



**BYLAWS  
OF  
FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH, ICARD, INC.  
A Nonprofit Corporation**

*Adopted December 19, 2021  
Amended December 18, 2022  
Amended October 22, 2023*

1  
2  
3 **BYLAWS**  
4 **OF**  
5 **FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH, ICARD, INC.**  
6 **A Nonprofit Corporation**

7 Subject to its Articles of Incorporation (the “Articles”), the affairs of the First Baptist Church,  
8 Icard, Inc. (the “Church”) shall be governed by the following Bylaws (“Bylaws”):

9 **I. Mission, Vision, & Core Values**

- 10 A. Mission. Because He first loved us, we will show our good Father’s perfect love, with the  
11 message of the Gospel, in the hard places of the world, to the glory of God.
- 12 B. Vision. To reach people in Burke County, the Unifour Region, North Carolina, North America,  
13 and globally with the Gospel of Christ.
- 14 C. Core Values.
- 15 a. Gospel Driven
  - 16 b. Christ Exalting
  - 17 c. Biblically Faithful
  - 18 d. Christ Ruled
  - 19 e. Congregationally Governed
  - 20 f. Elder Led
  - 21 g. Deacon Served
  - 22 h. Missions Sending
  - 23 i. Community Engaged

24 **II. Meetings**

- 25 A. Time and Place.
- 26 1. Worship. Unless providentially hindered, the church shall gather each Sunday for  
27 the purpose of worship. The Sunday Morning Worship Service may only be  
28 canceled or the time altered by a simple majority vote of the Board of Elders.
  - 29 2. Business. The Church shall hold its meetings during or immediately after the  
30 regular Sunday Morning Worship Service. If the church has two designated  
31 Sunday Morning Worship Service times, the meeting of the Church shall be held  
32 between the two services.
- 33
- 34 B. Notice. Whenever a members’ meeting is called, notice of agenda items and  
35 recommendations to be acted upon, shall be given to members no less than two (2)  
36 weeks prior to a meeting. Twenty (20) percent of members shall constitute a quorum of  
37 the membership for the transaction of business. All recommendations requiring a two-  
38 thirds approval will be done by secret ballot. Notification of business meetings shall be  
39 given in any two of the following manners, which shall be deemed to be a reasonable  
40 method of calling a business meeting:
- 41 1. Distribution of written material to the Church in attendance during a Sunday  
42 Morning Worship Service
  - 43

Adopted December 19, 2021 ~ Amended December 18, 2022; October 22, 2023; March 23, 2024

2. Oral announcement to the Church during a Sunday Morning Worship Service
3. Announcement of the meeting through social media
4. Delivery by United States mail to each active member identified on the membership roll

C. Waiver of Notice. In the event a necessity or urgent need arises, the two (2) week notice could be waived by a two-thirds vote of at least 40% of the Church's membership present during a Sunday Morning Worship Service. The Moderator will state the purpose of the meeting and call for a vote to waive the two-week notice, followed by the business being enacted.

D. Parliamentary Procedures. Robert's Rules of Order is adopted as the standard for parliamentary rules of procedure for all regular and called members' meetings of the Church. Effort will be made to follow the Robert's Rules of Order standards in parliamentary procedures. However, where inconsistent with these bylaws, the bylaws shall apply.

### **III. Members**

In addition to those requirements of church membership in the Articles,

- A. Responsibilities of Membership. The responsibilities of membership are described in the membership covenant. (See Appendix A; also, members serving in elected and appointed positions in the church voluntarily submit themselves to the Leadership Code of Conduct found in Appendix C)
- B. Voting Rights of Members. Active members age 13 and older shall have the right to vote on matters that come before the church in a business meeting. Any member under church discipline is not allowed to vote or speak at a meeting in which the member's continued church membership is being considered (See Appendix B). Proxy voting is prohibited.
  - a. The following matters must be voted upon by the active membership of the church. These issues require a simple majority vote.
    - i. the annual budget of the church
    - ii. the election of Boards and Teams as prescribed in the Bylaws.
  - b. The following items must also be voted upon by the church. These items require a two-thirds majority vote and will be done by secret ballot, which will be counted by two of the Deacons assigned by the moderator.
    - i. The disposition of all assets of the Church over \$5,000
    - ii. The merger or dissolution of the Church
    - iii. The acquisition of real property and related indebtedness
    - iv. Amendments to the Articles of Incorporation or Bylaws of the Church
    - v. Adoption of operational policies and guidelines
    - vi. The calling of all staff
    - vii. Termination of staff
- C. Termination of Membership. Members shall be removed from the Church roll by the Elders for the following reasons:
  - a. Death

- b. Transfer of membership to another church of like faith and practice
- c. By written request of the member
- d. Chronic absenteeism as outlined in the Articles
- e. Church Discipline. If a member's life and conduct are not in accordance with the membership covenant, the church, following the procedures outlined in Matthew 18:15-17, may upon a majority ballot vote, terminate the membership. (This procedure is outlined in Appendix B)

D. Restoration of Members. A member dismissed by the Church may be restored by the Church according to the spirit of 2 Corinthians 2:7-8 and 1 Thessalonians 5:14-15. When his lifestyle and behavior is assessed by the Elders to be in accordance with the membership covenant, the Elders may request of the Church that the member be restored.

