

***Constitution and
By-Laws Of
First Central Baptist Church***

Adopted November 6, 2011

Amended January 23, 2013

Amended January 18, 2015

Constitution and By-Laws of First Central Baptist Church

Constitution and By-Laws of First Central Baptist Church

ARTICLE I: NAME

The name of this church shall be the First Central Baptist Church of Chicopee, Massachusetts, incorporated under the laws of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts

ARTICLE II: PURPOSE

“At First Central Baptist Church, we are **Building a Community to Change the World**. We seek to **Glorify God** by **Connecting** people to Christ, the church and one another; so that we can **Grow** in our faith, character, and skills; in order to **Serve** the cause of Christ with our time, talents, and treasures; and to **Share** the message of the gospel where we live, work, and go to school; both locally, and as far around the world as we can reach.”

(Matthew 6:33, Matthew 28:19, 2 Timothy 2:15, Hebrews 10:25, Ephesians 4:1-16)

ARTICLE III: POLITY

Its government shall be vested in the body which is composed of its membership.

ARTICLE IV: MEMBERSHIP

SECTION 1: Admission of Members

The members of this church shall consist of persons

- professing faith in the Lord Jesus Christ,
- giving evidence of a changed heart, followed by baptism by immersion and
- accepting the faith and practice held by the church.

Persons may be received into membership

- by letter from other churches of like faith and order;
- by statement of Christian experience having been previously baptized by immersion;
- by statement of Christian experience and baptism by immersion.

All candidates for membership shall appear first before the Pastor and/or the Council of Elders, then upon recommendation of the Council, and by vote of the church, may be admitted into membership.

The Right Hand of Christian Fellowship shall be extended on a subsequent Sunday.

(Romans 10:9-10, 1 Corinthians 12:12-27, 2 Corinthians 5:17)

SECTION 2: Transfer of Members

A member may be transferred to the fellowship of another church of like faith by certificate of transfer/letter of recommendation.

SECTION 3: Church Discipline

If a member becomes an offense to the Lord and His church by reason of consistent immoral or unchristian conduct, this Church will initiate a process of Church discipline as described in Matthew 18. The goal of this process would be to bring about restoration of the relationship between the offending member and the Lord as well as between the offending member and the church. If restoration and repentance proves impossible, the church may terminate membership. Church discipline will also be

Constitution and By-Laws of First Central Baptist Church

Article IV Section 3 – continued

initiated if a member begins to teach or propagate a doctrine that is different from the church's doctrine. A written record of disciplinary proceedings will be kept in FCBC's permanent file. The details of the Church discipline process are located in the First Central Baptist Church Policies and Procedures Manual. *(Matthew 18:15-17, 1 Corinthians 5:1-5, Galatians 6:1,2)*

SECTION 4: Inactive Members

If a member is habitually absent from the Communion and other gatherings for worship and fails to communicate with the church for a period of one year and fails to reply to written communication, or any other good faith outreach effort, he shall, after due consideration by and vote of the Council of Elders be placed on the inactive list. Any name on the inactive list for a period of two years with no contact will be removed from the church roll.

SECTION 5: Restoration of Membership

Any person, who has been excluded from membership in this church, may, on recommendation of the Council of Elders, be restored to membership by vote of the membership, upon evidence of his repentance and reformation. Persons on the inactive list may be restored to membership in good standing upon vote of the Council of Elders.

SECTION 6: Kindred Membership

Kindred Membership may be extended at the discretion of the Pastor and/or the Council of Elders to one who professes Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior and is a member of a Bible preaching church and with no plan to live in this area permanently. It is also required that such members when asked to serve as teachers or leaders shall agree with our Statement of Faith. A kindred member has all the privileges of full membership with the exception of serving as an Elder. A kindred member shall not be required to relinquish membership in his home town church nor may a letter of transfer be issued to such a member when he moves from this area. Upon moving from this area this members' name shall be removed from the membership list.

ARTICLE V: PASTOR AND OFFICERS

SECTION 1: Senior Pastor

The Senior Pastor shall preach the gospel, administer the ordinances, watch over the membership, and have in his charge the spiritual welfare of the congregation and the stated services of public worship. He shall be an ex-officio member of all boards and committees of the church.

He shall be a licensed or ordained Minister who holds to Baptist doctrines.

SECTION 2: Associate Pastors

The Senior Pastor working with the Council of Elders may propose positions for associate pastors. All such positions must be approved by the assembly at a duly called business meeting. The duties of each associate pastoral position will be clearly defined with a job description written by the Senior Pastor and the Council of Elders. Associate pastors shall work under the leadership of the Senior Pastor to reach the goals and purposes of the church. Each associate pastor shall submit a written report for the church's annual meeting and shall submit a budget request, if needed, to the Finance Board by November 1.

