

Constitution And Bylaws of

Foundation Church

Vision Statement:

To become biblical missionaries passionately loving God and compassionately loving people.

Mission Statement:

To glorify God by making disciples for Jesus Christ.

Final Authority for Matters of Belief and Conduct:

The Bible itself, as the inspired and infallible Word of God that speaks with final authority concerning truth, morality, and the proper conduct of mankind, is the sole and final source of all that we believe. For purposes of Foundation Church's faith, doctrine, practice, policy, and discipline, our Elder Council is Foundation Church's final interpretive authority on the Bible's meaning and application.

OUR VALUES

*** All scriptures are taken from the New American Standard Bible (NASB)*

WE VALUE BIBLICAL TEACHING AND OBEDIENCE

We believe that correct interpretation of the Bible in context takes precedence over church traditions and human opinion. Therefore, we will teach God's Word with integrity and authority so that seekers find Christ and believers mature through obedience to Him.

"All Scripture is inspired by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for training in righteousness; so that the man of God may be adequate, equipped for every good work."

II Timothy 3:16-17, Colossians 2:8, James 1:22, Philippians 2:1-11

WE VALUE PRAYER

We believe that prayer is the church's lifeline to its Head, Jesus Christ. As we abide in Christ we are promised His power and answers in prayer. Therefore, we will seek Him in prayer in the conception, planning, execution, and evaluation of all ministries and activities of this church.

"Ask, and it will be given to you; seek, and you will find; knock, and it will be opened to you. For everyone who asks receives, and he who seeks finds, and to him who knocks it will be opened."

Matthew 7:7-8, John 15:7, James 5:13-18

WE VALUE WORSHIP

We believe that worship is a lifestyle. Therefore, we will acknowledge God's supreme value and worth in our lives.

"Therefore, I urge you, brethren, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies a living and holy sacrifice, acceptable to God, which is your spiritual service of worship. And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, so that you may prove what the will of God is, that which is good and acceptable and perfect."

Romans 12:1-2, Acts 2:43-47

WE VALUE GENEROUS STEWARDSHIP

We believe everything we have belongs to God: time, talent, and money. Therefore, we have a responsibility to manage what He has given us for His glory.

"Now this I say, he who sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and he who sows bountifully will also reap bountifully. Each one must do just as he has purposed in his

heart, not grudgingly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver. And God is able to make all grace abound to you, so that always having all sufficiency in everything, you may have an abundance for every good deed."

II Corinthians 9:6-8, Psalm 24:1, Luke 6:38, Matthew 6:19-21

WE VALUE GODLY LEADERSHIP

We believe that Christ is our model of servant leadership. Therefore, we will seek to know Him and learn to follow His example in leading and equipping as we lead others.

“It is not so among you, but whoever wishes to become great among you shall be your servant, and whoever wishes to be first among you shall be your slave; just as the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and give His life a ransom for many.”

Matthew 20:26-28, Ephesians 1:22, John 5:19, John 13:15, Philippians 2:3-8, Psalm 78:72

WE VALUE EVANGELISM

We believe that lost people matter to God and they matter to us. Therefore, we will equip believers to share the Gospel and pursue the lost how and where God leads us without compromising the Biblical message.

“Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age.”

Matthew 28:19-20, Luke 19:10, Psalm 107:2, John 17:22-23, I Corinthians 19:19-23

WE VALUE AUTHENTIC RELATIONSHIPS

We believe loving relationships that demonstrate sincerity and transparency should permeate every aspect of church life, and that building authentic relationships with Christ and other believers is essential to spiritual growth. Therefore, we are committed to small group ministries and classes as effective ways to accomplish this.

“You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind. This is the great and foremost commandment. The second is like it, you shall love your neighbor as yourself.”

Matthew 22:37-39

“Therefore, laying aside falsehood, speak truth, each one of you, with his neighbor, for we are members of one another. And be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving each other, just as God in Christ has forgiven you.”

Ephesians 4:25, 32, I Corinthians 13, Nehemiah 3, John 13:34-35, Acts 2:42-47

WE VALUE TEAM MINISTRY

We believe that every member is a minister. Ministry requires a team effort. Therefore, we are committed to a shepherding model for ministry and organization that ministers to, equips, and empowers each team member.

“As each one has received a special gift, employ it in serving one another, as good stewards of the manifold grace of God.”

I Peter 4:10, James 2:22, Ecclesiastes 4:9, 12, Romans 12, Matthew 20:28, Acts 13:36, Colossians 1:16, Colossians 3:17, John 15:8, John 15:16, Ephesians 4:11-16, I Corinthians 4, 12, 13, I Corinthians 12:27, John 13:13-15

WE VALUE FAMILY MINISTRY

We believe that the family is God's foundational unit for all societies in the world. As the family goes, so go the nation. We uphold the concept of the family as God's original and primary means for passing on godly values from generation to generation. Therefore, we will seek to partner with the family through mentoring and the application of spiritual truth.

“And these words, which I am commanding you today, shall be on your heart; and you shall teach them diligently to your sons and shall talk of them when you sit in your house and when you walk by the way and when you lie down and when you rise up. And you shall bind them as a sign on your hand and they shall be frontals on your forehead.

And you shall write them on the doorposts of your house and on your gates.”

Deuteronomy 6:6-9, II Tim 1:5, Matthew 19:4-5, Ephesians 5:22-33

WE VALUE CREATIVITY, INNOVATION, AND EXCELLENCE

We believe that creativity, innovation, and a commitment to excellence honor God and inspire people to give their very best. In today's rapidly changing world, forms and methods (not doctrine) must be continually evaluated and improved. We are more concerned with effectiveness in ministry than with adherence to tradition. Therefore, we will seek to maintain a high standard to the glory of God.

“No one tears a piece from a new garment; otherwise he will both tear the new, and the piece from the new will not match the old. And no one puts new wine into old wineskins; otherwise the new wine will burst the skins, and it will be spilled out, and the skins will be ruined. But new wine must be put into fresh wineskins. And no one, after drinking old wine wishes for new; for he says, the old is good enough.”

