

**Proposed  
CONSTITUTION**

**First Baptist Church of  
Winder, Inc.**

**Winder, Georgia**

**OUTLINE OF THE CONSTITUTION**

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## THE CONSTITUTION OF THE CHURCH

### PREAMBLE

For the more certain preservation and security of the principles of our faith, and to the end that this organization may be governed in an orderly manner consistent with the general tenets common among the Baptist people, and for the purpose of preserving the liberties inherent in each individual member and the freedom of action of this organization with respect to its relation to other churches, we do declare and establish this constitution.

### ARTICLE I NAME

The legal name of this organization shall be the First Baptist Church of Winder, Inc. (hereinafter the "Church"), but shall be commonly referred to as the First Baptist Church of Winder or Winder First Baptist Church. The Church address is 625 Jefferson Highway, Winder, Georgia 30680 or as may be designated by the Church.

### ARTICLE II VISION

Our vision is to proclaim Christ to all who will hear, create community amongst those who gather at First Baptist Church of Winder, and to impact our culture for the Kingdom of God.

### ARTICLE III MEMBERSHIP

The membership of this Church shall consist of persons who confess faith in Jesus Christ as their personal Savior and who commit themselves to faithful discipleship to Christ as Lord, who have been baptized by immersion, who express general agreement with the purposes and beliefs of the church as described in its Constitution, and who are received into membership by an affirmative vote of the Church according to the procedures set forth in the Bylaws.

### ARTICLE IV BELIEFS

#### 4.01 PRIMARY ARTICLE OF FAITH

The Scriptures of the Old and New Testament were given by inspiration of God, and are the only sufficient, certain, and authoritative standard by which all human conduct, beliefs and religious opinions are to be tried. The criterion by which the Scriptures are to be interpreted is Jesus Christ.

#### 4.02 ACCEPTED BELIEFS

This body believes and holds to the statement of faith set forth in "The Baptist Faith and Message" (<http://www.sbc.net/bfm2000/bfm2000.asp>) adopted by the Southern Baptist Convention in 1925, reaffirmed in the 1963 Convention, and revised in the 1998 and the 2000 Conventions. The same is hereby adopted and incorporated by reference into this Constitution. A copy of such statement of faith will be kept on file in the church office with this Constitution and will be available to any member upon request. Additionally, the Church will work to keep

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the Baptist Faith and Message conspicuously posted at the Church, such as on the website or the latest media outlet.

#### **4.03 STATEMENT OF BAPTIST IDEALS**

##### **A. Authority:**

1. *Christ as Lord.* The ultimate source of authority is Jesus Christ the Lord, and every area of life is to be subject to His Lordship.
2. *The Scriptures.* The Bible as the inspired revelation of God's will and way, made full and complete in the life and teachings of Christ, is the authoritative rule of faith and practice.
3. *The Holy Spirit.* The Holy Spirit is God actively revealing Himself and His will to man. He therefore interprets and confirms the voice of divine authority.

##### **B. The Individual:**

1. *Worth.* Every individual is created in the image of God and therefore merits respect and consideration as a person of infinite dignity and worth.
2. *Competence.* Each person is competent under God to make his or her own moral and religious decisions and is responsible to God in all matters of moral and religious duty.
3. *Freedom.* Every person is free under God in all matters of conscience and has the right to embrace or reject religion and to witness to his or her personal beliefs, always with proper regard for the rights of other persons.

##### **C. The Christian Life:**

1. *Salvation by Grace.* Salvation from sin is the free gift of God through Jesus Christ conditioned only upon trust in and commitment to Christ the Lord.
2. *The Demands of Discipleship.* The demands of Christian discipleship, based on the recognition of the Lordship of Christ, relate to the whole of life and call for full obedience and complete devotion.
3. *The Priesthood of the Believer.* Each Christian, having direct access to God through Christ, is his or her own priest and is also under obligation to become a priest for Christ on behalf of other persons.
4. *The Christian and His Home.* The home is basic in God's purpose for human well-being, and the development of Christian family life is a supreme concern of all believers in Christ.
5. *The Christian as a Citizen.* The Christian is a citizen of two worlds – the kingdom of God and the State – and is responsible to obey the law of the land as well as the higher law of God provided the two do not conflict. In the event of conflict, God's law prevails.