Constitution and By-Laws of First Central Baptist Church

Article V – continued

SECTION 3: The Calling and Termination of a Pastor

Calling a Pastor - The call of a pastor shall come before the church at a special business meeting, notice of such meeting and its purpose having been read from the pulpit on two successive Sundays. Twenty-five percent (25 %) of the current, active members must be present to establish a quorum. An affirmative vote of ¾ of the members voting, including absentee ballots, shall be necessary to extend a call.”

Only one candidate shall be presented to the church at one time. The vote shall be by written ballot.

Pastors shall serve until such time as he desires to sever the pastoral relationship. When such a change is desired by the pastor, 60 days notice shall be given or a lesser time as agreed on by both pastor and Elders.

An Interim Pastor may be called upon recommendation of the Council of Elders and vote of the church body. Responsibilities to be determined by the Council of Elders. The procedure for voting is the same as that for calling a pastor.

Termination of Pastor – The Council of Elders may remove a pastor from ministry and terminate the employment of a pastor if he becomes an offense to the Lord and His Church by reason of confirmed egregious immoral conduct, or begins to teach a non-scriptural doctrine or position that opposes the church’s Statement of Faith.

The termination of a Pastor shall be confirmed at a special business meeting to be scheduled as soon as is practical. A vote of 3/4 of the members present and qualified to vote or a minimum of 50 members, whichever is greater, provided there be present 25 % of the current, active membership, shall make a valid termination. There will be no absentee ballots for the termination of a pastor. *

* Additional reference to absentee ballots may be found on page 13 – Article X Section 2.

SECTION 4: Moderator

- A moderator shall be elected at each annual meeting to serve one year
- The moderator shall preside at all business meetings of the church and should be familiar with the parliamentary procedures specified in the church’s by-laws.

SECTION 5: Clerk

- A clerk shall be elected at each annual meeting to serve for one year.
- Duties are as follows:
 - Keep a complete record of the transactions of all business at the meetings of the church, which shall be available for approval at the next business meeting.
 - Maintain and keep current a record of the names and addresses of members, with dates and manner of admission, transfer and dismissal; also a record of baptisms.
 - Request and issue letters of transfer/recommendation
 - Preserve on file all communications and written reports
 - Give legal notice of all meetings where such is required by this constitution.

All books and records pertaining to this office shall be immediately delivered to any successor.

Constitution and By-Laws of First Central Baptist Church

Article V – continued

SECTION 6: Financial Secretary

- A Financial secretary shall be elected at each annual meeting to serve for one year.
- Duties are as follows:
 - Maintain a current list of envelope givers with their respective numbers
 - Record envelope and other designated contributions;
 - Supply annually and more frequently if requested, receipts of contributions privately to the specific contributor.

The purpose of this office is to maintain records for the convenience of the individual contributors only; such information is to be given only to the individual contributors.

SECTION 7: Auditor

- An auditor shall be elected at each annual meeting to serve for one year.
- The auditor shall examine the books of the treasurers and all ministries annually and at such other times as required and report to the church.

SECTION 8: Staff

The church shall employ such administrative and ministry support staff as are necessary to further and accomplish the established goals and objectives of the church. The creation of staff positions will be recommended by the Senior Pastor and/or Council of Elders. The hiring of staff will be consistent with applicable church policies. Church staff shall be under the authority of the Senior Pastor and/or the Council of Elders.

ARTICLE VI: BOARDS

SECTION 1: Council of Elders

- There shall be a Council of Elders consisting of the Senior Pastor, all Associate Pastors, by virtue of their office, and no more than six (6) male members elected from the congregation.
- The Senior Pastor shall serve as the Lead Elder and Chairman of the Council. The council shall choose annually a vice-chairman, secretary, and any other officer as needed to effectively discharge the duties of the council.
- The council shall meet regularly and special meetings may be called by the Senior Pastor, Vice-Chairman or Secretary who shall notify the other members. A majority of elected members and at least one pastor, if on staff, shall constitute a quorum.
- To be elected to the office of Elder, one must be a male member of the church in good standing, be over the age of 30, and meet the following biblical qualifications of an elder relating to character, testimony and family standards as summarized in Hebrews 12:1; Romans 14:13,; I Timothy 3:2-7, 11; Titus 1:7-9; I Peter 5:1-3; Matthew 5:31-32; and I Corinthians 7:15.

