

**CONSTITUTION**

**and**

**By-Laws**

**of**

**Mullins First Baptist Church**

**Mullins, SC**

# CONSTITUTION

## Preamble

For the purpose of preserving and making secure the principles of our faith and to the end that this body be governed in an orderly manner, and for the purpose of preserving the liberties inherent in each individual member of the Church, and to set forth the relationship of this body to other bodies of the same faith, we do declare and establish this constitution.

## ARTICLE I – Name

This body shall be known as the Mullins First Baptist Church. This Church was established March 7, 1880.

## ARTICLE II – Purpose

Under God's leadership, Mullins First Baptist Church will strive to exemplify a loving personal relationship with Jesus Christ. We will demonstrate this personal relationship to individuals beyond our membership by growing spiritually and personally proclaiming God's Word and love through our lives.

To this end the Church will:

1. Maintain public worship of God.
2. Sustain the ordinances of Baptism and the Lord's Supper.
3. Encourage the study of the doctrines and ethics revealed in the Holy Bible and their relations to daily living.
4. Seek the promotion and advancement of Christ's cause and His Kingdom through a program of community, home, and world missions.

## ARTICLE III – Membership

**Section 1.** The membership of this Church shall be composed of persons who have given evidence of regeneration, who have been baptized by immersion, who have subscribed to the constitution of this Church, and who have been received by majority vote of the Church present and voting.

**Section 2.** A member of another Baptist church of like faith and order may be received by majority vote of the members of the Church present and voting upon a letter of dismissal from that church.

**Section 3.** Anyone who has once been a member of a church of like faith and order, and in consequence of peculiar circumstances has no regular letter of dismissal, may be received into our fellowship upon a statement of their faith to the Church.

**Section 4.** Letters of dismissal may be granted to any church of like faith and order for members in good standing. When letters are granted, membership in this Church will terminate.

**Section 5.** When a member of this Church joins a church of different faith and orders, membership in this Church will terminate.

**Section 6.** In considering the rights involved, members, and members only, may act and vote in the transactions of the Church.

**Section 7.** In considering the duties involved, members are expected, first of all, to be faithful in all the duties essential to the Christian life; to attend regularly the services of the Church; to give regularly and systematically to its support and Kingdom causes; share in its organized work; and adhere to the covenant for guidance.

## COVENANT

Having been led, as we believe, by the Spirit of God, to receive the Lord Jesus Christ as our Lord and Savior, and on the profession of our faith, having been baptized in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit, we do now in the presence of God, angels, and this assembly, most solemnly and joyfully enter into covenant with one another as one body in Christ. We engage, therefore, by the aid of the Holy Spirit to walk together in Christian love; to strive for the advancement of this Church in knowledge, holiness, and comfort; to promote its prosperity and spirituality; to sustain its worship, ordinances, doctrines, and discipline; to give it sacred preeminence over all institutions of human origin; to contribute cheerfully and regularly to the support of the ministry, the expenses of the Church, the relief of the poor, and the spread of the gospel through all nations. We also engage to maintain family and personal devotions; to religiously educate our children; to seek the salvation of our kindred and acquaintances; to walk circumspectly in the World; to be just in our dealings, faithful in our engagements, and exemplary in our deportment; to avoid all tattling, backbiting, and excessive anger; to use our influence to combat and to never promote the use of Drugs and Alcohol, and the spread of pornography and other

practices which lead to moral and spiritual decay; and to be zealous in our efforts to advance the Kingdom of our Savior. We further engage to watch over one another in brotherly love; to remember one another in prayer; to aid one another in sickness and distress; to cultivate Christian sympathy in feeling and Christian courtesy in speech; to be slow to take offense, but always ready for reconciliation, and mindful of the rules of our Savior to secure it without delay. We moreover engage that when we remove from this place we will, as soon as possible, unite with some other church, where we can carry out the spirit of this covenant and the principles of God's Word.

## **ARTICLE IV - Meetings**

**Section 1.** This Church shall hold regular meetings for worship, teaching, training, and fellowship.

**Section 2.** This Church shall hold business meetings at which time the material and spiritual conditions of the Church will be discussed, and plans projected for progress in Kingdom endeavors.