#### IV. Leaders

The leadership structure of the Church is based upon the nature of the Church as revealed in the Scriptures. As Baptists, we affirm congregational polity. As a congregationally governed church, we submit to the leadership of godly Elders (pastors) and Deacons. The visionary leadership of the church is placed upon the Elders. All Elders and Deacons agree to abide by the Leadership Code of Conduct (Appendix C) by their acceptance of their role.

A. **The Board of Elders.** Subject to the will of the Church, the Elders will oversee the preaching and teaching ministry of the church and set the vision for the church's ministry. The Elders shall take particular responsibility to examine and instruct prospective members, examine and recommend all prospective candidates for offices and positions, oversee the work of the Deacons and appointed church agents and committees, conduct worship services, administer the ordinances of baptism and communion, equip the membership for the work of the ministry, encourage sound doctrine and practice, admonish and correct error, oversee the process of church discipline, coordinate and promote the ministries of the church, and mobilize the church for world missions. Further, the Elders should seek to ensure that all who minister the Word to the Church, including outside speakers, affirm our fundamental gospel convictions and do not teach our church anything contrary to the Statement of Faith and additional statements of belief in the bylaws. The Elders shall be comprised of not less than six men who satisfy the qualifications for the office of Elder set forth in 1 Timothy 3:1-7 and Titus 1: 6-9. No Elder shall hold the office of Deacon during his tenure.

- a. Lead Pastor. The Lead Pastor will be an Elder and shall be recognized by the church as particularly gifted and called to the full-time ministry of preaching and teaching.
  - i. Requirements. The requirements for this office are found in 1 Timothy 3:1-7 and Titus 1:7-9. The Lead Pastor shall be an ordained male and once accepting the call to the Church shall request church membership. The Lead Pastor shall be an ordained Southern Baptist Minister who affirms the Doctrinal Statement found in the Statement of Faith and additional statements of belief in the bylaws. The Church and Lead Pastor shall enter into an employment covenant at the time of his calling.
  - ii. Responsibilities. Though this list is not exhaustive, the Lead Pastor will be responsible and have oversight for the:

1. Preaching, teaching of the Word, and devoting to prayer and Bible study
  2. Chairing the Board of Elders
  3. Counseling
  4. Overseeing the fulfillment of ministry responsibilities of the Church staff
  5. Overseeing all ministries of the church, including weddings and funerals
  6. Delegating responsibilities to other ministry leaders
  7. Leading and modeling pastoral care
- iii. Calling. Upon the occurrence of a vacancy in the role of the Lead Pastor, the Church shall initiate procedures leading to the choosing of a Lead Pastor Search Team (LPST), who will be charged with the process of screening and nominating a new Lead Pastor. The Elders and Deacons will receive open nominations from the Church for the LPST members. These names will be prayed over, vetted, and a team will be formed consisting of one Elder, one Deacon, and three names given by the Church. The LPST will only bring one name to the church to be considered at any one time.
  - iv. Evaluation. The Lead Pastor Evaluation Team will consist of one non-staff Elder and the chairs from the Deacons, Trustees, Finance, and Personnel Teams. The Evaluation Team will conduct an annual evaluation in November that will include the evaluation of the Lead Pastor, setting of the pastor salary, and state of the church. The summary will be delivered in an annual report, during the Fourth Quarter Business Meeting, to the Church.
  - v. Term. The Lead Pastor shall continue to serve as Lead Pastor until the relationship is ended either by resignation or termination. In the case of termination, a two-thirds affirmative vote of the active church members present and voting at a special meeting for such purpose must be received. All voting regarding the issue of termination shall be by secret ballot.
  - vi. Vacancy. When the role of Lead Pastor is vacant, the Elders will have charge of the pulpit ministry of the church. The remaining Elders will select a chairman by majority vote.
- b. Associate Pastors
    - i. Requirements. The requirements for this office are found in 1 Timothy 3:1-7 and Titus 1:7-9. An Associate Pastor shall be an ordained male and once accepting the call to the Church shall request church membership. The Associate Pastor shall be an ordained Southern Baptist Minister who affirms the Doctrinal Statement found in the Statement of Faith and additional statements of belief in the bylaws. The Church and Associate Pastor shall enter into an employment covenant at the time of his calling.
    - ii. Responsibilities. The Associate Pastor's responsibilities shall be delineated in his job description developed by the Personnel Team and approved by the Church.
  - c. Lay Elders
    - i. Requirements. The Elders shall be comprised of men who are members of the church and who satisfy the qualifications for the office of Elder set

1           forth in 1 Timothy 3: 1–7 and Titus 1: 6–9. No Elder shall hold the office  
2 of Deacon during his tenure.

- 3           ii. Calling. The church shall recognize men gifted and willing to serve in this  
4 calling. These men shall be received as gifts of Christ to His church and  
5 set apart as Elders. The church will strive to always maintain at least six  
6 Elders on the Elder Board. Church members may recommend men to  
7 serve on the Elder Board at any time and the Elders should prayerful  
8 consider asking other men to join the Elder Board as they see God gifting  
9 men for this calling. The church shall vote to affirm the addition of Elders.  
10 Responsibilities.