He must:

- *not have any sin that easily besets him or any unresolved justifiable complaint against him.*
- *be hospitable, respectable, and of good reputation, demonstrating he is a mature believer in Jesus Christ.*
- *be temperate, self-controlled, gentle, and peaceable; not violent, rebellious, or quick tempered.*

Constitution and By-Laws of First Central Baptist Church

- *be prudent, just, devout, and a lover of what is good; not arrogant or having the love of money.*
- *not be under the mastery of any substance that would hinder his reasoning.*
- *exercise his liberty in a way that does not cause him to become a stumbling block to weaker brothers or sisters in Christ.*
- *be a one woman man. If divorced, it must be for biblically acceptable reasons such as abandonment by an unsaved spouse or adultery. Otherwise, the divorce must have occurred prior to salvation.*
- *lead his home spiritually, having his children subject to him while living under his care and training them to live as Christians. Also, his wife must be honest, trustworthy, and vigilant, not found to be a gossip.*
- *be able to effectively teach the Word. While holding to the Word, he must be able to exhort others using sound doctrine.*
- The Council of Elders shall function as the teaching leaders of the church, and have full authority to conduct, manage and direct the administrative and business affairs of the church as well as oversee the spiritual welfare of the assembly. Specific biblical functions include:
 - pray and teach (Acts 6:2-4)
 - visit and pray for the sick (James 5:14)
 - Watch out for the church in humility (1 Peter 5:1-4)
 - Evangelize and church plant (2 Timothy 4:5)
 - Equip believers for service (Ephesians 4:12)
 - Be good examples (1 Timothy 3)
 - Exhort in sound doctrine (Titus 1:9)
 - Watch out for the spiritual life of individuals (Hebrews 13:17)
 - Protect the church from false teachers (Acts 20:17, 28-31)
 - Settle disputes in the church (Acts 15:1-2)
 - Confront sin (1 Timothy 5:20)
 - Direct the affairs of the church (Acts 20:28)
- Policies and procedures to implement all of the above biblical directives will be the responsibility of the council. Specific council functions will include, but are not limited to, the following:
 - Responsibility for ensuring that all regular services and teaching ministries of the Church are held in accordance with these articles.
 - General oversight, direction and guidance of all boards, committees and ministries in the Church.
 - Provide for pastoral supply during illness or absence of the pastoral staff.
 - Responsibility for hiring and dismissal of all paid staff (other than pastoral staff) and volunteer officials of the Church.
 - Consideration of applicants for church membership
 - Be responsible to sign, execute, and acknowledge in the name of the church, all deeds, mortgages, bonds and contracts or other instruments authorized by the board or the church, or delegate such authority to some other officer or agent of the church in order to provide for the effective administration of the Church.
 - Responsible for church discipline in accordance with Scripture.

Constitution and By-Laws of First Central Baptist Church

Article VI Section 1 – continued

- The Council of Elders shall recommend to the Nominating Committee the names of eligible men that may serve as elders. In order to insure that the Biblical requirements are met, congregation members are encouraged to submit names of prospective elders to the Council of Elders prior to November 1st of each year. No nominations for the office of elder shall originate from the floor of a business meeting.
- Each elected member of the Council of Elders shall be elected for a term of 3 years. Elders may serve 2 consecutive terms. The council may waive the term limit, to add one additional 3-year term, if qualified candidates for the office of elder are not available. An Elder may not serve concurrently as a Deacon.
- One third of the elected members of the council shall be elected by written ballot from the membership of the church at the annual meeting.
- The council may choose to appoint Elder Emeritus positions as needed to assist in providing spiritual resources. Emeritus positions will not be voting members of the council, but shall have all other rights and privileges ascribed to the council.
- The council shall provide a written report of the matters in its charge for the annual meeting.

Section 2: Deacons & Deaconesses

There shall be a Board of Deacons and a Board of Deaconesses that serve under the authority of the Council of Elders. Whereas the Elders serve as the shepherd leaders of the church, the Deacons and Deaconesses function as servants of the church. In that role, they assist and work with the elders in caring for the practical needs of the church body. The Deacons and Deaconesses coordinate and complement one another in ministering to the unique needs of men and women within the body. They meet together periodically to foster communication and effective ministry.

Section 2A: Board of Deacons

- There shall be a Board of Deacons consisting of male members elected from the congregation.
- The board shall choose annually a chairman, vice-chairman, secretary and treasurer.
- The board shall meet regularly and special meetings may be called by the chair or secretary who shall notify the other members. A majority of members shall constitute a quorum.
- The Board of Deacons shall meet periodically with the Board of Deaconesses in order to coordinate their respective ministries. The two boards shall meet with the Elders on an as needed basis to ensure that members are well cared for.
- To be elected to the office of deacon, one must be a male member of the church in good standing, be over the age of 21, and meet the following biblical qualifications of a deacon relating to character, testimony and family standards as summarized in Matthew 5: 31-32; Acts 6:1-6; I Corinthians 7:15 and I Timothy 3:-13.