**Section 3.** Other meetings of the Church as a whole or of authorized groups within the Church shall be set according to the needs of the congregation.

## **ARTICLE V – Church Officers**

**Section 1.** Officers: The officers of this Church shall be a Pastor, and other vocational leadership as needed. Also included are the Deacons, the Clerk, the Treasurer, and such other officers as shall be required for the normal operation of the Church in any of its departments or organizations. All of these shall be elected by the Church and shall be members in good standing.

**Section 2.** Election and Duties:

### **A. PASTOR**

Whenever a vacancy occurs, a Pastor shall be called by the Church to serve until the relationship is dissolved at the request of either the Pastor or the Church. In either case, at least 30 days notice shall be given of termination of the relationship, unless otherwise mutually agreed, with both Pastor and the Church seeking to follow the will of God and the leadership of the Holy Spirit.

The call of the Pastor shall take place at a meeting especially set for that purpose of which at least one week's notice has been given the membership. The election shall be upon the recommendation of a special committee appointed to seek out and nominate as a Pastor a minister of the Gospel whose Christian character and qualifications fit the candidate for the office of the Pastor of this Church. The committee shall bring only one name at a time for consideration by the Church. Election shall be by standing vote with an affirmative vote of three-fourths of those present and voting necessary for a call. Should the one recommended by the committee fail to receive a three-fourths vote, the committee will be instructed to seek out another minister, and the meeting shall be adjourned without debate.

The Pastor shall have in charge the welfare and oversight of the Church, shall be ex-officio member of all organizations, departments and committees; may call a special meeting of the Deacons or any committee according to procedures which may be set forth in the By-Laws; shall conduct religious services on stated and special occasions, administer the ordinances, minister to members of the Church and community, and to perform other duties that usually pertain to that office; shall have special charge of the pulpit ministry of the Church and shall, in cooperation with the Deacons, provide for pulpit supply when absent and arrange for workers to assist in revival meetings and other special services. The Pastor shall preside at all meetings of the Church except as otherwise provided in the By-Laws. The Pastor shall be the administrative head of the Church and shall arrange and approve all absences and vacations of all Church employees.

## **B. DEACONS**

There shall be at least three Deacons for the first 100 members of the Church and three additional Deacons for each 100 additional members up to five hundred members; and then as many other Deacons as the Church may require. These shall be elected from among those members who have proved themselves to have scriptural qualifications. Deacons shall be elected for a period of three years with one-third of the number being elected each year. After the completion of a full three-year term, no deacon shall be eligible for re-election until after the lapse of one year. Whenever Deacons are to be elected, each member of the Church shall be entitled to place upon a ballot the names of those for whom they wish to vote, not exceeding the number to be elected. These ballots shall be counted by the Deacons who are retiring and the ones receiving the highest vote shall be declared elected. Ballots shall be received at both the morning and evening services on the day of election.

Deacons shall at all times consider themselves as servants of the Church. With the Pastor, and as the Holy Spirit may direct, they are to consider and make

recommendations to the Church in all matters pertaining to its work and progress; including oversight of the discipline of the Church; establishing and maintaining spiritual fraternal relations with all members of the Church; assisting the Pastor in the observance of the ordinances; having general oversight over the upkeep, repair and use of the Church property, and the financial program of the Church. They shall arrange for regular meetings and such committees as are necessary to the discharge of their duties. The Pastor or the Chairman of the Deacons, may call the Deacons into special session whenever need for such arises.

### **C. CLERK**

The Clerk shall be elected annually. It shall be the duty of the Clerk to attend, or be represented at, all Church business meetings, to keep an accurate record of all business transactions, to prepare the annual associational letter and to notify all officers, members of committees and messengers of their election or appointment. The Clerk shall issue letters of dismissal as authorized by the Church, preserve all papers and valuable letters and records that belong to the Church, and preserve a true history of the Church. It shall also be the duty of the Clerk to see that an accurate roll of the Church membership is kept with dates and methods of admission and dismissal, change in name, correct mailing addresses, and other pertinent information.

