

CONSTITUTION

FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH OF CONWAY, SOUTH CAROLINA A South Carolina Nonprofit Corporation

Preamble

First Baptist Church of Conway, South Carolina (the “church”) is a religious nonprofit corporation organized pursuant to the laws of the State of South Carolina. The church declares and establishes this constitution for the preservation and security of the principles of its faith, and to preserve the liberties inherent in each individual member of the church and the church’s freedom of action in its relation to other churches. The church shall be governed in accordance with its bylaws.

Article I Identity and Purposes

This church was organized in October, 1866, as Conwayborough Baptist Church. In 1890, the name was changed to Conway Baptist Church. Later (c. 1939), the church adopted its present name of First Baptist Church of Conway, South Carolina. The church is a local, autonomous church congregation. As of the date of enactment of this constitution, the church’s principal facility is located at 603 Elm Street, Conway, South Carolina 29526. The church is organized exclusively for religious purposes to provide regular opportunities for public worship; to sustain the ordinances, doctrines, and ethics set forth in the New Testament for the Church of the Lord Jesus Christ (the “Church”); to lead people to Jesus Christ and the fellowship of His Church; to encourage believers in discipleship to be Christ-like; to equip members for service in the church and global evangelism; to exercise discipline; and, to ordain to sacred office. No substantive part of the activities of the church shall be the carrying on of propaganda or otherwise attempting to influence legislation. The church shall not participate in, nor advocate for or against, any political campaign on behalf of any candidate for public office.

Article II Statement of Faith

- **About God:** We affirm there is only one living and true God; that He is an all knowing, all powerful, spiritual, loving and personal Being, the Creator, Redeemer, Preserver, and Ruler of the universe; that He is infinite in holiness and all other perfections; that we owe Him the highest love, reverence, and obedience; and that the eternal God reveals Himself to us as Father, His only begotten Son Jesus Christ, and the Holy Spirit.
- **About the Scriptures:** We believe that the Holy Bible, composed of the scriptures contained in the Old and New Testaments, is the inspired Word of God, the only objective foundation for the understanding and practice of the

Christian faith, and the final authority concerning truth, morality, and the proper conduct of mankind.

- **About Humanity:** We believe that all people were created in the image of God to have fellowship with Him, but all became alienated in that relationship through sinful disobedience. As a result, people are incapable of regaining a right relationship with God through their own efforts, but only through the grace of God. We believe that every person must be afforded compassion, love, kindness, respect, and dignity; and that hateful or harassing behavior or attitudes directed toward any individual are to be repudiated and are not in accord with the Scriptures.
- **About Salvation:** We believe that the blood of Jesus Christ, shed on the cross, provides the sole basis for the forgiveness of sin. Therefore, God freely offers salvation to those who place their faith in the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ as sufficient redemption for their sins.
- **About the Christian Life:** We believe that by obedience to the Word of God and daily yielding to the Spirit of God, every believer should mature and seek to be conformed to the image of Christ.
- **About Marriage:** We believe that marriage is intended by God to be the uniting of one man and one woman in an exclusive union, as delineated in scriptures, and that marriage is God's gift to mankind and a picture of the union between Christ and His Church.
- **About the Church:** We believe that the Church is the body of Christ, of which Jesus Christ is the head. The members of the Church are those who have trusted by faith the finished work of Christ. The purpose of the Church is to glorify God by loving Him and our fellow man, and by making Him known to the lost world.

Article III Church Covenant

Having been led by the grace of God through the eternal life-giving power of the Holy Spirit to repent of our sins and to turn in faith to Jesus Christ as our Lord and Savior, and having given public testimony of this faith through baptism, we the members of the church now joyfully and solemnly enter into this "Church Covenant":

- We commit, through the power of the Holy Spirit, to affirm and follow the Statement of Faith and the Church Covenant in the church constitution, to walk together in love, to remember one another in prayer, to help one another in times of need, to exercise gentleness and humility in our dealings with one another as we speak the truth in love, to be faithful in our responsibilities and commitments, to be just and honest in our dealings, and to honor ourselves and others for Christ's sake through living as followers of Christ's teachings and abstaining from

things or practices that would bring harm to our faith or the faith of another.

- We commit to faithful participation in worship, prayer, study, and fellowship with other believers, to the building up of the church by using our spiritual gifts in ministry, to contributing cheerfully, proportionately and regularly for the ministry and expenses of the church, the relief of the poor, and the spread of the gospel to the world.
- We commit to practice personal and family worship, to train our children in the discipline and instruction of the Lord, and to seek the salvation of our family, friends, neighbors, co-workers, acquaintances, and all peoples of the world.
- We have read and agree to abide by the church's constitution and bylaws.

Article IV Ordination, Licensing, and Commissioning

The church reserves the right to ordain, license, or commission individuals as ministers of the gospel to perform the ordinances and ceremonies of the church, including but not limited to: marriage, baptism, communion, and funerals. The church recognizes licensed ministers and ordained pastors.

Article V Governance and Affiliations

The church is an autonomous and democratic Baptist church and shall be governed in accordance with its bylaws. The membership of the church retains the right to exclusive self-government in all phases of the spiritual and temporal life of the church. The church is subject to the control of no other religious body, but it recognizes and sustains the obligations of mutual counsel and cooperation which are common among Baptist churches. Insofar as is practical, the church will cooperate with and support local, state, and regional Baptist associations.

Article VI Ordinances

Baptism is the immersion of a believer in water in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. It is a symbolic act of obedience and a prerequisite to the privileges of church membership. A person who receives Jesus Christ as Savior by personal faith, who professes Him publicly at any worship service, and who indicates a commitment to follow Christ as Lord may be received for baptism. Baptism shall be: (1) by immersion in water; (2) administered by the Lead Pastor or his designee(s), or by any minister of the church or his designee(s) in the absence of the Lead Pastor; (3) administered as an act of worship during any worship service; and (4) performed promptly after the public profession of faith.

The Lord's Supper is a symbolic act of obedience whereby members of the Church, through partaking of the bread and fruit of the vine, commemorate the death of Jesus Christ and anticipate His second coming. The Lord's Supper shall be observed and shall be administered by the Lead Pastor and/or his designee(s), or by any minister of the church and/or his designee(s) in the absence of the Lead Pastor.

Article VII Adoption of Constitution and Amendments

This constitution shall become effective upon adoption in accordance with the requirements of the existing constitution and shall supersede all prior constitutions of the church and any prior resolutions and policies of the church in conflict with the constitution's provisions; provided however, in the event of any conflict between the provisions of the constitution and the provisions of the church bylaws, the provisions of the bylaws shall prevail.

The church constitution may be replaced, amended, or repealed only by following same process required for the replacement, amendment, or repeal of the church bylaws, as prescribed therein.

Two identical, complete, and official copies of this constitution together with any and all amendments hereto shall be kept, one with the official church minutes and the other in the church office.

This constitution was approved and adopted by the affirmative vote of at least 2/3 of the church members present and voting at a business meeting duly called pursuant to the constitution which this replaces on the 12th day of December, 2021.



Bill Graham, deacon chair