He must:

- *be a man of good reputation, full of the Spirit and of wisdom that is willing and able to serve the body of Christ.*
- *be a tested Christian who has demonstrated Christ-likeness in life situations.*
- *be serious in both mind and character.*
- *not be under the mastery of any substance that would hinder his reasoning.*
- *exercise his liberty in a way that does not cause him to become a stumbling block to weaker brothers or sisters in Christ.*

Constitution and By-Laws of First Central Baptist Church

Article VI Section 2 – continued

- *be able to live by sound doctrinal practices and keep short accounts with God.*
 - *be a one-woman man. If divorced, it must be for biblically acceptable reasons such as abandonment by an unsaved spouse or adultery. Otherwise, the divorce must have occurred prior to salvation. Also, his wife must be honest, trustworthy, vigilant, and not found to be a gossip.*
 - *lead his home spiritually, having his children subject to him while living under his care and training them to live as Christians.*
 - *have no proven accusation of sin made against him.*
 - *be good for his word*
 - *not use his position for financial gain.*
 - *be an active servant while in the office of deacon.*
- The Board of Deacons shall function as the servants of the church, with biblical mandates that include:
 - benevolence ministries that meet basic physical needs (Acts 6:2-4)
 - visit and pray for the sick (Acts 6:2-4)
 - encourage unity in the church (Acts 6:5)
 - facilitate the spread of the gospel (Acts 6:7-8)
 - be alert to practical needs that could free up Elders for prayer and teaching (Acts 6:2-4)
- Policies and procedures to implement the biblical directives above will be the responsibility of the board. Specific board functions will include, but are not limited to, the following:
 - Administration of the Deacon Fund
 - Provide for member care as needed
 - Monitor and keep in touch with church membership to facilitate personal and ministry connections among members
 - Responsibility for set-up and serving of the Lord's Table.
 - Provide set-up and support for Baptism services
 - Assist in coordinating Special Services (i.e. Thanksgiving Sunrise Service, etc.)
 - Provide for and schedule regular visitation ministry
 - Assist the Council of Elders as needed.
- The Board of Deacons shall recommend to the Elders the names of eligible men that may serve as deacons. After discussing, the Elders will in turn recommend the names to the Nominating Committee. In order to insure that the Biblical requirements are met, congregation members are encouraged to submit names of prospective deacons to the Board of Deacons prior to November 1st of each year. No nominations for the office of deacon shall originate from the floor of a business meeting.
- Each member of the Board of Deacons shall be elected for a term of four (4) years. There will not be term limits for the Board of Deacons. A Deacon may not serve concurrently as an Elder.
- Deacons shall be elected by written ballot from the membership of the church at the annual meeting.
- The board may choose to appoint Deacon Emeritus positions as needed to assist in providing the servant care necessary in the assembly. Emeritus members will not be voting members of the board, but shall have all other rights and privileges ascribed to the board.
- The board shall provide a written report of the matters in its charge for the annual meeting.

Constitution and By-Laws of First Central Baptist Church

Article VI Section 2 – continued

Section 2B: Board of Deaconesses

- There shall be a Board of Deaconesses consisting of female members elected from the congregation.
- The board shall choose annually a chair, vice-chair, and secretary.
- The board shall meet regularly and special meetings may be called by the chair or secretary who shall notify the other members. A majority of members shall constitute a quorum.
- The Board of Deacons shall meet periodically with the Board of Deaconesses in order to coordinate their respective ministries. The two boards shall meet with the Elders on an as needed basis to ensure that members are well cared for.
- To be elected to the office of deaconess, one must be a female member of the church in good standing, be over the age of 21, and meet the following biblical qualifications of a deaconess relating to character, testimony and family standards as summarized in Matthew 5: 31-32; Acts 6:1-6; I Corinthians 7:15; and 1 Timothy 3:11.

She must:

