....	12

Article I. Name

This body shall be known as First Baptist Church, Los Alamos (FBCLA).

Reference: Article I, FBCLA Constitution/Bylaws, June 1997

Article II. Purpose

First Baptist Church, Los Alamos exists to

- *exalt* the Savior through Christ-centered individual, small-group, and congregational worship (Matthew 22:37-40, John 4:23-24, Hebrews 10:19-24).
- *evangelize* the lost in our community, nation, and world, seeking to bring them to a saving knowledge of Christ (Matthew 28:16-20, Acts 5:42, II Corinthians 5:20a, I Peter 3:15).
- *equip* the Body of Christ by promoting spiritual growth and preparing, educating, and discipling individuals for each good work to which they are called (Deuteronomy 11:18-20, Matthew 4:23, Matthew 28:19-20, Ephesians 6:10).
- *enjoy* fellowship with one another, building up the bonds through which we can encourage, support, love, forgive, submit to, and minister to one another (Acts 2:42, Hebrews 10:25, I John 1:6-7).
- *enter into prayer* boldly and unceasingly. Prayer must undergird every effort of the church to accomplish its purpose. The church must remain constantly focused on the Kingdom of God as it works to further that Kingdom. Flexibility of method in planning and implementing activities and strategies is fundamental. Every member is encouraged to serve God and one another with humility (I Thessalonians 5:17).

Reference: Article II, FBCLA Constitution/Bylaws, June 1997

Article III. Statement of Faith

Believing the Bible to be the only inspired and recorded word of God, we declare it to be the basis for our beliefs and conduct.

Article IV. Church Covenant

All members of the church agree to abide by the following covenant:

Having been led 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 doctrine; 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 further engage to watch over one another with brotherly love; to remember each other in prayer; to aid each other in sickness or distress; to cultivate Christian sympathy in feeling and courtesy of speech; to be slow to take offense but always ready for reconciliation, and mindful of the teachings of our Savior to secure it without delay.

We moreover engage that if we move from this area, we will as soon as possible unite with some other church where we can carry on the spirit of this covenant and the principles of God's Word.

Article V. Polity and Relationships

Section 1. Governance

FBCLA is a sovereign and democratic New Testament church under the Lordship of Jesus Christ. This church shall be governed only by its congregation in all phases of its spiritual and temporal life. The congregation shall be established and maintained in keeping with Article VI of the Implementing Policies.

Reference: Article IV, FBCLA Constitution/Bylaws, June 1997

Section 2. Accountability

All groups created and empowered by this church shall report to and be accountable only to the congregation, unless otherwise specified by action of the congregation.

Section 3. Outside Relationships

This church is subject to the control of no other body, but it recognizes and sustains the obligations of mutual counsel and cooperation that are common among Southern Baptist churches.

Section 4. Denominational Affiliation

In so far as is practical and Biblically accurate, this church will cooperate with and support the work of the Santa Fe Baptist Association, the Baptist Convention of New Mexico, and the Southern Baptist Convention. The congregation elects messengers to meetings of these groups by formal vote. Such messengers shall make reports to the congregation following the meetings and make recommendations for action by the congregation when deemed advisable. No messenger has the authority to commit the church to any agreement or obligation without specific authorization of such action by the congregation.

If the congregation ever finds Biblical need to change denominational affiliation, it must amend the Constitution/Bylaws accordingly.

Reference: Articles II and XIV, FBCLA Constitution/Bylaws, June 1997

Article VI. Church Membership

The congregation reserves the exclusive right to determine membership of this church and the conditions of such membership.

The membership shall consist of those persons who have confessed Jesus Christ as their Lord and Savior, have followed Him in New Testament baptism by immersion, and have voluntarily banded together in this local fellowship.