- 11           1. Teach. An Elder must be “an able teacher” (1 Tim. 3:2; see 5:17).  
12 He must hold “to the faithful message as taught, so that he will be  
13 able both to encourage with sound teaching and refute those who  
14 contradict it” (Tit. 1:9). Jesus’ under-shepherds feed Jesus’ sheep  
15 with Jesus’ word.  
16           2. Lead. Just as shepherds lead their flocks, so Elders lead local  
17 congregations. The biblical writers also call Elders “overseers,” a  
18 title that highlights their role as leaders (Acts 20:28; 1 Tim. 3:1;  
19 Tit. 1:5, 7). Hebrews instructs Christians to “obey your leaders and  
20 submit to them, for they keep watch over your souls as those who  
21 will give an account” (Heb. 13:17).  
22           3. Model. Elders lead by example. Shepherd the church “not [by]  
23 lording it over those entrusted to you, but being examples to the  
24 flock” (1 Pet. 5:3). Not surprisingly, the New Testament lists of  
25 Elder qualifications focus predominantly on character (1 Tim. 3:1-  
26 7, Tit. 1:5-9; 1 Pet. 5:1-4). An Elder’s most basic job is to say  
27 “Imitate me as I also imitate Christ” (1 Cor. 11:1).  
28           4. Pray. Elders should take up the apostolic shepherding mantle and  
29 say, “we will devote ourselves to prayer and to the preaching  
30 ministry” (Acts 6:4). Ultimately Elders are powerless in  
31 themselves to mature anyone in Christ; only the Holy Spirit can do  
32 that through God’s Word.

- 33           d. Term. Elders who are compensated pastors of the church will serve an indefinite  
34 term. Lay Elders will serve a term of three years and must take a Sabbatical from  
35 the Elder Board for one year before being reelected. This requirement can be  
36 waived if the Sabbatical would put the number of Elders below six.  
37           e. Meetings. The Elders will generally meet monthly to conduct their business and  
38 other times as necessary.  
39           f. Removal. If, for any reason, an Elder no longer meets the membership covenant  
40 and/or the biblical qualifications for an Elder, then the Elders will seek  
41 restoration. If restoration cannot be achieved, removal will be recommended to  
42 the Church following the process of Appendix B.  
43

- 44           B. **The Board of Deacons.** Deacons serve for the well-being of the church and care for  
45 internal and external benevolence and bereavement. They shall have charge to oversee  
46 the facilities of the church and to ensure the execution of the annual church budget.

1 Through their service they will guide and assist in the administrative functions of the  
2 church.

- 3 a. Deacon Responsibilities. Deacons shall at all times regard themselves as servants  
4 to the church family by serving as Deacon of the week and assisting in pastoral  
5 care to families. They may give counsel to the Elders in practical and spiritual  
6 matters as requested. They may assist the pastor in the observance of the  
7 ordinances of the church as necessary. They shall arrange for their regular  
8 meetings and have such committees as are necessary to discharge their duties.  
9 They, along with the Elders, have the responsibility of screening new Deacon  
10 nominees.
- 11 b. Requirements. Deacon candidates shall be men nominated by the church,  
12 screened by the Elders and current Deacons, and ordained by the church. They  
13 must meet the biblical qualifications as described in Titus and Timothy.
- 14 c. Calling. The church shall recognize men gifted and willing to serve in this calling.  
15 These men shall be received as gifts of Christ to His church and set apart as  
16 Deacons. Each year the Elders will receive nominations for the Deacon Board.  
17 The Elders and Deacons will present the names of three men who have been  
18 nominated to serve on the Deacon Board beginning the following January 1.
- 19 d. Term. Deacons shall actively serve in this role for three years and must rotate off  
20 for at least a year.
- 21 e. Meetings. The Deacons will meet ~~as needed~~ to conduct their business and other  
22 times as necessary.
- 23 f. Removal. If, for any, reason a Deacon no longer meets the membership covenant  
24 or the biblical qualifications, then the Deacons will seek restoration. If restoration  
25 cannot be achieved, removal will be recommended to the Church following the  
26 process of Appendix B.

Deleted: quarterly

27  
28 **C. Clerk.** It shall be the duty of the clerk to record the minutes of all regular and special  
29 members' meetings of the church, to preserve an accurate roll of the membership, and to  
30 render reports as requested by the Elders or the church. The clerk, who shall be a member  
31 in good standing, shall be nominated by the Elders and elected by the congregation to  
32 serve a term of three years. In the absence or incapacity of the clerk, the Elders shall  
33 appoint a member to perform the duties of the church clerk. The church clerk shall ensure  
34 that dated copies of the most recent revision of these bylaws shall be available for all  
35 church members. The clerk agrees to abide by the Leadership Code of Conduct (Appendix C)  
36 by his/her acceptance of his/her role.

37  
38 **D. Treasurer.** The treasurer shall be the chairman of the Finance Team as designated by the  
39 Deacons. The treasurer shall support the Elders in providing oversight of the financial  
40 and accounting activities of the church, shall not have custody of church funds, and shall  
41 ensure that all funds and securities of the church are properly secured in such banks,  
42 financial institutions, or depositories as appropriate. The treasurer shall also be  
43 responsible for presenting regular reports of the account balances, revenues, and expenses  
44 of the church at each members' meeting. The treasurer shall also see that full and  
45 accurate accounts of receipts and disbursements are kept in books belonging to the  
46 church, and that adequate controls are implemented to ensure that all funds belonging to  
47 the church are appropriately handled by any officer, employee, or agent of the church.