#### **D. The Church:**

1. *Nature.* The Church, in its inclusive sense, is the fellowship of persons redeemed by Christ and made one in the family of God. The Church, in its local sense, is a fellowship of baptized believers, voluntarily banded together for worship, nurture and service.
2. *Membership.* Membership in the Church is a privilege properly extended only to regenerated persons who voluntarily accept baptism and commit themselves to faithful discipleship in the body of Christ.
3. *Ordinances.* Baptism and the Lord's Supper, the two ordinances of the Church, are symbolic of redemption, but their observance involves spiritual realities in personal Christian experience.
4. *Government.* A Church is an autonomous body, subject only to Christ, its Head. Its democratic government properly reflects the equality and responsibility of believers under the Lordship of Christ.
5. *Relation to the State.* Church and State are both ordained of God and are answerable to Him. They should remain separate, but they are under the obligation of mutual recognition and reinforcement as each seeks to fulfill its divine function.
6. *Relation to the World.* The Church is to be responsible in the world; its mission is to the world; but its character and ministry are not to be of the world.

#### **E. The Church's Continuing Task:**

1. *Centrality of the Individual.* The individual's worth, needs, moral freedom and potential for Christ have primary consideration in the life and work of the Church.
2. *Worship.* Worship, which involves an experience of communion with the living and holy God, calls for an emphasis on reverence and orderliness, on confession and humility and on an awareness of the holiness and majesty and grace and purpose of God.
3. *The Christian Ministry.* Every Christian is under obligation to minister or to serve with complete self-giving, but God in His wisdom calls many persons in a unique way to dedicate their lives to a full-time church-related ministry.
4. *Evangelism.* Evangelism, which is primary in the mission of the church and the vocation of every Christian, is the proclamation of God's judgment and grace in Jesus Christ and the call to accept and follow Him as Lord.
5. *Missions.* Missions seek the extension of God's redemptive purpose in all the world through evangelism, education, and Christian service and calls for the utmost dedication on the part of Christians to this task.
6. *Stewardship.* Christian stewardship conceives the whole of life as a sacred trust from God and requires the responsible use of life, time, talents, and substance-personal and corporate-in the service of Christ.
7. *Teaching and Training.* The nature of Christian faith and Christian experience and the nature and needs of persons make teaching and training imperative.

8. *Christian Education.* Christian education grows out of the relation of faith and reason and calls for academic excellence and freedom that are both real and responsible.
9. *Self-Criticism.* The Church, if it is to remain healthy and fruitful, must accept the responsibility of constructive self-criticism.

**ARTICLE V  
CHARACTER**

**5.01 POLITY**

The government of this Church is vested in the body of believers who compose it. It is subject to the control of no other ecclesiastical body or secular organization.

**5.02 RELATIONSHIPS**

The Church recognizes and accepts the obligations of mutual counsel and cooperation with other churches and religious groups. Consistent with the principle of voluntary cooperation, the Church maintains relationship with the churches of the Appalachian Baptist Association, the Georgia Baptist Mission Board, and the Southern Baptist Convention.

**5.03 DOCTRINE AND AUTHORITY**

The Church receives the Scriptures as its authority in all matters of faith and practice. The Accepted Beliefs and Ideals set forth in **Article IV** express common religious convictions, drawn from the Scriptures, and are guides in interpretation.

**ARTICLE VI  
AMENDMENTS**

This Constitution may be amended by three-fourths vote of the members present and voting at a Special Conference of the Church, said proposed amendment having been laid before the Church in writing at the church office and on the church website or current most accessible medium not less than one month before the time of the proposed action, and announced from the pulpit on the two consecutive Sundays prior to the Sunday of the vote.

Prior to any action by the Church, all proposed amendments to the Constitution shall be forwarded to the Active Deacon Body who shall appoint an ad hoc team to review the proposed amendment. The ad hoc team shall review and ensure that the proposed amendment actually applies to the Constitution and Bylaws, and should coordinate with other committees and teams affected by the proposed amendment prior to the submission of their recommendation to the Active Deacon Body for action.