Section 1. New Members

A person may offer himself or herself as a candidate for membership in any of the following ways:

- If the person has no prior church membership, then that person may profess faith in Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord and express willingness to be baptized by immersion.
- If the person is a member of another Baptist church of like faith and practice, then that person may request transfer of membership by church letter, or by statement if no letter is available.
- If the person is a member of a non-Baptist church or denomination whose teachings on salvation and Biblical baptism are compatible with those of FBCLA, then that person may transfer membership by statement.
- If the person is a member of another church or denomination whose teachings on salvation and baptism are not compatible with those of FBCLA, then that person may provide a statement of prior conversion experience and express willingness to be baptized by immersion.
- If the person is a member of another church or denomination of like faith and practice and will be living in our community for a limited period of time, then that person may present himself as a candidate for Watch Care membership. Watch Care members may be received by stating that they have made a public profession of faith in Christ as their Savior. Watch Care members may not vote or serve as an officer of the church, Team leader, or Committee member. They may enter into discussions and make suggestions at business meetings and may serve as members of Ministry or Support Teams.

A candidate presenting himself or herself for membership should meet for counseling with the Pastor, a member of the ministerial staff, or an active Deacon of the church to determine if the candidate understands the experience of spiritual rebirth and Scriptural baptism.

After such counseling, an invitation extended at any regular worship service shall constitute a motion that the candidate be considered for membership at that time, conditional upon fulfillment of any stated obligations, such as baptism or transfer of letter. A candidate's acceptance into the fellowship shall be by a majority vote of the members present.

*Reference: Section VII, Baptist Faith and Message, June 2000;
Article V, FBCLA Constitution/Bylaws, June 1997*

Section 2. Training and Counseling for New Members

All new members will be asked to attend orientation sessions offered by the church.

Topics should include

- denominational linkage and beliefs.
- relationships with the Santa Fe Baptist Association, the Baptist Convention of New Mexico and the Southern Baptist Convention.
- the Cooperative Program and this church's involvement.
- other topics as determined by the teacher who is designated by the ministerial staff.

Sessions should be offered as often as is necessary to orient new members in a timely manner.

Section 3. Privileges of Members

- Every member present (not including Watch Care members) is entitled to vote on all issues presented to the congregation for action.
- In keeping with spiritual gifts and practical qualifications, every member (not including Watch Care members) is eligible for elective positions in the church.

Section 4. Termination and Restoration of Membership

Membership may be terminated in any of the following ways:

- Death of the member.
- Transfer by letter to another Baptist church.
- Removal upon becoming affiliated with a church of another faith or denomination, in which case the member shall be granted a statement of Christian standing.
- Request of the member.
- Should a member become offensive to the church by reason of immoral or non-Biblical conduct or by persistent breach of the Church Covenant, and if faithful but unsuccessful efforts have been made to bring the member to repentance (Matthew 18:15-17), the congregation may initiate procedures to terminate membership at a regular or special business meeting. A majority vote of the members present is required to initiate such procedures. Following this vote, written notification will be presented to the member indicating that a hearing will take place before the congregation to consider termination of membership, including the reasons the hearing has been called; this will be provided at least thirty days before the hearing. The hearing may take place in either a regular or special business meeting. Termination following the hearing requires a two-thirds vote of those present.

Upon request of the removed person, and by majority vote of the congregation in response to evidence that the cause of exclusion has been resolved, a special

business meeting may be called to consider restoration of membership. The congregation may restore to membership any removed person by a vote of at least two-thirds of the members present.

Inactive members will be contacted to attempt to restore them to active membership or to determine their desire to be removed from the membership roll. Such contacts will be made by the Pastor, other ministerial staff, an assigned Deacon, or other assigned church member.

Article VII. Church Officers and Staff

The church may employ staff and appoint officers as designated in the Constitution/Bylaws.

Section 1. Pastor

The Pastor is an officer of the church as designated in Article VII of the Constitution/Bylaws. The qualifications, period of employment, and duties are stated in Article VIII of the Constitution/Bylaws. In addition to these duties, the Pastor has oversight of the ministerial and non-ministerial staff.

The resignation or removal of the Pastor is covered in Articles XI and XII of the Constitution/Bylaws. A vacancy in this position may be filled as the congregation sees fit as indicated in Article XIII of the Constitution/Bylaws.

Section 2. Trustees

The Trustees are officers of the church as designated in Article VII of the Constitution/Bylaws. The duties and organization of the Trustees are stated in Article IX of the Constitution/Bylaws and the FBCLA Policy Book. The Trustees' duties include ensuring compliance with all legal, contractual, and financial obligations of the church.