Luke 5:36-39, I Corinthians 3:13, Proverbs 18:15, Romans 8:32, Colossians 3:23-24, Genesis 1:1

As a result of these commitments, we will staff, structure, preach, teach, worship, budget, calendar, evaluate and build according to the values God has revealed in the Bible. This will bring glory to Him through our lives. (Rom. 11:36)

BASIC DOCTRINAL STATEMENT

We affirm the Holy Bible as the inspired word of God and the only basis for our beliefs. We believe that the administrative and pastoral structure for a New Testament Church is to utilize a plurality of leadership. FC follows this scriptural instruction. To achieve this New Testament model, FC requires qualified men to serve as elders on the Elder Council.

For a statement of our Basic Doctrinal Beliefs, please refer to the document, STATEMENT OF BASIC DOCTRINAL BELIEFS OF FOUNDATION CHURCH.

PLURALITY OF LEADERSHIP STATEMENT

“Be on guard for yourselves and for all the flock, among which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers, to shepherd the church of God which He purchased with His own blood.” (Acts 20:28)

*“For this reason I left you in Crete, that you might set in order what remains, and appoint elders in every city as I directed you.”
(Titus 1:5)*

The New Testament clearly teaches that the church is to be led by a plurality of godly men. Their assignment falls into four categories. First, these men are given both the responsibility and authority to skillfully and lovingly **lead** the flock. Next, they are to **feed** the flock, offering accurate and insightful teaching of the Scripture. Third, they are to **care** for the flock. This care is shown in the love, concern, prayers, ministry, and adept management of church resources. Finally, they are to **protect** the flock from harmful influences and beliefs.

They are first called “**elders**.” An elder (Greek “presbuteros”) is a godly leader, whose wisdom and maturity are respected by God’s people. Next, these are men who give oversight. That is, they are “**overseers**” (Greek “episkapos”). An overseer is a person who is a good manager of resources and guardian of people. Finally, these leaders are called “**shepherds**,” which is also translated as “**pastors**” (Greek “poimain”). This word refers to the role of caring for and leading the flock.

These leaders are known by the three titles listed above, each of which reveals a separate aspect of their function. All three titles are used in 1 Peter 5:1-2; “Therefore, I exhort the **elders** among you, as your fellow **elder** and witness of the sufferings of Christ, and a partaker also of the glory that is to be revealed, **shepherd** the flock of God among you, exercising **oversight** not under compulsion, but voluntarily, according to the will of God; and not for sordid gain, but with eagerness.”

It is important to note that within the New Testament model of church organization, authority for leadership is not granted to just one individual pastor, nor is it given as democratic rule by the congregation. Instead, the Scripture states that authority for leadership is conducted by a plurality of leaders who are appointed by the church and accountable to God. The Scriptures further teach that when the church supports the elders, both the church body and individual Christians will flourish. (Heb. 13:17; 1Thessalonians 5:12-13; 1 Peter 5:1-5; Acts 20:28) These elders do not form a separated “clergy class” of Christians. Instead, the elders, some of whom fill church vocational roles, others non-vocational roles, are brothers with the people, always seeking God’s best for the members of the church. (Acts 14:23; Titus 1:5; 2 Corinthians 8:19)

BYLAWS

PREAMBLE TO THE BYLAWS

Foundation Church (FC) endeavors to be a church of the Lord Jesus Christ, as described, established, and mandated by the New Testament. These Bylaws are to provide general guidance to FC on governance and operation, based upon biblical references. However, the ultimate authority for FC governance and operation is the Bible. When a conflict or ambiguity exists with regard to these Bylaws, deference is to be given to the biblical reference to resolve the conflict or ambiguity.

STATEMENT OF AFFILIATION

The Bible teaches that local churches should seek voluntary fellowship with other doctrinally sound churches. This association is to provide help and encouragement while working together as the Lord directs. This is a voluntary association that in no way involves the surrender of the individual church's freedom or dependence upon God.

Foundation Church has chosen to affiliate itself with the Southern Baptist Convention. We continue this association, believing that it is God's will to do so. Fundamental to this affiliation is the understanding that the Southern Baptist Convention is a fellowship of autonomous, biblically sound churches that choose to work together to further God's Kingdom. This affiliation is maintained by budgeted contributions to local, state, national and international mission projects. Support may also be provided by sending messengers to the annual convention for voting on doctrinal, ethical, and procedural positions. Members of Foundation Church may desire to become personally involved in Southern Baptist evangelism, education, and mission work. Throughout the years, Foundation Church has also associated with other Christian ministries. All of our affiliations are to be with churches and organizations that are biblically sound in doctrine and practice.

ARTICLE I IDENTIFICATION

Section 1. NAME

The name of the corporation is Foundation Church (hereinafter "FC").

Section 2. PRINCIPAL OFFICE

FC's principal office shall be located in Sapulpa, Oklahoma.

ARTICLE II MEMBERSHIP

Section 1. CHURCH MEMBERSHIP DEFINED

The membership of this Church shall be composed of individuals who are believers in the Lord Jesus Christ and affirm the tenets of the Church Constitution, and who offer evidence, by their confession and their conduct, that they are living in accord with their affirmations and this Constitution and Bylaws, and are actively pursuing and continuing in a vital fellowship with the Lord, Jesus Christ. The pastors

and Elder Council shall have final authority in all matters of church governance, as set forth and described in the Bylaws.

Church membership is a commitment to actively function in this local body of Christ, rather than merely affiliate with an organization. (Romans 12:3-21; 1 Corinthians 12)

Section 2. REQUESTING CHURCH MEMBERSHIP

Any person may offer himself or herself as a candidate for membership in this church. All such candidates shall complete **XploringMembership**, commit to abide by the membership agreement, and be presented to FC for membership. Membership shall be granted any of the following ways:

1. By profession of faith and for baptism by immersion according to the policies of this church.
2. By promise of a letter of recommendation from another Baptist Church.
3. By restoration upon statement of prior conversion experience and baptism by immersion according to the policies of this church when no letter is obtainable.

Section 3. ACCEPTANCE

The Elder Council (see Article IV, Section 1), or their designees, will interview all persons making application for church membership.

Membership will be granted to anyone who completed **XploringMembership**, agrees to accept the responsibilities of membership, offers a biblical testimony of salvation and has been scripturally baptized by immersion.