- *be a woman of good reputation, full of the Spirit and of wisdom that is willing and able to serve the body of Christ.*
 - *be a tested Christian who has demonstrated Christ-likeness in life situations.*
 - *be serious in both mind and character.*
 - *not be under the mastery of any substance that would hinder her reasoning.*
 - *exercise her liberty in a way that does not cause her to become a stumbling block to weaker brothers or sisters in Christ.*
 - *be able to live by sound doctrinal practices and keep short accounts with God.*
 - *be faithful to her husband, if married. If divorced, it must be for biblically acceptable reasons such as abandonment by an unsaved spouse or adultery. Otherwise, the divorce must have occurred prior to salvation.*
 - *be honest, trustworthy, vigilant, and not found to be a gossip.*
 - *be an active servant while in the office of deaconess.*
- The Board of Deaconesses shall function as the servants of the church, with biblical mandates that include the following, with particular emphasis on the care of women:
 - benevolence ministries that meet basic physical needs (Acts 6:2-4)
 - visit and pray for the sick (Acts 6:2-4)
 - encourage unity in the church (Acts 6:5)
 - facilitate the spread of the gospel (Acts 6:7-8)
 - be alert to practical needs that could free up Elders for prayer and teaching (Acts 6:2-4)
 - Policies and procedures to implement the biblical directives above will be the responsibility of the board. Specific board functions will include, but are not limited to assisting the Deacons in ministry to women in the following areas:
 - Administration of the Deacon Fund
 - Provide for member care as needed
 - Monitor and keep in touch with church membership to facilitate personal and ministry connections among members
 - Responsibility for set-up and serving of the Lord's Table.
 - Provide set-up and support for Baptism services

Constitution and By-Laws of First Central Baptist Church

Article VI Section 2 – continued

- Assist in coordinating Special Services (i.e. Thanksgiving Sunrise Service, etc.)
 - Provide for and schedule regular visitation ministry
 - Assist the Council of Elders as needed.
-
- The Board of Deaconesses shall recommend to the Elders the names of eligible women that may serve as deaconesses. After discussing, the Elders will in turn recommend the names to the Nominating Committee. In order to insure that the Biblical requirements are met, congregation members are encouraged to submit names of prospective deaconesses to the Board of Deaconesses prior to November 1st of each year. No nominations for the office of deaconess shall originate from the floor of a business meeting.
 - Each member of the Board of Deaconesses shall be elected for a term of four (4) years. There will not be term limits for the Board of Deaconess.
 - Deaconesses shall be elected by written ballot from the membership of the church at the annual meeting.
 - The board may choose to appoint Deaconess Emeritus positions as needed to assist in providing the servant care necessary in the assembly. Emeritus members will not be voting members of the board, but shall have all other rights and privileges ascribed to the board.
 - The board shall provide a written report of the matters in its charge for the annual meeting.

SECTION 3: The Board of Trustees

- There shall be a Board of at least six persons, 1/3 of whom shall be elected at each annual meeting for a term of three years. In addition, the head custodian shall be an ex-officio member. The Chairman of the Board of Finance shall have the privilege of attending its meetings and shall be present when so requested.
- The Board shall choose annually a chairman and a secretary and shall meet monthly. Special meetings may be called by the chairman or by the secretary, who shall notify the other members. A majority of the members shall constitute a quorum.
- The board shall hold in trust all property belonging to the church and shall take all measures necessary for its protection, management and upkeep.
- It shall determine the use of the church building for all extra or secular purposes.
- It shall, when so instructed by the church, secure the services of one or more custodians at such salary as is authorized by the church.
- It shall perform such other duties as are imposed upon it by the church and the state. It shall submit a report of its work at each annual meeting.
- The board shall work within its budget as designated at the annual meeting and seek additional funds as necessary through the Finance Board. It shall also be responsible for submitting a proposed budget for the coming year to the Finance Board by November 1.

SECTION 4: Board of Finance

- There shall be a Board of 4 persons 1 of whom shall be elected at each annual meeting for a term of 4 years. The staff position of General Fund Treasurer shall be an ex-officio member. The Board shall choose a chairman, vice chairman and secretary annually.
- This Board shall be responsible for:
 - Approving policies and procedures related to the disbursement, collection and investment of church funds,
 - Ensuring that a proposed annual expense budget is prepared, reviewed by the pastor and approved by the Finance Board.

Constitution and By-Laws of First Central Baptist Church

Article VI Section 3 – continued

- Monitoring the actual level of expenses incurred compared to the approved budget and income received/cash available.

SECTION 5: Board of Christian Education

- There shall be a Board of Christian Education composed of at least 6 persons, ½ of whom shall be elected at each annual meeting for a term of two years.
- The Mission of the Christian Education Board is to ensure that all of First Central Baptist Church's educational programs are effective by providing resources, vision, leadership, and oversight for those programs, consistent with the Mission and Purpose of FCBC.
- All educational seminars, guest speakers and programs shall come under the review of the board to ensure that the doctrine is in line with the Statement of Faith of FCBC. The exception is guest speakers/pulpit supply, which come under the direction of the Council of Elders.
- The leaders of the various Christian Education ministries—Awana, Sunday School, Youth, etc., shall be ex-officio members of the board.
- Teachers and substitute teachers shall be approved by the C.E. Board. The Board shall be responsible for establishing Policies and Procedures for teachers and substitutes.
- The board shall have regularly scheduled meetings and special meetings may be called by the chairman and/or the pastor at anytime. A quorum shall consist of 4 elected members.
- The secretary of the board shall notify the members of all meetings, enter accurate minutes of the meetings in a book to be kept for that purpose, have custody of and be responsible for all books, papers and documents pertaining to the affairs of the board, and surrender all records to the board when a new secretary is elected.
- The chairman of the board shall be responsible for submitting a report of the previous year's accomplishments to be published in the annual report. The board shall also be responsible for submitting a proposed Christian Education budget for the coming year to the Finance Board by November 1.