Formatted: Font: 12 pt

Formatted: List Paragraph, Left, Numbered + Level: 1 +  
Numbering Style: A, B, C, ... + Start at: 1 + Alignment:  
Left + Aligned at: 0.25" + Indent at: 0.5"

1 The treasurer shall render to the Elders and/or Deacons, whenever they may require it, an  
2 account of all activities as treasurer and of the financial condition of the church. The  
3 treasurer agrees to abide by the Leadership Code of Conduct (Appendix C) by his/her acceptance  
4 of his/her role. ▲  
5 ▼

Formatted: Font: 12 pt

Deleted: ¶



## 6 V. Teams

7 A team is a group of Church members chosen to fulfill specific responsibilities. Each team  
8 will have a chairman, appointed by the Deacons. Teams will consist only of those members  
9 who are active in the worship and ministries of the church. They will meet on a regular basis,  
10 keep minutes of the meetings, and share information from their work with the Church. Team  
11 members agree to abide by the Leadership Code of Conduct (Appendix C) by their  
12 acceptance of their role.

### 13 A. Personnel.

- 14 a. Selection. This team will consist of 6 men and women who are members of the  
15 Church including at least one Deacon. Each year, the Church will make  
16 nominations of team members to the Elders. Team members will be presented by  
17 the Elders. Team members will be voted on by the Church. Team members will  
18 serve no more than three consecutive years. No two members of the same  
19 immediately family may serve on this team at the same time.
- 20 b. Responsibilities.
- 21 i. Will create written job descriptions for all church paid positions. This will  
22 include measurable outcomes for each role and specific expectations of the  
23 job (i.e. general qualifications, attendance requirements, hours of work,  
24 duties, etc.).
  - 25 ii. Will evaluate all staff and ministers, except the Lead Pastor, before  
26 October 15<sup>th</sup> each year
  - 27 iii. Will locate, screen, interview, and bring one recommendation of  
28 employment to the Church for vote on all open job positions except the  
29 Lead Pastor
  - 30 iv. Will administrate all personnel policies and procedures.
  - 31 v. Will keep minutes of every meeting to be available for inspection. A copy  
32 will be kept in the "Records and Reports" file in the Church office.  
33 Sensitive information shall remain classified.
  - 34 vi. Will give reports to the Church in members' meetings on a quarterly basis
  - 35 vii. Will review salaries, fringe benefits, work conditions, and work schedules  
36 for all Church Staff
  - 37 viii. Will recommend any personnel budget adjustments to the Finance Team.
  - 38 ix. Will serve as sounding board and as a liaison between the Church and all  
39 ministers and staff personnel
  - 40 x. Will counsel and settle grievances as follows:
    - 41 1. Will serve as grievance committee for all church staff personnel  
42 who may wish to raise a complaint against the church, any minister  
43 or officer or other member of the church (providing however,  
44 where a minister is involved, the aggrieved must first inform the  
45 minister of his or her intentions.



- 1                                    2. Will serve as a grievance committee for any church member who  
2                                    has a complaint against any church staff personnel or minister,  
3                                    provided that the complaint must concern the performance of the  
4                                    individual's church responsibilities.  
5                                    xi. Will be able to request the formation of a special ad hoc search team to  
6                                    fulfill a specific job, which is approved by the Church  
7

8 **B. Finance.**

- 9                                    a. Selection. This team will consist of 6 men and women who are members of the  
10                                    Church including at least one Deacon. Each year the Church will make  
11                                    nominations of team members to the Elders. Team members will be presented by  
12                                    the Elders. Team members will be voted on by the Church. Team members will  
13                                    serve no more than three consecutive years. No two members of the same  
14                                    immediately family may serve on this team at the same time.  
15                                    b. Responsibilities.  
16                                        i. Will be responsible for developing and managing the Church Ministry  
17                                                                       Budget utilizing the financial goals for ministry from the Elders.  
18                                        ii. Will give counsel to Church staff regarding expenditures and financial  
19                                                                       practices  
20                                        iii. Will provide counsel to the Elders and Deacons during times of financial  
21                                                                       crisis  
22                                        iv. Will provide approval of emergency expenditures and report to the Church  
23                                        v. Will verify availability of funds for expenditures in excess of \$1,500  
24                                                                       within the budgeted items  
25                                        vi. Will seek Church approval of all amended budgeted items  
26                                        vii. Will seek Church approval for all non-budgeted expenditures from the  
27                                                                       general fund  
28                                        viii. Will provide a monthly expenditure sheet to the Church  
29                                        ix. Will provide quarterly business reporting to the Church  
30                                                                       Will keep minutes of every meeting to be available for inspection. A copy  
31                                                                       will be kept in the "Records and Reports" file in the Church office.  
32                                        x.