The resignation or removal of a Trustee is covered in Articles XI and XII of the Constitution/Bylaws. A vacancy in this position may be filled as the congregation sees fit as stated in Article XIII of the Constitution/Bylaws.

The Trustees are elected by the congregation for terms of three years. The Trustee who has served the longest in his present term will be the president, and the most junior Trustee will be the secretary.

Section 3. Deacon Council

The members of the Deacon Council are officers of the church as designated in Article VII of the Constitution/Bylaws. The Deacon Council shall consist of those ordained Deacons elected by the congregation for active service as stated in Article X of the Constitution/Bylaws. The qualifications, duties, organization, and rules for election of Deacons may be found in the FBCLA Policy Book. Their duties include

- visiting the sick, sorrowing, needy, and backslidden.
- seeking to win the lost to Christ.
- supporting the ministries of the church through prayer and attendance.

- upholding the Pastor in prayer and aiding him in conducting public worship. In the Pastor's absence, the Deacons are responsible for leading worship unless otherwise arranged.
- supplying to any staff, officers, Teams, or Committees such counsel or advice as they may request.

The resignation or removal of a Deacon is covered in Articles XI and XII of the Constitution/Bylaws. A vacancy in this position may be filled as the congregation sees fit as indicated in Article XIII of the Constitution/Bylaws.

Section 4. Recording Secretary

The Recording Secretary (Church Clerk) is an officer of the church as designated by Article VII of the Constitution/Bylaws. The duties and responsibilities of the Recording Secretary are stated in the FBCLA Policy Book.

The resignation or removal of the Recording Secretary is covered in Articles XI and XII of the Constitution/Bylaws. A vacancy in this position may be filled as the congregation sees fit as indicated in Article XIII of the Constitution/Bylaws.

Section 5. Treasurer

The Treasurer is an officer of the church as designated by Article VII of the Constitution/Bylaws. The responsibilities and duties of the Treasurer may be found in Article XI of the Implementing Policies and the FBCLA Policy Book.

The resignation or removal of the Treasurer is covered in Articles XI and XII of the Constitution/Bylaws. A vacancy in this position may be filled as the congregation sees fit as indicated in Article XIII of the Constitution/Bylaws.

Section 6. Ministerial Staff

The congregation may call such ministerial staff, in addition to the Pastor, as it deems necessary. Ministerial staff must be members of the church. Job descriptions including, but not limited to, primary function and responsibilities shall be written/revised for these positions by the Personnel Committee but do not become binding until they are approved by the congregation.

The resignation of the Pastor is covered in Article XI of the Constitution/Bylaws. The resignations of other ministerial staff shall be voted on by the Personnel Committee. The removal of a ministerial staff member is covered in Article XII of the Constitution/Bylaws. A vacancy in such a position may be filled as the congregation sees fit as indicated in Article XIII of the Constitution/Bylaws.

Section 7. Non-Ministerial Staff

The congregation may call such non-ministerial staff as it deems necessary. Non-ministerial staff are not required to be members of the church. Job descriptions including, but not limited to, primary function and responsibilities shall be written/revised for these positions by the Personnel Committee but do not become binding until they are approved by the congregation.

The resignations of non-ministerial staff shall be voted on by the Personnel Committee. The removal of a non-ministerial staff member is covered in Article XII of the Constitution/Bylaws. A vacancy in such a position may be filled as the congregation sees fit as indicated in Article XIII of the Constitution/Bylaws.

Section 8. Staff Policies

Policies regarding such items as call of new staff members, vacation, sick leave, overtime, pay schedule, and jury duty may be found in the FBCLA Policy Book.