SECTION 6: Board of Missions

- There shall be a Board of Missions composed of at least 6 persons, 1/2 of whom shall be elected at each annual meeting for a term of two years. From their own membership they shall elect a chairman, vice-chairman and a secretary.
- They shall meet monthly and duties shall include:
 - Investigate any question regarding the motive and conduct of any church-supported missionary
 - Promote missionary awareness in the fellowship
 - Organize the annual Missionary Conference
 - Recommend to the church any new candidates for missionary support.
 - Determine the financial capability of the church to support additional missionaries, the amount of support, any increases in support, etc.
 - Present a proposed Missions Budget at the Annual Meeting.

SECTION 7: Dismissal of Board Members

A member of any board shall conclusively be presumed to have vacated his office if he ceases to be a member in good standing of this church, or if he moves from the area for the purpose of taking up a permanent residence elsewhere. Said member may be removed from office for failing to attend, without reasonable cause, the regular monthly meetings of the board or for conduct tending to impair his efficiency as a board member.

Constitution and By-Laws of First Central Baptist Church

ARTICLE VII: COMMITTEES

SECTION 1: Counting committee

- A counting committee consisting of at least 9 members shall be elected at the annual meeting to serve for one year. The new committee shall include a minimum of 4 members retained from the previous committee.
- This committee shall have the responsibility of counting, recording, and depositing all monies received by the church with the exception of the Deacon Fund.
- Procedures shall comply with the church policy for financial controls established and in use by the Finance Board.

SECTION 2: Nominating Committee

- There shall be a Nominating Committee composed of 5 members, one of whom is an elder and one of whom is a carry-over from the previous year's committee.
- They shall be elected at each annual meeting and shall serve through the next annual meeting.
- The committee, in conjunction with the pastoral staff and ministry leaders, shall prepare a list of those qualified to fill the various offices, boards and committees.
- It shall interview each nominee proposed and ascertain his or her willingness to serve if elected.
- The committee shall nominate one person for each office to be filled and report the names to the church at least one week before the election is to be held.
- It shall also be responsible for making recommendations for filling all vacancies or increases as requested to board or committee size that occur during the year.

SECTION 3: Pastoral Search Committee

When any pastoral position is vacant the nominating committee shall nominate at least 5 and no more than 7 members including a minimum of 1 Deacon and 1 Elder to serve as a pastoral search committee. The committee shall then be approved at a special business meeting of the church to be called for that purpose. The committee shall investigate the merits of each candidate under consideration in regard to his personal character, education, ministerial record and preaching ability in determining his fitness for this pastorate. When a suitable person is found the committee shall recommend him to the church for consideration. Only one candidate shall be presented to the church at one time.

SECTION 4: Music Committee

- A music committee consisting of at least 5 members shall be elected at the annual meeting for a term of one year.
- The Music Pastor/Director and Choir Director if different, shall be ex-officio members.
- The music committee shall assist the Music Pastor/Director by:
 - encouraging people in the congregation to serve in the music ministry,
 - researching available music publications for the ministry (sheet music and recordings)
 - researching potential outside groups to perform for the church and
 - assisting in any other areas the Music Pastor/Director asks of them.

SECTION 5: Special Committees

Special Committees shall be established by the nominating committee at the direction of leadership. These committees shall be approved at any regularly scheduled business meeting or at a special business meeting of the church called for that purpose.

Constitution and By-Laws of First Central Baptist Church

ARTICLE VIII: MINISTRIES

The Senior Pastor and Elder Council shall have the responsibility of approving and overseeing all church related ministries. New ministries must follow start-up procedures as outlined in the Policies and Procedures manual.

ARTICLE IX: ELECTIONS

SECTION 1: Annual Elections

The annual election shall be held during the annual meeting of the church which shall be on the fourth Wednesday evening in January. All those elected shall serve until the next Annual Business Meeting.

SECTION 2: Qualifications of voters

Matters of business relating to the church and congregation shall be voted on only by members in good standing who are 18 years of age or older.