33 **C. Trustee.**

- 34                                    a. Selection. This team will consist of 5 men and women who are members of the  
35                                    Church including at least one Deacon. Each year the Church will make  
36                                    nominations of team members to the Elders. Because of the legal nature of their  
37                                    work, the Elders should give deference to those already serving on the Trustee  
38                                    Team. Team members will be presented by the Elders. Team members will be  
39                                    voted on by the Church. Because of the legal nature of their work, Trustees may  
40                                    serve an indefinite number of one-year terms. They must be reelected by the  
41                                    Church each year. No two members of the same immediately family may serve on  
42                                    this team at the same time.  
43                                    b. Responsibilities.  
44                                        i. Serving as official representatives of the church in terms of business  
45                                                                       contracts and other legal matters.  
46                                        ii. Borrowing money and incurring indebtedness only on behalf of and under  
47                                                                       the direction of the church.

- iii. Requiring a quorum of 20 percent of the Church to incur indebtedness
- iv. Executing and delivering for the church’s purposes, and in the church’s name, promissory notes and other evidences of debt and securities
- v. Conducting other duties and activities as designated by the Elders and/or Deacons.

**D. Facility.**

- a. Selection. This team will consist of 6 men and women who are members of the Church including at least one Deacon. Each year the Church will make nominations of team members to the Elders. Team members will be presented by the Elders. Team members will be voted on by the Church. Team members will serve no more than three consecutive years. No two members of the same immediately family may serve on this team at the same time.
- b. Responsibilities.
  - i. Oversee all maintenance and improvements for all facilities, property, and vehicles owned by the Church.
  - ii. Ensure all contracts involving facilities and maintenance entered into by the Church are fulfilled.
  - iii. Suggest needed improvements for the facilities to the Deacons for consideration.
  - iv. Along with the Deacons, evaluate standing facility contracts yearly to determine if they still serve the best interests of the church.

**VI. Ordinances**

- A. **Baptism.** Baptism is a symbolic act of obedience. 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, shall be received for baptism. (1) Baptism shall be by immersion in water. (2) Baptism may be administered by the Lead Pastor or whomever he shall authorize. (3) Baptism shall be administered as an act of worship during any worship service. (4) Baptism shall be as soon as possible after the public confession of faith.
- B. **The Lord's Supper.** 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. (1) The Lord's Supper shall be observed at least quarterly, preferably on the first Sunday of the quarter. (2) The Elders and The Deacons shall be responsible for administration of the Lord's Supper.

**VII. Additional Statements of Belief**

- A. **Statement on the Sanctity of Human 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)

1 B. **Statement on Sexuality.** We believe that God wonderfully and immutably creates each  
2 person as male or female. These two distinct, complementary sexes together reflect the  
3 image and nature of God (Gen. 1:26-27). Rejection of one’s biological sex is a rejection  
4 of the image of God within that person.

5 C. **Statement on Marriage**

6 a. We believe the term “marriage” has only one meaning: the uniting of one man  
7 and one woman in a single, exclusive union, as delineated in Scripture (Gen. 2:18-  
8 25). We believe that marriage between one man and one woman, for life, uniquely  
9 reflects Christ’s relationship with His Church (Eph. 5:21-33). We believe that  
10 God intends sexual intimacy to occur only between a man and a woman who are  
11 married to each other (1 Cor. 6:18; 7:2-5; Heb. 13:4). We believe that God has  
12 commanded that no intimate sexual activity be engaged in outside of a marriage  
13 between a man and a woman.

14 b. We believe that any form of sexual immorality (including adultery, fornication,  
15 cohabitation, homosexual behavior, rejection of one’s biological sex or use of  
16 pornography) is sinful and offensive to God (Matt. 15:18-20; 1 Cor. 6:9-10).

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

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

24 D. **Final Authority for Matters of Belief and Conduct.** The Statement of Faith and  
25 additional statements of belief in the bylaws do not exhaust the extent of our beliefs. The  
26 Bible itself, as the inspired and infallible Word of God that speaks with final authority  
27 concerning truth, morality, and the proper conduct of mankind, is the sole and final  
28 source of all that we believe. For purposes of the Church’s faith, doctrine, practice,  
29 policy, and discipline, our Elders are the Church’s final interpretive authority on the  
30 Bible’s application.

31  
32 **VIII. Amendments**

33 The Bylaws may be changed or amended during a properly called meeting of the Church.  
34 Amendments to be considered must be presented to the Elders and Deacons. The Elders and  
35 Deacons will present, in writing, any changes to be made to the entire Church at least two weeks  
36 prior to the meeting. In order to approve the amendment, it must be accepted by a two-thirds vote  
37 by the Church.

1  
2  
3  
4  
5  
6  
7  
8  
9  
10  
11  
12  
13  
14  
15  
16  
17  
18  
19  
20  
21  
22  
23  
24  
25  
26  
27  
28  
29  
30  
31  
32  
33  
34  
35  
36  
37  
38  
39

**Appendix A**

**The FBI Membership Covenant**

Having received Christ as my Lord and Savior, having been baptized, and being in agreement with the articles, bylaws, and mission of First Baptist Church of Icard, I now feel led by the Holy Spirit to unite with the FBI church family. In doing so, I will commit myself to God and to the other members to do the following:

**I. I agree to protect the unity of my church by**

- Acting in love toward other members.
- Refusing to gossip or spread rumors.
- Not letting my personal preferences and desires undermine the church body
- Following the leaders, who follow Christ and His word.