Upon acceptance, the name of the new member shall be added to the FC roll and publicized to the membership of FC. If no clear evidence of salvation is found, the applicant cannot be accepted into the membership. However, FC will diligently offer Christian love, prayer, and Scripture, making every attempt to lead the individual to Christ and then church membership. (John 3:16; Rom. 1:16-17; 10:9-10; Eph. 2:8-9; James 2:14-26)

Section 4. RESPONSIBILITIES OF MEMBERS

a. Will Protect the Unity of FC:

- ...By acting in love toward other members
- ...By refusing to gossip
- ...By following the leadership
- ...Romans 15:19; Romans 15:5; 1 Peter 1:22; Ephesians 4:29; Hebrews 13:17

b. Will Share the Responsibilities of FC:

- ... By praying for its growth
- ... By inviting the unchurched to attend
- ... By warmly welcoming those who are guests

c. Will Support the Testimony of FC:

- ... By Connecting in a LifeGroup
- ... By Living my Mission
- ... By giving regularly

d. Will Serve in a Ministry of FC:

- ... By discovering my gifts and talents
- ... By being equipped to serve by my pastors
- ... By developing a servant's heart

In addition, as a member, I will focus on:

- a. Personal Holiness:** To bring to FC a submitted and Spirit-filled life. Our relationship with the Lord is the source of everything we have to offer one another. It is impossible to help others improve their relationship with God, or others, apart from God working in us. (John 15:5)

- b. Christian Relationships:** To pursue godly relationships within FC. The Bible teaches that the Church is the Body of Christ in the world. We are members of that Body. It is imperative that each part of the Body pursues healthy relationships, respecting and caring for the other parts of the Body. (Rom. 12:1; I Cor. 12:2; II Cor. 1:12)
- c. The Investment of Life:** To seek to serve more than to be served. We live in a society that encourages self-centeredness. As the people of God, we are called to give our time, talents, spiritual gifts and financial resources in service to others. (Mark 10:35-45; John 13:12-15; I Cor. 12; Rom. 12:3-21; II Cor. 4:5)

Section 5. PRIVILEGES OF MEMBERS

- a. Decision Making.** FC decisions and affirmations are made by active members. To participate in such decisions, a member must be at least 18 years old and be in attendance at such meeting.
- b. Office Holding.** Every member is eligible for consideration as a candidate for team participation at FC, subject to scriptural qualifications.
- c. Interest in FC Property.** Members of FC have no property rights in the property of FC, and upon termination of membership, shall not be entitled to any interest in FC's assets.

Section 6. DISCIPLINE OF MEMBERS

- a. Purpose.** The purpose of church discipline is to glorify God by maintaining (1) purity in the church (1 Corinthians 5:6), (2) protecting believers by deterring sin (1 Timothy 5:20), and (3) promoting the spiritual welfare of the offending believer by calling him or her to return to biblical standards of doctrine and conduct. (Galatians 6:1)
- b. Process.** Members and all other professing Christians who regularly attend or fellowship at FC who err in biblical doctrine or conduct shall be subject to discipline according to Matthew 18:15-18. (Such person hereafter will be referred to as an "Erring Person.") Before such discipline reaches its final conclusion:
 - 1) It shall be the duty of any FC member who has knowledge of the Erring Person's unbiblical beliefs or misconduct to warn and to correct such Erring Person in private, seeking his or her repentance and restoration. If the Erring Person does not heed this warning, then,
 - 2) The warning member shall again go to the Erring Person accompanied by one or two witnesses to warn and correct such Erring Person, seeking his or her repentance and restoration. If said Erring Person still refuses to heed this warning, then,
 - 3) It shall be brought to the attention of the Elder Council. (It is understood that this process will continue to conclusion, whether the Erring Person leaves FC or otherwise seeks to withdraw from membership to avoid the discipline process.) The elders will appropriately investigate any allegation brought by one church member against another. If these allegations are warranted, two or more of the Elder Council will contact the Erring Person and seek his or her repentance and restoration. If the Erring Person refuses to be restored, the matter will be presented to the Elder Council, who will act to protect the church by removing the Erring Person's membership and notifying the church in accordance with Matthew 18. However, even at this point, FC will pray for the restoration of the Erring Person.

- c. **Reinstatement.** If such dismissed member heeds the warning, demonstrates repentance and requests reinstatement, he or she shall be publicly restored to membership through the affirmation of the Elder Council and notification of FC.

Section 7. TERMINATION OF MEMBERSHIP

FC membership shall be terminated and the member's name removed from the membership roll at the death of the member, transfer of membership to another church, at the written request of a member or as a result of discipline (See Article II, Section 6). (1 Corinthians 5:12)

ARTICLE III

Section 1. BAPTISM

The Church shall receive for baptism any person who has received 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.

1. Baptism shall be by immersion in water.
2. The pastors, or whomever the church shall authorize, shall administer the baptism.
3. Baptism shall be administered as an act of worship during any service of the Church.

Section 2. THE LORD'S SUPPER

The Church shall observe the Lord's Supper quarterly unless otherwise scheduled by the Church.

1. The pastors, deacons, and/or whomever the church shall authorize, shall administer the Lord's Supper.
2. The deacons will be responsible for the physical preparation.

ARTICLE IV

Section 1. STATEMENT ON MARRIAGE, GENDER, AND SEXUALITY

We believe that God wonderfully and immutably creates each person as male or female. These two distinct, complementary genders together reflect the image and nature of God. (Gen. 1:26-27) Rejection of one's biological sex is a rejection of the image of God within that person.

We believe that the term "marriage" has only one meaning: the uniting of one man and one woman in a single, exclusive union, as delineated in Scripture. (Gen. 2:18-25) We believe that God intends sexual intimacy to occur only between a man and a woman who are married to each other. (1 Cor. 6:18; 7:2-5; Heb. 13:4) We believe that God has commanded that no intimate sexual activity be engaged in outside of a marriage between a man and a woman.