Article VIII. Teams and Committees

Section 1. Ministry Teams

Ministry Teams are groups of members who work in specified areas of ministry. Each Team has a leader elected by the congregation and operating under the supervision of the ministerial staff. The Teams are staffed through requests for participation and volunteer commitments. All members are encouraged to serve on a Ministry Team to which they feel led by the Holy Spirit. Individuals or small groups within the Team plan, organize, and carry out specific activities within the area of responsibility. Teams may further organize themselves as they see fit. The Ministry Teams are as follows:

- **Worship:** In cooperation with the ministerial staff, prepares and organizes Christ-centered worship services. Creates an atmosphere that encourages people to glorify God.
- **Evangelism/Outreach:** Organizes and assists members of the church to reach out with God's grace and to present the Gospel to the lost of Los Alamos, New Mexico, the United States, and the world, seeking to bring them to a saving knowledge of Christ. Supports people who are sent to share the Gospel.
- **Christian Education:** Organizes and helps provide training for church members to grow in spiritual maturity and prepare for the work to which they are called. This education includes Biblical doctrines, teachings, and disciplines of the faith.
- **Fellowship:** Organizes and promotes activities that encourage members of the church to become better acquainted, foster unity and the building of relationships, and provide relief for identified physical needs of members.

Section 2. Support Teams

Support Teams provide necessary work and planning in support of the Ministry Teams. Each Team has a leader elected by the congregation and operating under the supervision of the ministerial staff. The Teams are staffed through requests for participation and volunteer commitments. Individuals or small groups within the Team plan, organize, and carry out specific activities within the area of responsibility. Teams may further organize themselves as they see fit. The Support Team is as follows:

- **Buildings and Grounds:** Deals with all matters regarding the buildings, grounds, furnishings, and equipment of the church. Serves to keep the facilities

operational, to keep the grounds and furnishings attractive, and to recommend repair, upgrades, and expansion as required.

Section 3. Standing Committees

The congregation elects the members of the standing Committees, which operate under Robert's Rules of Order. They serve three basic functions:

- They recommend to the congregation courses of action within specified areas of responsibility.
- They monitor the performance of specific duties in the church and recommend corrective action by the congregation if necessary.
- They serve as liaisons between the congregation, the officers of the church, the staff, and the Teams.

The standing Committees are as follows:

- **Personnel:** Has responsibilities related to both ministerial and non-ministerial staff, including, but not limited to, finding and recommending candidates for non-ministerial staff (ministerial staff shall be hired in accordance with Article XIII of the Constitution/Bylaws); recommending staff policies as per Article VII, Section 8 of the Implementing Policies; monitoring staff performance; serving as a liaison between the staff and the rest of the church; providing encouragement and accountability for the staff. The detailed duties and responsibilities of this Committee may be found in the FBCLA Policy Book.
- **Nominating:** Identifies interests and gifts of members and nominates candidates for all elected positions other than staff (such as non-staff church officers, Team leaders, and Committee members) and assists the Team leaders and ministerial staff in recruiting Team members if such assistance is requested. (Any member of the congregation may also present nominations for any of these positions.) This Committee monitors the performance of appointees to these positions and serves as a liaison between them and the congregation. The detailed duties and responsibilities of this Committee may be found in the FBCLA Policy Book.
- **Finance:** Recommends annual budget and financial policy to the congregation; monitors expenditures and income; and serves as a liaison between the Treasurer, staff, Teams, Committees, and congregation. These duties are to be performed in accordance with Article XI of the Implementing Policies. The detailed duties and responsibilities of this Committee may be found in the FBCLA Policy Book.

Section 4. The Church Council

The Church Council serves as a venue in which the various organizations within the church government, such as staff, Committees, and Teams, have the opportunity to interact with each other, to become familiar with each other's work, and to support one another in a way which brings unity to the work of the church. The Council prepares and updates the church calendar and prepares the agenda for business meetings. The Council also serves as a long-range planning and vision setting team. It will meet during the week prior to a regular business meeting to determine the agenda.

The standing members of the Church Council are the Pastor, the ministerial staff, the president of the Trustees, the Chairman of Deacons, the Treasurer, the Church Clerk, the chairmen of the Committees, and the leaders of the Ministry and Support Teams. The standing members of the Church Council may add or remove non-standing Council members by a simple majority vote. The church moderator (see Article X, Section 3 of the Implementing Policies) will preside at Church Council meetings.

Article IX. Ordinances

Section 1. Baptism

Christian baptism is an act of obedience, symbolizing the believer's faith in a crucified, buried, and risen Savior, the believer's death to sin, the burial of the old life, and the resurrection to walk in newness of life in Christ Jesus. It is the immersion of a believer in water in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, and is a testimony of the believer's faith in the final resurrection of the dead. It is a prerequisite to church membership.