“Therefore let us pursue the things which make for peace and the things by which one may edify another.” Romans 14:19

“Now may the God of patience and comfort grant you to be like-minded toward one another, according to Christ Jesus, that you may with one mind and one mouth glorify the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.” Romans 15:5-6

“Since you have purified your souls in obeying the truth through the Spirit in sincere love of the brethren, love one another fervently with a pure heart. . .” 1 Peter 1:22

“Let no corrupt word proceed out of your mouth, but what is good for necessary edification, that it may impart grace to the hearers.” Ephesians 4:29

“Obey those who rule over you, and be submissive, for they watch out for your souls, as those who must give account. Let them do so with joy and not with grief, for that would be unprofitable for you.” Hebrews 13:17

**II. I agree to share in the responsibilities of my church by**

- Praying for its growth.
- Praying for my Pastors and their family
- Inviting the unchurched to attend.
- Sharing the gospel as the Holy Spirit provides opportunity
- Warmly welcoming those who visit.

“We give thanks to God always for you all, making mention of you in our prayers.” 1 Thessalonians 1:2

“Then the master said to the servant, ‘Go out into the highways and hedges, and compel them to come in, that my house may be filled.’” Luke 14:23

“Therefore receive one another, just as Christ also received us, to the glory of God.” Rom. 15:7

“Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Ghost, teaching them to observe all that I commanded you...” Matthew 28:19-20

**III. I agree to serve in the ministries of my church by**

- Discovering my gifts and talents and use those gifts in areas of service

*Adopted December 19, 2021 ~ Amended December 18, 2022; October 22, 2023; March 23, 2024*

- 1 • Studying and seeking to be equipped to serve
- 2 • Submitting myself to the Holy Spirit so that I may develop a servant’s heart
- 3 “As each one has received a gift, minister it to one another, as good stewards of the manifold
- 4 grace of God.” 1 Peter 4:10
- 5 “And He Himself gave some to be apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, and some pastors
- 6 and teachers, for the equipping of the saints for the work of ministry, for the edifying of the body
- 7 of Christ.” Ephesians 4:11-12
- 8 “Let nothing be done through selfish ambition or conceit, but in lowliness of mind let each
- 9 esteem others better than himself. Let each of you look out not only for his own interests, but
- 10 also for the interests of others. Let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus, who,
- 11 being in the form of God, did not consider it robbery to be equal with God, but made Himself of
- 12 no reputation, taking the form of a bondservant, and coming in the likeness of men.” Philippians
- 13 2:3-7
- 14 “I thank my God in all my remembrance of you, always offering prayer with joy in every prayer
- 15 for you all, in view of your participation in the gospel from the first day until now.” Philippians
- 16 1:3-5

17 **IV. I agree to support the testimony of my church by**

- 18 • Attending faithfully
- 19 • Seeking to live a Godly life
- 20 • Giving regularly
- 21 • Becoming a member of another Christian Church if I move or become inactive
- 22

23 “Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as is the manner of some, but exhorting one

24 another, and so much the more as you see the Day approaching.” Hebrews 10:25

25 “Only let your conduct be worthy of the gospel of Christ . . .” Philippians 1:27a

26 “On the first day of the week let each one of you lay something aside.” 1 Corinthians 16:2a

27 “So then you are no longer strangers and aliens, but you are fellow citizens with the saints, and are

28 of God’s household, having been built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Christ Jesus

29 Himself is the cornerstone.” Ephesians 2:19-20

31

32 \_\_\_\_\_

33 Name

34

35 \_\_\_\_\_

36 Date

1 **Appendix B**

2 Church Discipline Procedures

3 The New Testament is clear that the church is fundamentally a people, a congregation marked by  
4 their commitment to Christ and to one another. Therefore, when the Bible talks about church  
5 discipline, it involves the spiritual care of people. It's the process by which members of a church  
6 guard one another from the deceitfulness of sin and uphold the truth of the gospel.

7 Church discipline largely takes place informally, as Christians speak the truth in love to one  
8 another and point each other to the grace of the gospel. However, in this fallen world, there will  
9 be times when informal discipline will not be enough; there will be times when those who belong  
10 to the church refuse to repent and continue down the path of sin. It's for these situations that  
11 Jesus provides instructions for church discipline:

12 *If your brother sins against you, go and show him his fault, just between the two of you. If he*  
13 *listens to you, you have won your brother over. But if he will not listen, take one or two others*  
14 *along, so that "every matter may be established by the testimony of two or three witnesses." If he*  
15 *refuses to listen to them, tell it to the church; and if he refuses to listen even to the church, treat*  
16 *him as you would a pagan or a tax collector. (Matt. 18:15–17)*

17 Every single step of this process is an expression of Christ's loving and wise rule over his  
18 church, and therefore every step ought to be followed.

19 **Have a private conversation.**

20 It all begins with private confrontation (Matt. 18:15). As mentioned above, this happens  
21 regularly in the life of the church in all kinds of contexts. The member who knows of  
22 unrepentant sin is to go to the one who has sinned and, in love, call him to repentance. Rather  
23 than fostering gossip and division, Jesus commands his people to speak privately first, "just  
24 between the two of [them]." And in God's grace, so often this is the means by which God works  
25 repentance among his people.