We believe that any form of sexual immorality (including adultery, fornication, homosexual behavior, bisexual conduct, bestiality, incest, and use of pornography) is sinful and offensive to God. (Matt. 15:18-20; 1 Cor. 6:9-10)

We believe that in order to preserve the function and integrity of Foundation Church as the local Body of Christ, and to provide a biblical role model to the Foundation Church members and the community, it is imperative that all persons employed by Foundation Church in any capacity, or who serve as volunteers, agree to and abide by this Statement on Marriage, Gender, and Sexuality. (Matt. 5:16, Phil. 2:14-16; 1 Thess. 5:22)

We believe that God offers redemption and restoration to all who confess and forsake their sin, seeking His mercy and forgiveness through Jesus Christ. (Acts 3:19-21; Rom. 10:9-10, 1 Cor. 6:9-11)

We believe that every person must be afforded compassion, love, kindness, respect, and dignity. (Mark 12:28-31; Luke 6:31) Hateful and harassing behavior or attitudes directed toward any individual are to be repudiated and are not in accord with Scripture nor the doctrines of Foundation Church.

Section 2. MARRIAGE POLICY

Our statement of faith, the Baptist Faith and Message (2000), expresses our fundamental biblical conviction that Christian marriage is, by definition, the spiritual and physical uniting of one man and one woman in an exclusive covenant commitment for their joint lifetime. Christian marriage is God's unique gift to reveal the union between Christ and His Church. As such, this local church believes that wedding ceremonies on church property are spiritual observances of worship of God who created this divine institution. As worship services, weddings on church property shall be officiated by one or more ordained ministers of the gospel. The church may decline to make its facilities or ministers available for any wedding if it is determined that one or both of the parties are not biblically and/or legally qualified to marry. Such determinations may be made by the pastor and/or Elder Council, subject to the direction of the church.

Because God has ordained marriage and defined it as the covenant relationship between a man, a woman, and Himself, Foundation Church will only recognize marriages between a biological man and a biological woman. Further, to be consistent with the marriage policy, the Elder Council and staff or employees of Foundation Church shall only participate in weddings and solemnize marriages between one man and one woman. Finally, the facilities and property of Foundation Church shall only host weddings between one man and one woman.

Section 3. FINAL AUTHORITY FOR MATTERS OF BELIEF AND CONDUCT:

The statement of faith does not exhaust the extent of our beliefs. The Bible itself, as the inspired and infallible Word of God that speaks with final authority concerning truth, morality, and the proper conduct of mankind, is the sole and final source of all that we believe. For purposes of Foundation Church's faith, doctrine, practice, policy, and discipline, our Elder Council is Foundation Church's final interpretive authority on the Bible's meaning and application.

ARTICLE V SANCTITY OF LIFE

We believe that all human life is sacred and created by God in His image. Human life is of inestimable worth in all its dimensions, including pre-born babies, the aged, the physically or mentally challenged, and every other stage or condition from conception through natural death. We are therefore called to defend, protect, and value all human life. (Ps. 139)

ARTICLE VI CHURCH FACILITY USE POLICY

Section 1. PURPOSE STATEMENT

Foundation Church's facilities were provided through God's benevolence and by the sacrificial generosity of church members. FC desires that its facilities be used for the fellowship of the Body of Christ and to bring God glory. Although the facilities are not generally open to the public, we make

our facilities available to approved non-members as a witness to our faith, in a spirit of Christian charity, and as a means of demonstrating the Gospel of Jesus Christ in practice.

However, FC facility use will not be permitted to persons or groups holding, advancing or advocating beliefs or practices that conflict with the church's faith or moral teachings, which are summarized in, among other places, FC's Constitution and Bylaws. Nor may church facilities be used for activities that contradict, or are deemed inconsistent with FC's faith or moral teachings. The pastor and elders are the final decision makers concerning use of FC facilities.

This restricted facility use policy is necessary for two important reasons.

1. Foundation Church cannot in good conscience materially cooperate in activities or beliefs that are contrary to its faith. Allowing its facilities to be used for purposes that contradict the church's beliefs would be material cooperation with that activity, and would be a grave violation of FC's faith and religious practice. (2 Cor. 6:14, 1 Thess. 5:22)
2. It is very important that the church present a consistent message to the community, and that FC staff and members conscientiously maintain that message as part of their witness to the Gospel of Jesus Christ. Allowing facilities to be used by groups or persons who express beliefs or engage in practices contrary to the church's faith would have a severe, negative impact on the message that FC strives to promote. It could also cause confusion and scandal to church members and the community because they may reasonably perceive that by allowing use of our facilities, the church agrees with the beliefs or practices of the persons or groups using its facilities.

Therefore, in no event shall persons or groups who hold, advance, or advocate beliefs, or advance, advocate, or engage in practices that contradict the church's faith use any FC facility. Nor may church facilities be used in any way that contradicts the church's faith. This policy applies to all church facilities, regardless of whether the facilities are connected to the church's sanctuary, because the church sees all of its property, whether indoor or outdoor, as holy and set apart to worship God. (Col. 3:17)

Section 2. APPROVED USERS AND PRIORITY OF USE

The pastor and elders must approve all uses of church facilities. Generally, priority shall be given to church members, their immediate families, and organized groups that are part of the ministry, organization, or sponsored activities of the church. Church facilities and equipment will be made available to non-members or outside groups meeting the following qualifications:

1. Groups or persons requesting facility use must affirm that their beliefs, practices and planned uses of the facilities are consistent with FC's faith and practice.
2. The group or person seeking facility use must submit a signed "Church Facility Reservation Request and Agreement Form."
3. The group or person seeking facility use must be willing to take responsibility for the facilities and equipment used and must agree to abide by FC's rules of conduct for facility use, as stated below and as described in any additional instructions by church staff.

Section 3. FACILITY USE POLICIES

1. ALCOHOL POLICY: No alcohol may be served in church facilities, whether indoor or outdoor.
2. SMOKING POLICY: Smoking in any indoor church facility is prohibited.