Baptism shall be administered by the Pastor or whomever the ministerial staff shall authorize, and shall be carried out as an act of worshipful obedience during any worship service.

Reference: Section VII, Baptist Faith and Message, June 2000

Section 2. Lord's Supper

The Lord's Supper is a symbolic act of obedience whereby members of the Body of Christ, through partaking of the bread and the fruit of the vine, memorialize the death of the Redeemer and anticipate His second coming.

The invitation to share in this observance shall be extended to all people who have accepted Jesus Christ as their Lord and Savior.

The Pastor, ministerial staff, and Deacons shall be responsible for serving the Lord's Supper. The Deacons shall be responsible for the preparation of the Lord's Supper table.

Article X. Church Meetings

Section 1. Worship Services

The church shall meet regularly for worship, preaching, instruction, prayer, and evangelism. The meetings are open to all people, and all members are encouraged to attend. The meetings are conducted under the direction of the Pastor.

Section 2. Special Services

Evangelistic meetings and any other meetings essential to the promotion of the purposes of the church shall be added to the church calendar by the Church Council.

Section 3. Business Meetings

The congregation at any time may act upon acceptance of new members and routine, non-controversial matters, e.g. the election of messengers to associational, state, or national meetings.

Regular business meetings will be held at intervals to be determined by the Church Council. In addition, special business meetings for consideration of limited topics may be called by the Pastor or the chairman of the Deacon Council if the pastorate is vacant or if the Pastor is not able to act.

The time and date of any business meeting (and the topic of any special business meeting) will be announced at a Sunday morning service. Business meetings shall be held in the regular meeting place of the church, and Robert's Rules of Order shall govern the meetings. Fifteen members shall constitute a quorum. A moderator shall be elected by the congregation and shall act as chairman of the meetings; he shall be thoroughly conversant with Robert's Rules of Order and have experience in conducting such meetings. This individual will also serve as moderator of Church Council meetings.

In both regular and special business meetings members must be present to vote. An exception may be made to allow absentee voting by a two-thirds vote of those present. Such an exception shall apply only to the motion for which it is approved. Rules for the election of Deacons may be found in the FBCLA Policy Book.

Reference: Articles III, IV, VI, FBCLA Constitution/Bylaws, June 1997

Article XI. Financial Operations

The operations of the church shall be financed by the tithes and freewill offerings of its members and other persons interested in the work of the church. Relying on the guidance of the Holy Spirit, the congregation shall have absolute control of all funds in its possession. Designated funds shall be handled in accordance with policy given in the FBCLA Policy Book.

The congregation will approve a church budget each year, in accordance with which all organizations will expend funds according to availability. The budget will designate funds for the programs and activities of the Teams, Committees, and staff; it will also itemize staff salaries and benefits and funds for other needs (e.g., world missions ministries, office expenses, accounting services) as it sees fit.

The Finance Committee will recommend a budget to the congregation for approval, and it will monitor the church's income and expenses throughout the year, recommending adjustments to the budget as necessary.

The Treasurer will track church expenditures and prepare regular reports of these expenditures for the Finance Committee and congregation.

The Team leaders, Committee chairmen, and staff members will decide how the funds designated to them by the church budget will be expended and will be accountable for managing these funds.

Article XII. Amendments

These Implementing Policies may be amended by a majority of members present at any business meeting. Amendments must be in agreement with the current FBCLA Constitution/Bylaws. Any amendment must be proposed in a business meeting at least thirty days before final consideration.

Article XIII. Dissolution of the Church

In the event that the corporation of FBCLA shall ever dissolve either voluntarily or involuntarily, the assets at the time of the dissolution shall be given in their entirety to a non-profit entity that shall conform to the requirements of Title 26 of the U.S. Code of Federal Regulations, Chapter 1 Section 501(c) (3) or corresponding section of any future federal tax code or laws and as provided by Chapter 53, Article 8, Section 48 of the New Mexico Statutes Annotated (Nonprofit Corporation Act). In the event the Santa Fe Baptist Association meets the above requirements, they shall have the assets.

No member of the congregation, staff member, or officer shall share in any assets upon dissolution.