26 If this is not the case,

27 **Step #1: Take one or two others along (Matt. 18:16).**

28 The next step widens the circle of involvement, while not yet involving the church as a whole.  
29 Jesus instructs the members to take one or two others along to confront the one caught in sin. If  
30 the Elders have already been notified, it might be appropriate for one of the Elders to go along  
31 with the member making the charge. It's also worth considering whether there might be another  
32 member of the church—perhaps a trusted friend—to speak into his life. Ideally, this step would  
33 happen in a personal meeting, but in certain situations, a phone call, voicemail, or perhaps even  
34 written correspondence may have to suffice.

35 Those involved up to this point should evaluate the response of the one caught in sin and  
36 determine if there's evidence of genuine, lasting repentance. Of course, the goal isn't perfection  
37 but rather a heart that's broken over sin and clinging to Christ, evidenced by humility and a  
38 willingness to follow wise counsel. In many cases, this step may take weeks, or months, or even

| *Adopted December 19, 2021 ~ Amended December 18, 2022; October 22, 2023; March 23, 2024*

1 longer. Often, it's here that God brings about repentance and reconciliation. But in some cases, it  
2 will become evident to those involved that there's no genuine repentance and, in obedience to  
3 Christ's instructions, the church should proceed to the next step.

4 **Step #2: Involve the Elders by informing them of the situation.**

5 At this point, a member should involve a few Elders. The person aware of the sin should write it  
6 down, sign it, and meet with the Elders to discuss the sin.

7 Jesus does not speak of the involvement of Elders in Matthew 18, but given the responsibility  
8 over the church that the apostles assign to them in other passages, it makes sense that Elders  
9 would be involved in the process of church discipline. In more difficult situations, the Elders will  
10 need to be involved sooner rather than later.

11 Here, the leadership has the responsibility to consider the nature of the charges. Is the sin  
12 concrete and serious enough to warrant taking the next steps of church discipline? Are there  
13 extenuating circumstances that the member might not know? Are there other members who  
14 might better speak to the one caught in sin? How do we care for those who have been wronged?  
15 The Elders will need to think through these and other important questions, and prayerfully  
16 shepherd those involved in the following steps.

17 **Step #3: Give adequate notice to the one caught in sin.**

18 Before making the matter public, the Elders will make formal contact with the one caught in sin.  
19 This is especially in cases where there has been minimal contact with the Elders, as when  
20 communication has been rejected or most of the information has been communicated  
21 secondhand. The goal of this contact is to explain the charges and express their love and concern.  
22 If the person remains unrepentant, then it's necessary to notify them of when this will be shared  
23 with the congregation. Given the need for clarity and precision in communication, the initial  
24 contact should probably be some form of written communication, followed up by a personal  
25 meeting.

26 If none of the Elders have met with the one being confronted, they should make clear that they  
27 want a chance to hear his side of the story. If meeting with all the Elders is too intimidating, they  
28 can offer to send a smaller group of the Elders. The goal in this step is to give the unrepentant  
29 member a chance to meet with the Elders personally and make sure there is no misunderstanding.

30 If after this step it's clear there's no misunderstanding and there's still no repentance, then the  
31 Elders should proceed to the next step.

32 **Step #4: Tell it to the church (Matt. 18:17).**

33 At this point, Jesus commands the member to "tell it to the church." In this step, the Elders will  
34 communicate what's taken place to the congregation.

35 Given the sensitive nature, the Elders will present this report at a business meeting, rather than a  
36 public worship service. The Elders will think through carefully what and how much to  
37 communicate about to the congregation. They want to communicate enough so that the  
38 congregation understands what has taken place and the need for church discipline. However,

| *Adopted December 19, 2021 ~ Amended December 18, 2022; October 22, 2023; March 23, 2024*

1 they should not communicate so much that it makes returning upon repentance difficult because  
2 of public shame, embarrasses family members, or causes weaker sheep to stumble.

3 Given the need for carefulness and precision the Elders are to craft a letter to be read at the  
4 meeting, rather than trying to explain it extemporaneously. In some cases, the Elders may want  
5 to involve the member who initially brought the charges in crafting the letter. After the Elders  
6 read the letter, they should allow for questions from the congregation, and invite people to talk to  
7 them privately if they have further questions. In more difficult cases, the Elders might consider  
8 holding a forum for members of the church to bring questions.

9 Having been apprised of the situation, the congregation will be instructed to pray. Those in the  
10 church who have a personal relationship with the one caught in sin should reach out prayerfully.  
11 The Elders will want to give the congregation enough time to participate in the process of  
12 confrontation.

13 Generally, the Elders will schedule a meeting for two weeks from the date the church is informed  
14 of the member under discipline for the purpose of voting to remove the person from membership.  
15 However, in certain cases, the church may need to act more quickly, perhaps even right away, if  
16 the church feels confident about a lack of repentance (1 Cor. 5:1-5).

17

18 **Step #6: Remove the unrepentant person from membership (Matt. 18:17).**

19 After following all the previous steps, if the individual continues to refuse to listen “even to the  
20 church,” then the Elders should update the congregation on the situation, and bring a formal  
21 motion for the congregation to remove him from the membership of the church. If the vote  
22 passes, then the church will understand that they no longer affirm this person’s profession of  
23 faith. They are to relate to him no longer as one who belongs to the church but to the world, like  
24 “a pagan or tax collector.”