3. **RESTROOM POLICY:** Restrooms labeled “Men” are for use by biological males. Restrooms labeled “Women” are for use by biological females. Restrooms labeled “Family” are available for family use or anyone with gender-identity issues.
4. **AUBSIVE OR FOUL LANGUAGE, VIOLENT BEHAVIOR AND DRUG OR ALCOHOL ABUSE POLICY:** Abusive or foul language, violent behavior, and drug or alcohol abuse are strictly prohibited on Foundation Church premises. Any person exhibiting such behavior will be required to leave the premises. If the whole group must be asked to leave the premises, all deposits and fees will be forfeited and no refunds will be made.
5. **RESERVATION POLICY:** A “Foundation Church Facility Reservation Request and Agreement” form must be completed and signed by the person or the group’s representative prior to reservation of church facilities.
6. **INSURANCE POLICY:** For all non-church-sponsored events, the group or person using the facilities must obtain liability insurance coverage in the amount listed in the Church Facility Use Guidelines. The user must sign a “Facility Use and an Indemnity and Hold Harmless Agreement.” Both items must be completed prior to the event. Any exceptions to this requirement will be identified in the Church Facility Use Guidelines.

ARTICLE VII MEETINGS

Section 1. ANNUAL MEETINGS

There shall be an annual meeting of FC within forty-five (45) days of the end of its fiscal year at its principal place of worship in Sapulpa, Oklahoma, at which time the Elder Council shall provide detailed presentations of the activities of FC during the previous year. They will discuss issues, events, and activities that are anticipated for the coming year. FC members shall have the opportunity to discuss issues they may consider important at this meeting. The Elder Council will moderate this “family meeting,” in order to provide explanations, answers, insights, and comments as appropriate. The Elder Council shall seek council, insights and guidance from the members of FC, carefully considering their opinions and desires. (See Article III, Section 7 for decisions and affirmations reserved to FC membership.) The Elder Council will publish the minutes of this meeting to the FC body.

Section 2. SPECIAL MEETINGS

Special meetings of FC membership shall be held at its principal place of worship in Sapulpa, Oklahoma. The Elder Council may call a special meeting. Also, the Lead Pastor, one third of the Elder Council membership, or forty (40) members of FC can cause a special meeting to be called by the Elder Council within thirty (30) days of such request.

Section 3. NOTICE

Notice of the time of these meetings (Annual and Special) shall be published in writing, in a church-wide publication, to allow each member an opportunity to reasonably know of the meeting. This official notice must be published at least ten (10) days prior to the meeting and not more than thirty (30) days before the date of such meeting. The notice shall state the time and date of the meeting. Notice of a Special Meeting shall state the purpose of the meeting.

Section 4. PRESIDING OFFICIAL

The Elder Council shall provide the moderation of all such meetings.

Section 5. VOTING

The Elder Council will present issues calling for a decision of the FC body. These decisions shall be voted upon by the "Qualified Church Members." A Qualified Church Member is any person at least 18 years of age who has been received into church membership and is not under the process of church discipline (Article II, Section 6). Each active Qualified Church Member shall be entitled to cast one vote. The method of seeking affirmation shall be determined by the moderator of the meeting.

Section 6. MATTERS TO BE CONSIDERED BY FC

The Elder Council will secure the affirmation (majority approval) of the FC body regarding:

- a. Selection, rebuke, or dismissal of the Lead Pastor;
- b. Selection, rebuke, or dismissal of deacons and elders;
- c. Selection of full-time pastoral staff members;
- d. Building and facilities—major decisions relating to FC properties;
- e. Financial budgets of FC;
- f. Amending the Bylaws (Article XIV, Section 1); and,
- g. Other matters in which the Elder Council feel led to seek the members' advice and counsel.

Section 7. QUORUM

A quorum for decision-making at a FC meeting shall consist of 40 "Qualified Church Members" attending such meetings or a number of Qualified Church Members equal to 10% of the people in FC's worship services on the Sunday morning just prior to the meeting, whichever is the greater number.

ARTICLE VIII ELDERS

Section 1. GENERAL SCOPE

FC seeks to be a New Testament church committed to the teachings of the Bible. No other authority or tradition is to guide the means, faith or structure of the Lord Jesus Christ's Church. The administrative and pastoral structure for a New Testament church is to utilize a plurality of leadership. FC will follow this scriptural example. To achieve this New Testament model, FC requires qualified men to serve as an Elder Council. These men must meet specific moral and spiritual qualifications before they serve (1 Tim. 3:1-7). They must be publicly installed into office (1 Tim. 5:22; Acts 14:23). They must be motivated and empowered by the Holy Spirit to do their work (Acts 20:28). After review, examination and appointment, as noted in Section 4 hereof, men affirmed by FC to serve as elders shall constitute the "Elder Council." To effectively perform their duties, the Elder Council needs the prayers, support (1 Tim. 5:17-18) and agreement of members of FC (Heb. 13:17). FC is called upon to honor their Elder Council and to protect them against false accusations (1 Tim. 5:19). Finally, if an elder falls into sin, and continues in sin, he must be publicly rebuked (1 Tim. 5:20).

Section 2. RESPONSIBILITIES

The Elder Council shall:

- a. **feed the flock** (1 Tim. 3:2; 5:17; 1 Thess. 5:12; Titus 1:9),
- b. **provide leadership to the flock** (Acts 20:28; 1 Thess. 5:12; Heb. 13:17),
in practical matters (Acts 6:1-6; 11:29-30),
in matters of doctrine (Acts 15; 16:4), and

- in matters of discipline and character (Heb. 13:17);
- c. lovingly care for the flock** (James 5:14-15; Acts 20:35; Heb. 13:17); and,
- d. protect the flock** (1 Pet. 5:2-3; Acts 20:28).