SECTION 3: Procedure

- Nominations for all offices should be submitted to the Nominating Committee for consideration; no nominations will be accepted from the floor during business meetings.
- A majority of the ballots cast are necessary for the election of any nominee.
- The entire Annual Report shall be made available to the congregation at least one week prior to the Annual Meeting.

SECTION 4: Vacancies

The unexpired term of any vacancies for offices, boards or committees may be filled at any business meeting. The nominating committee shall present nominees to the church for these vacancies and shall follow the procedure as outlined in section 3 of this article. Nominees shall be presented to the church at least one week before the business meeting.

ARTICLE X: MEETINGS

SECTION 1: Public Services

- Public services shall be conducted on each Lord's Day. The Youth Ministries and the Sunday School shall hold weekly meetings at times fixed by the Board of Christian Education.
- The Lord's Supper shall be celebrated at least once each month and at such other times as the Council of Elders and/or Board of Deacons may determine.
- Other meetings may be called by the Pastor or the Council of Elders at any time as the interests of the Lord's work may demand.

SECTION 2: Business Meetings

- The Annual Business Meeting shall be on the fourth Wednesday evening in January for the purpose of receiving the annual reports of individual officers, boards, committees and ministries of the church; the election of officers, boards and committees; and the transaction of such other business as is proper to come before this meeting.
- A semi-annual business meeting shall be held on the third Wednesday in June.
- The Council of Elders may at its discretion alter the date of either of these meetings, provided notice of such change is given from the pulpit 14 days before the proposed date of the meeting.

Constitution and By-Laws of First Central Baptist Church

Article X Section 2 – continued

- A quorum for the transaction of business shall be 50 members of voting age, except for voting upon new members when the quorum shall be 25.
- Special business meetings may be called at any time by the Pastor or by the Council of Elders. Seven members in good standing who are qualified voters may also, after consultation with the Council of Elders, call a special business meeting. Notice of such meetings and the object for which they are called shall be given from the pulpit at the worship services preceding the date of the meeting.
- At the discretion of the Elders, applications for absentee ballots may be made available to eligible voting members who legitimately cannot attend any scheduled business meeting, except as otherwise provided.
- At any of the regular meetings of worship the church may, without notice, act upon the reception or transfer of members only.

ARTICLE XI: CHURCH YEAR

The fiscal year of the church shall be the calendar year. Current officeholders and budgets shall remain in place until the Annual Meeting.

ARTICLE XII: AMENDMENTS

This constitution may be amended at any regular or special business meeting of the church by a two-thirds vote of those present and voting, provided a quorum is present and voting, and that notice of such amendment stating the proposed change, shall have been given from the pulpit on two successive Sundays. When this constitution is amended by

- deletion of any article or any part thereof,
- addition of any article or any part thereof,
- or by substitution of some words for others,

the clerk shall ensure that all changes are reflected in all digital copies of the constitution, including our website, and shall be authorized to make any appropriate changes in the numeration of articles and sections. The amendments ordering such deletions, additions or substitutions shall not themselves be printed as part of this constitution.

Constitution and By-Laws of First Central Baptist Church

BY-LAWS

SECTION 1: Attendance of Leadership

All church officers, board and committee members, Sunday School teachers, youth leaders and ministry heads shall be members of the church, attending church services and communion regularly.

SECTION 2: Funding

The church and all its ministries shall depend wholly upon tithes, free-will offerings and donations to defray all expenses incurred. Sale of ministry-related items may be allowed upon approval of the Council of Elders.

SECTION 3: Rules of Order

Church business meetings are to be conducted in accordance with the rules of order found in the appendix of this constitution. Whenever personal matters which concern the pastors or any staff member are being considered in any business meeting, he or she and family shall retire.

SECTION 4: Privileges of Ex-Officio Officers

An ex-officio (by reason of office) member is a full voting member of a board or committee. An ex-officio vote is not transferrable by proxy.

Constitution and By-Laws of First Central Baptist Church

APPENDIX

SECTION 1: Purpose

The purpose of this appendix is to assure the orderly conduct of business in accordance with the Word of God.