25 Following the removal, the Elders should instruct the congregation on how to interact with the  
26 individual. As someone under discipline, the goal is not to shun him or to cut off all relationship.  
27 Rather, members should relate to him as someone in need of the gospel, yet who is self-deceived.  
28 In that sense, interactions are more complex than relating with non-Christian friends who know  
29 they are non-Christians. Any interactions should be used to call the person to repentance and to  
30 remind him of the hope of the gospel. Members should encourage him to attend the services of  
31 the church and to sit under the preaching of the Word. And yet, at the same time, they must avoid  
32 relating to him casually as if nothing has changed.

33 After the meeting, the Elders should send a written communication to the individual, informing  
34 him of the act of discipline, and expressing their love for him and their desire for his repentance  
35 and restoration. The Elders should also continue to follow up with the congregation in different  
36 settings (Sunday School classes, small groups, etc) to see if there are any concerns or questions  
37 about what has taken place. Church discipline can be a difficult time in the life of a church, and  
38 yet it can also be used by God to bring about maturity and growth. Elders should shepherd the  
39 congregation wisely both throughout the process and after.



1 We believe that to neglect church discipline is to fail to love one another in that way. So, as we  
2 labor to follow Christ's instructions for the purity of the church, we cling to the hope of the  
3 gospel both for ourselves and for those around us.

1 **Appendix C**

2 **Leadership Code of Conduct**

3 As a ministry leader at First Baptist Icard, I will, to the best of my ability, commit to the  
4 following:

5 *Relationships*

- 6 1. I will speak and act, in all my personal and professional relations, in ways that follow the  
7 pattern of Christ, who used his power to serve (1 Pet. 5; Mark 10; Phil. 2; 2 Tim. 4:2).  
8 2. I will respect, love, and treat with integrity and truthfulness people of every position,  
9 status, race, ethnicity, gender, age, or ability.  
10 3. I will maintain appropriate emotional, physical, and sexual boundaries in all  
11 relationships.  
12 4. I will keep all my relationships free from inappropriate, unwanted physical contact,  
13 emotional or sexual intimacy, sexual comments, gestures, or jokes.

14 *Safety*

- 15 1. I will actively promote a welcoming and respectful environment where all persons are  
16 treated with dignity and value, and where any form of abuse, bullying, or harassment is  
17 neither tolerated nor allowed to take place.  
18 2. I will report known or suspected cases of physical, sexual, or emotional abuse or neglect  
19 of minors or vulnerable adults to the proper authorities.  
20 3. I will support those who disclose physical, sexual, or emotional abuse in a way that  
21 empowers the person who has been victimized to seek out justice and healing.

22 *Biblical Leadership*

- 23 1. I will promote truthfulness, transparency, and honesty in all of my work.  
24 2. I will use my power, authority, and position to build up the community of believers and  
25 seek first the kingdom of God.  
26 3. I will work within my trained competence, especially in counseling situations, and I will  
27 refer individuals to other professionals as appropriate.  
28 4. I will preach, teach, admonish, or discipline in ways that are biblical and Christlike,  
29 promoting the peace and flourishing of those to whom I am ministering (2 Tim. 3:16). I  
30 will not teach, affirm, or promote beliefs in a way that is contradictory to the FBI  
31 Statement of Faith and additional statements of belief in the bylaws.  
32 5. I will refrain in my leadership and counseling others from using references to Scripture or  
33 God to manipulate, coerce, or threaten another person.  
34 6. I will disclose any perceived or actual conflict of interest.

35  
36  
| *Adopted December 19, 2021 ~ Amended December 18, 2022; October 22, 2023; March 23, 2024*

1 *Confidentiality*

- 2 1. I will maintain and uphold confidentiality appropriately, which means I will hold in  
3 confidence whatever information is not mine to share.  
4 2. I will not use information shared with me in confidence in order to elevate my position or  
5 to depreciate that of others.

6 *Finances*

- 7 1. I will ensure that funds for which I am responsible or which are under my control are  
8 used for their intended ministry purposes.  
9 2. I will keep confidential all knowledge I have of tithes, gifts, and offerings given to the  
10 Church.  
11 3. In all financial matters, including the acceptance of gifts, I will act with scrupulous  
12 honesty, transparency, and appropriate accountability.  
13 4. I will appropriately use and encourage accepted accounting practices and regular reviews  
14 and/or audits of ministry funds.

15 In the event that I misuse my power, either intentionally or unintentionally, in my dealings with  
16 others, in word or deed—if I fail “to act justly and to love mercy and to walk humbly” (Mic. 6:8)  
17 as outlined in the Scriptures and our Statement of Faith and additional statements of belief in the  
18 bylaws—I will acknowledge the harm that has been caused and the trust that has been broken,  
19 and I will actively seek restoration with compassion, truth, and grace. I will humbly submit to the  
20 insight and accountability of the Elders and Deacons that implement this Code of Conduct to  
21 ensure that I use any power entrusted to me fully in service to Christ.

22 In the beautiful hope of Christ’s transforming work, in all I do, I will seek to use my position,  
23 power, and authority prudently and humbly to support and encourage all the members of his  
24 body in my care.