Section 3. QUALIFICATIONS

Each elder must have a “calling” from God to this office. The qualifications of an elder are described in 1 Tim. 3:1-7 and Titus 1:6-9. He must be:

- a.** Blameless as a steward of God; above reproach (1 Tim. 3:2; Titus 1:6-7);
- b.** Husband of one wife; a one-woman man (1 Tim. 3:2; Titus 1:6);
- c.** The wife must be reverent, not a slanderer, temperate, faithful in all things (1 Timothy 3:11)
- d.** Temperate, sober, vigilant (1 Tim. 3:2);
- e.** Sober-minded, prudent (1 Tim. 3:2; Titus 1:8);
- f.** Of good behavior; orderly, respectable (1 Tim. 3:2);
- g.** Given to hospitality (1 Tim. 3:2; Titus 1:8);
- h.** Apt to teach; able to teach; able to exhort believers and refute false teaching (1 Tim. 3:2; Titus 1:9);
- i.** Not given to much wine (1 Tim. 3:3; Titus 1:7);
- j.** Not violent; not pugnacious (1 Tim. 3:3; Titus 1:7);
- k.** Patient, moderate, forbearing, gentle (1 Tim. 3:3);
- l.** Not a brawler; uncontentious; not soon angry or quick-tempered (1 Tim. 3:3; Titus 1:7);
- m.** Not covetous; not a lover of money; not greedy of base gain (1 Tim. 3:3; Titus 1:7);
- n.** Manages his own house well. His children are faithful, not accused of rebellion to God (1Tim. 3:4; Titus 1:7);
- o.** Not a novice; not a new convert (1 Tim. 3:6);
- p.** Has a good report or reputation with people outside the church (1 Tim. 3:7);
- q.** Not self-willed (Titus 1:7);
- r.** Lover of what is good (Titus 1:8);
- s.** Just, fair (Titus 1:8);
- t.** Holy, devout (Titus 1:8); and,
- u.** Self-controlled (Titus 1:8).

(Further guidance for an expanded understanding of the qualifications may be found in the Elders Qualifications Statement.)

Section 4. SELECTION

- a.** The Elder Council shall seek the Lord’s leadership regarding the number of additional elders needed to minister at FC. While the Bible does not give instruction as to the number of elders a church should have, it is recognized that there must be a plurality. A determination of the need for additional elders should be based upon the work of God in the FC family and the availability of those with a God-given desire to serve as an elder.
- b.** Men who aspire to be elders, due to the calling of God, should express that desire to an elder or the Lead Pastor of FC. (1 Tim. 3:1)
- c.** A potential elder will be examined by the Elder Council in order to discover his calling and qualifications. If the Elder Council and the man, in search of God’s will for his life in this matter, are of like mind as to his calling, the Elder Council shall recommend him to the FC body to be affirmed as an elder. The appointment of a man to serve as an elder is a solemn and serious matter (1 Tim. 5:21-22). Therefore, the Elder Council shall earnestly, without any haste, bias or partiality, seek God’s will with regard to the potential elder’s appointment to the Elder Council.

- d. In a Special Meeting of FC (Article III, Section 2), the Elder Council shall recommend the potential elder to FC. A three-fourths (75%) vote of the Qualified Church Members in attendance is required for affirmation of the recommendation. (1 Timothy 5:21, 22, 24, 25)

Section 5. ELDER COUNCIL

Reconstitution of Elders. In the event that it is necessary to reconstitute the Elder Council, an Elder Examination Team shall be recommended to FC by the Deacon leadership in a Special Meeting (Article III, Section 2) for FC's determination whether to affirm the recommended individuals. Five individuals who are FC members in good standing shall be recommended. They are to be qualified to research and review the scriptural teachings on church elders and prayerfully recommend elders to FC. Once FC has affirmed five elders to the reconstituted Elder Council, the Elder Examination Team shall be dissolved. The process in subsection "b" in the [Appendix](#) shall be followed to reconstitute the Elder Council, if and when required.

Section 6. TERM OF OFFICE

An elder, called by God, shall serve until such time as God calls him to other service and away from the office of Elder. Additionally, by the improper actions of an elder, he can be removed from office (Article IV, Section 10).

Section 7. NUMBER OF ELDERS

As God calls men to serve in this office of Elder, they shall be considered, examined, and utilized in service. The number of elders is not determined; it is a matter of the revealed will of God. The Bible indicates a plurality of leadership, which implies more than one leader.

Section 8. AUTHORITY AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The Elder Council shall have the authority and responsibility to oversee the spiritual and administrative activities of FC unless otherwise reserved to the FC body elsewhere in these Bylaws. This authority is able to be delegated by the Elder Council. In summary, the Elder Council is to shepherd the "flock" of God (1 Peter 5:1-5). It is recognized by FC and Elder Council that there is only one Lord and Master in God's Church: the Lord Jesus Christ. All others are His servants. (Philippians 2:5-11)

Section 9. TRAINING AND EDUCATION

There are no specific requirements for formal training or education to be an elder. Becoming an elder is a matter of God's preparation of the man and His call to the place of service.

Section 10. DISCIPLINE AND REMOVAL

Any elder may be removed from office if he becomes incapacitated, spiritually unqualified or his inability to serve is established in the minds of the remainder of the Elder Council. FC has the right to rebuke an elder due to a continuing sin in his life, based upon the procedure established in 1 Timothy 5:19-20. FC also has the right to remove the Elder Council in a Special Meeting (Article III, Section 2), with a majority vote of the Qualified Church Members voting. The Lead Pastor is not automatically removed with the removal of the Elder Council.

Section 11. MEETINGS AND ORGANIZATION

The Elder Council shall establish written policies and procedures for the conducting of their activities. All meetings shall have written or otherwise recorded minutes of the matters considered. These minutes shall become a part of the permanent records of the Elder Council.

Section 12. TRUSTEES

The Elder Council shall function as the trustees of FC. They manage FC property, both real and personal, as fiduciaries. They shall represent FC in all of its legal matters. Other FC members may be appointed by the Elder Council to be Trustees as necessary.

ARTICLE IX MINISTRY TEAMS

Section 1. GENERAL

FC is committed to accomplishing its stated goals through the ministry of its members. To accomplish these goals, FC is determined to organize into "Teams" to be more effective. Teams are focused upon accomplishing a stated or determined goal, or set of goals, to fulfill the ministry that God has called those participating to do.

Section 2. EMPOWERMENT

Teams organize and function under policies and procedures established by the Elder Council.

Section 3. MINISTRY

Teams perform the ministry best when it is performed by a plurality. Teams are the basic organizing units of FC to accomplish its goals within the guidelines of our Purpose Statement. Teams are not policy-setting entities. Rather, they are the "hands and feet" of the body of Christ. These teams devise and carry out the actions to further determine FC ministries. FC policies and procedures provide a framework within which teams successfully operate.