SECTION 2: Order of Business for Business Meetings

The following order of business shall be executed by the Moderator:

- A. Call meeting to order;
- B. Quorum Check;
- C. Prayer;
- D. Reading of minutes of previous meeting;
- E. Old business;
- F. Election of officers, boards and committees:
 - The report of the Nominating Committee will be read.
 - The Moderator will entertain a motion to accept the:
 - 1. Entire slate **or**
 - 2. Slate setting aside requested exceptions. (Exceptions must be voted by secret ballot.)
- G. Reading and acceptance of Treasurers' Reports
 - 1. Report on General Fund actual spending compared to last year's budget
 - 2. Approval of next year's General Fund budget
 - a. No salary recommendations will be made from the floor
 - 3. Report on Missions Fund actual spending compared to last year's budget
 - 4. Approval of next year's Missions budget
- H. Other new business
- I. Adjournment with prayer

SECTION 3: Permissible Actions or Motions

- A. Main Motion will be used to bring a subject to the assembly for consideration. It requires a second and is debatable. It can be amended. All amendments, except as noted below, must be seconded. All amendments require a majority affirmative vote for passage except the following:
 - 1. All amendments to budget items require a two-thirds affirmative vote for passage.
- B. Secondary Motions The following can be applied to main motions or amendments. Since they affect the main motion or amendments they must be decided before action on the question can proceed.
 - 1. "Postpone Action to a Certain Time" removes the question from consideration for a definite and stated time period. Only discussion related to the propriety of the postponement is permitted and it can be amended by altering the time. The time specified cannot be beyond that session of the assembly. It requires a majority affirmative voted for passage.

Constitution and By-Laws of First Central Baptist Church

APPENDIX Section 3 B – Continued

2. “Refer to Committee” can be used to defer an action on a main motion or amendment. It can be amended to specify or change the name of the board or committee, to specify procedure for appointing a special committee, or for any other such instructions. It is debatable and must be seconded and requires a majority affirmative vote for passage.
3. “Lay on the Table” (“To Table”) refers to a motion to remove the main motion from consideration until the assembly votes to remove it from the table. It must be seconded and requires a majority affirmative vote of those voting.
 - a. “Take from the Table” puts a question previously laid aside before the assembly. As it reverses a motion to lay on the table, it is not debatable and requires a majority affirmative vote for approval
4. “An Order to Limit Debate” permits a member to submit a motion that limits the amount of time given to a particular question. It must be seconded and is not debatable. The moderator will use his discretion to set the parameters to limit the debate according to:
 - The amount of time given to a particular question *or*
 - The time allotted to each speaker *or*
 - The number of speakers *or*
 - A specific time at which debate will be stopped.It requires a two-thirds majority affirmative vote for passage.
5. “Move the Question” refers to the action to cut off debate on a main question, secondary motion or amendment. “Move the question” cannot be used until an order to limit debate has been approved and carried out. It must be seconded, is not debatable and requires a two-thirds affirmative vote.

C. Other Permissible Actions.

1. “Point of Information”. All requests for information or clarification shall be directed to the Moderator.
2. “Point of Parliamentary Procedure” All requests for information or assistance shall be directed to the Moderator.
3. “Question of Order” A member can rise to call for enforcement of the rules by the Moderator. The Moderator will rule on the question.
4. “Appeal to Question of Order” Any member may appeal a ruling on a question of order by the Moderator. After hearing an appeal which has been seconded, the Moderator will put the question before the assembly to decide. The Moderator will be given an opportunity to state the reasons for his decision prior to the vote. The motion for an appeal is debatable (the Moderator cannot participate in the debate) after the Moderator has had the opportunity to state his reasons unless: a.) it relates to transgressions to the rules of speaking, or some indecorum, or to the priority of business or b) the previous question was pending at the time the question of order was raised. After the vote is taken, the Moderator will announce whether his decision is sustained or reversed. In the event of a tie vote, the decision of the chair is sustained.
5. “Suspension of the By-laws or Rules of Order” requires a two-thirds vote of those in attendance at the business meeting. Suspension must be for a specific purpose and a rejection of the motion to suspend the rules cannot be reconsidered.

Constitution and By-Laws of First Central Baptist Church

APPENDIX Section 3 C – Continued

- D. No other action on motions or amendments except those noted above is permissible unless suspension of the rules is approved.

SECTION 4: Parliamentary Procedure

- A. Each member of the assembly may speak on a motion or amendment as many times as he desires unless debate is suppressed through a secondary motion.
- B. The person making the motion or amendment shall, if he chooses have the right to the floor at the beginning of debate. If he declines the floor at that time he loses any priority of privilege to the floor.
- C. The Moderator shall recognize members to speak in the order in which he sees their hand raised in a request for recognition. The Moderator will recognize a person twice in this manner. After having spoken twice on the same motion or amendment, the person shall not be recognized again until all other members present have been given the same opportunity to speak.
- D. A member willing to address the assembly shall rise when recognized by the Moderator.
- E. No other priorities of privilege to the floor shall be recognized by the Moderator except those noted above.
- F. A motion will be in order to determine the method of voting whether by voice, raising of hands or secret ballot, except where otherwise provided in the constitution. When no motion of this type is made, the Moderator shall determine the method of voting. This motion need not be seconded nor voted upon.