Section 4. STRUCTURE

Depending upon FC membership participation in a ministry, the team may be in a leadership role for the ministry, or the team may be FC members, who comprise all of the participants in that FC ministry. Team size and function shall meet the needs of its ministry.

Section 5. DISSOLUTION

Teams may be dissolved upon a determination of the Elder Council.

ARTICLE X DEACONS

Section 1. GENERAL SCOPE

Deacons are the servant-ministers of the church. Their purpose is to relieve the elders of the multitude of practical duties of caring for the flock. Deacons are to give their primary attention toward caring for the congregation's physical welfare. Deacons have the honor of modeling, for the local church and the lost world, God's compassion, kindness, mercy, and love. As the church compassionately cares for people's needs, the world sees a visible display of Christ's love, which will draw some people to the Savior. Deacons are to be an example of commitment, unity, and harmony in their service.

Section 2. DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The deacons are effectively and carefully to administer the church's charitable activities. They are the collectors of funds, the distributors of relief and agents of mercy. They help the poor, the jobless, the sick, the widowed, the elderly, the homeless, the shut-in, and the disabled. They comfort, protect, encourage people, and help to meet their needs. Although they do in many ways meet spiritual needs of those whom they serve, their primary service is related to physical needs. They also facilitate other activities that relate to church operations that relate to administration and church building and grounds. Specific duties include, but are not limited to:

- a.** Service to the physical needs of the membership exhibiting the love and compassion of Christ. Specific attention is to be given to widows and widowers, the needy, and the aged. Collection and administration of the benevolent fund is included.
- b.** Assist the Elder Council in the preparation and serving of the Lord's Supper to the membership.
- c.** Other such duties and responsibilities as determined by the deacons and/or the Elder Council.

Section 3. QUALIFICATIONS

Deacons must be members in good standing of FC and possess the qualifications stated in I Timothy 3:8-10, 12-13. These qualifications are listed below:

- a. A man of dignity. (1 Timothy 3:8)
 - b. Not double-tongued. (1 Timothy 3:8)
 - c. Not addicted to much wine. (1 Timothy 3:8)
 - d. Not fond of sordid gain. (1 Timothy 3:8)
 - e. Holding to the mystery of the faith with a clear conscience. (1 Timothy 3:9)
 - f. Tested (1 Timothy 3:10)
 - g. Beyond reproach. (1 Timothy 3:10)
 - h. The wife must be reverent, not slanderers, temperate, faithful in all things (1 Timothy 3:11)
 - i. Husbands of only one wife. (1 Timothy 3:12)
 - j. Good managers of their children and their own households. (1 Timothy 3:12)
- (Additional guidance on deacon's qualifications is found in the Deacon Qualification Statement.)*

Section 4. SELECTION

Nominations will be made by the membership, annually, from those members in good standing, who are perceived to meet the qualification of deacon and have proved they have a heart to serve others. The Deacon Coordination Team, or their designee will review these nominees. They or their designee will recommend to the Elder Council those whom they have examined and find to be qualified and who confirm that they sense the Lord's calling to serve as a deacon.

Section 5. TRANSITION PERIOD

The Deacons chosen will then serve for a trial period of six months. At the end of this time, the DCT or their designee and the Elder Council will decide if they are to be permanently installed as a Deacon. If they are, then a Special Meeting (Article III, Section 2) will be called by the Elder Council, for the purpose of affirming the deacon candidates. Individual deacon candidates will be affirmed to serve by a three-fourths majority (75%) vote of all Qualified Church Members voting.

Section 6. ORDINATION

Deacon candidates, who have been affirmed, but have not previously been ordained in a Southern Baptist Church, shall be ordained (set apart for service) by the Elder Council in the presence of the membership. Affirmed deacon candidates will not serve as an active deacon until they have been ordained.

Section 7. TERM OF OFFICE

The initial term of office of deacon shall be one year. Consecutive terms are acceptable and encouraged, for those who are serving well as deacons. At the completion of their one-year term of service, with the recommendation of the Deacon Coordination Team and the deacon's affirmation that God's leading is for them to continue serving as an active deacon, the Deacon Coordination Team will present the names of those deacons, whom they recommend to continue to serve, to the Elder Council for concurrence. Deacons recommended and approved for continuance of active service will not require reaffirmation by a vote of the membership. Following any lapse of service by a deacon, the procedures stated in Section 4 will be followed for return to active service.

Section 8. NUMBER OF DEACONS

The number of active deacons will be as determined by the Deacon Coordination Team with the concurrence of the Elder Council.

Section 9. TRAINING AND EDUCATION

No special education or training is required to serve as a deacon. The deacon must have a heart to serve others and be committed to work together with the other deacons in fulfilling the deacon ministry.

Section 10. DISCIPLINE AND REMOVAL

A deacon may be removed from active service upon failure to meet the qualifications stated in Section 3 or for reasons as stated in Article IV, Section 10, Discipline and Removal. Removal of a deacon from active service other than by completion of a term of service or resignation shall be by action of the Elder Council at the recommendation of the Deacon Coordination Team.

Section 11. MEETINGS AND ORGANIZATION

Deacons shall meet regularly for prayer, Bible study and discussion of the fulfillment of the duties and responsibilities of deacons. Frequency of meetings shall be as determined by the Deacon Coordination Team. The Deacon Coordination Team or their designee shall prepare written policies and procedures for submission to the Elder Council for concurrence. These shall be submitted to the Elder Council within one year from the adoption of these Bylaws.

ARTICLE XI THE LEAD PASTOR

Section 1. SELECTION

In the event that Foundation Church is without its Lead Pastor, the Elder Council will act as a search group to seek the Lord's will regarding the Lead Pastor. When they are unanimous in their recognition of God's leadership toward a candidate, they will seek the affirmation of the members of FC in a Special Meeting (Article III, Section 2). A vote of at least three-fourths (75%) majority of all Qualified Church Members voting is required to call a Lead Pastor (Ephesians 4:11).

Section 2. Term of Office

He shall remain in office an indefinite period of time subject to the following reservation: If the Elder Council is in unanimous agreement (excluding the Lead Pastor) with the decision to remove the Lead Pastor from his position, they have the authority to dismiss the Lead Pastor, through the affirmation of a majority vote of FC, in Special Meeting (Article III, Section 2). Severance compensation shall be determined by the Elder Council. The Lead Pastor shall give notice of his resignation to FC, after having informed the Elder Council.

Section 3. Duties

In addition to his shepherding role, as an elder the Lead Pastor's primary responsibility is the ministry of the Word and prayer, in order to provide strategic leadership and vision to the body. He is called to help believers who are maturing in their faith, through insightful and accurate presentation of biblical truths, equipping them to be the true "ministers" of the body. Due to these primary roles, the ministry of the Word and his leadership, the Lead Pastor will need to prioritize his time, focusing upon these duties first. (Eph. 4:11-12) As shepherds of the flock, the elders are responsible to appoint other leaders, who possess complimentary spiritual gifts, to undertake areas and aspects of the ministry that cannot be fulfilled by the Lead Pastor.

ARTICLE XII STAFF

The Lead Pastor will select, supervise, and evaluate all staff members in accordance with the FC personnel manual. All staff are subject to Foundation Church's Statement of Faith (Article X, Sections 1).

ARTICLE XIII RECEIPT, INVESTMENT, AND DISBURSEMENT OF FUNDS

Section 1. RECEIPT OF MONEY

FC shall receive all monies or other properties transferred to it for the purposes that are consistent with God's Word. The Elder Council shall determine whether to accept such money or property.

Section 2. MANAGEMENT OF FUNDS

The Elder Council shall manage and distribute any funds or property only for the benefit of FC consistent with the expressed purposes of FC.

Section 3. REVIEW OF FINANCIAL MATTERS

The Elder Council shall require that an annual review of FC's financial records be conducted by an independent accounting firm (when budget funding is available).

ARTICLE XIV COMPENSATION

Any person receiving compensation directly or indirectly from FC shall not be in a position to determine the nature or amount of such compensation or remuneration.

ARTICLE XV RECORDS AND REPORTS

Section 1. RECORDS

FC shall maintain adequate and correct accounts, books, and records of its business and properties. All such accounts, books, and records shall be kept at its principal place of business in Sapulpa, Oklahoma. The Elder Council shall oversee the adequacy and accuracy of the books and records. The location of the principal place of business of FC may be changed from time to time as determined by the Elder Council.

Section 2. INSPECTION OF BOOKS AND RECORDS

Every member shall have the absolute right, at any reasonable time, to inspect all accounts, book, and records (with the exception of personnel and contribution records) and the physical properties of FC. The Elder Council, if necessary to maintain good order, may restrict and limit the number of inspections or establish an orderly manner for such to be conducted. But in no event shall a reasonable inspection of the books and records be denied to a member.

ARTICLE XVI INDEMNIFICATION OF ELDERS

The elders acting together in the Elder Council shall be indemnified and held harmless for actions consistent with the purpose and vision of FC. FC shall be primarily responsible for liability arising from such actions or inaction of the Elder Council. Reasonable expenses to litigate or resolve issues

otherwise arising from the Elder Council's performance of its duties and responsibilities shall be paid by FC. At the election of the Elder Council, this same indemnification shall extend to all individuals performing within the scope of their duties and responsibilities for the benefit of FC.

ARTICLE XVII DISSOLUTION

Upon dissolution of FC, the Elder Council shall cause the assets herein to be distributed to a Southern Baptist Association or another Southern Baptist church.

ARTICLE XVIII AMENDMENTS

Section 1. AMENDMENT PROCESS

These Bylaws may be amended and new and additional Bylaws may be made at any time by the Elder Council, with affirmation of such change, as reflected by a (75%) majority vote of the Qualified Church Members voting.

Section 2. RECORD OF AMENDMENTS

Whenever an amendment or new Bylaw is adopted, it shall be copied into the books and records of FC, with the original Bylaws. If any Bylaw is repealed or amended, the fact of repeal or amendment, along with the date of the meeting at which the repeal or amendment was confirmed, by FC, shall be stated in FC's books and records with the Bylaws and the repealed or amended provision, clearly marked as repealed or amended, in the original Bylaws.

APPENDIX

INITIAL ELDER COUNCIL—(Article VIII, Section 5.)

- a. Initial Elders.** Since the PLT is in place and the church has voted and approved these leaders to guide and direct the church, each leader will seek the Lord to see if they aspire to the position, are qualified (are working on the qualifications as outlined), and could function as a team member and give overall leadership to the church. Each candidate will first meet with the Lead Pastor to go over their calling to the position and their qualifications and experiences. Going forward in this process, each candidate and his wife will interview with the Lead Pastor and the Lead Pastor's wife. An interviewing process will be set with questions regarding the husband's role in the marriage and the family, and other qualifications outlined in I Timothy 3 and Titus 1. After the candidate is interviewed and determined to be qualified to serve as an elder, they will then have an opportunity to serve for a trial period of six months. At the end of this time, the Lead Pastor and each candidate will decide if they are to be permanently installed as an elder. If so, the PLT will make a recommendation to FC in a Special Meeting (Article III, Section 2) for FC to affirm the elder candidates and to establish the Elder Council, and thereafter dissolving the PLT. Upon FC's affirmation of the candidates, there will be a public commissioning (ordination) of the elder welcoming him into his official position.

The elders chosen will then comprise the Elder Council and will have an opportunity to raise up an Elder Examination Team or have the Lead Pastor go through the same process with the new elder candidates.

- b. Elder Examination Team.** When the Elder Examination Team has been eventually formed to process new elder candidates and reaches a unanimous agreement that the new candidates are qualified, the Elder Council will seek the affirmation of FC in a Special Meeting. A three-fourths (75%) affirmative vote of the Qualified Church Members attending the Special Meeting is required to affirm a person to be an elder. These elders will be added to the Elder Council and shall begin the process prescribed in Article IV, Section 4, SELECTION, seeking to appoint additional elders as God directs. (It is understood that much of this work may be performed in preparation for the possible adoption of these Bylaws to avoid an inordinate delay in the establishment of the Elders Council. In that case, the Elder Examination Team may be presented with the Bylaws.)