The Ministry Assistants shall assist the Clerk and Treasurer in the transaction of their business as directed by these officers.

### **D. TREASURER**

The Treasurer shall be elected annually to oversee the financial well-being of the Church. The Treasurer shall upon invitation meet with the Deacons, and shall be a member of the Finance Committee.

## **ARTICLE VI – General**

**Section 1.** License. When a member announces to the Church that he/she feels the call to the ministry, the Church, by majority vote, may license him/her as an acknowledgement of his/her call to the ministry and encouragement to make preparation for it. The Clerk of the Church may furnish the member with a copy of the minutes or a certificate of license as his/her credentials. It is understood that the performance of civil duties by the member shall be governed by State law.

**Section 2.** Ordination. In the event this Church has been requested to ordain a member who has been called as pastor of a Baptist church, the following procedure shall be followed: The Church will express its approval by a vote of three-fourths of the members present at any regularly arranged business meeting of the Church. Then the Church shall invite the Associational Council on Ordinations to examine the candidate concerning their fitness for the ministry. In the event the association has no such council, this Church shall invite representatives of neighboring churches to examine the candidate and report to the Church. Then in the event the report of the committee is favorable, the Church shall proceed with the ordination.

**Section 3.** Cooperation with Associations and Conventions. We recognize that there is mutual helpfulness in the association of the churches who are in such agreement in faith and practice as to encourage the spirit of fellowship and good will. We also recognize that there have been devised, through the voluntary cooperation of churches of like faith and order, organizations whose purposes it is to implement the missionary, educational, and benevolent interests and obligations of the individual Christian and their church family.

Believing that the Marion Baptist Association, the South Carolina Baptist Convention, and the Southern Baptist Convention are organizations which have as their sole purpose the promotion and support of missions, education and benevolence of the character and in keeping with the spirit of the Constitution and the Articles of Faith of this Church, we therefore agree to participate in these organizations through our duly elected messengers and our support of the causes which these organizations represent. The 2000 statement of The Baptist Faith and Message is our doctrinal guideline. The Government of this Church is vested in the membership of Mullins First Baptist Church.

## **ARTICLE VII - Amendments**

**Section 1.** This Constitution may be amended, altered, or repealed by a two-thirds vote of the members present at any regular business meeting of the Church; provided, however, that such amendment, alteration, or repeal must be given to the Clerk in writing; and this proposed change shall be presented to the Church at least **15** days prior to the time the vote is taken.

## **BY-LAWS**

### **ARTICLE I – Meetings**

**Section 1.** The regular worship services of the Church shall be held on Sunday mornings, Sunday evenings, and Wednesday evenings, unless otherwise agreed upon by the Church. The Lord's Supper shall be observed at least once a quarter.

All officers of the Church shall be elected prior to September 1.

**Section 2.** Business meetings may be called by the Pastor or the Chairman of the Deacons at such time as they may be needed. At least a one-week notice of time, place, and purpose of the meeting will be given to the congregation. The Pastor shall serve as Moderator of the business sessions of the Church. In the absence of the Pastor, or upon the Pastor's request, the Chairman of the Deacons, or some other person chosen by the Church, may serve as Moderator.

## **ARTICLE II**

### Section 1: Committees

The Church shall elect such standing and special committees as may be deemed necessary to carry on the various phases of the programs of the Church. These committees shall be elected by the Church upon the recommendation of the Nominating Committee or the Deacons. All committees serve at the pleasure of the Church and shall in no event have any authority to act for the Church except where specifically authorized.

## Section 2: Composition, Duties, and Election of Committees

The composition, duties, and means of election of all standing committees shall be established by the Church and set forth in a committee handbook made available to all Church members.

The committee handbook covers the following elements:

- a. How committees are created.
- b. Composition of committees.
- c. Election and terms of members including eligibility for re-election.
- d. Committee structure, organization and officers.
- e. Duties of committees – general and specific (meetings, reports, special assignments)
- f. Training and orientation.
- g. Accountability to Church.

## ARTICLE III– Amendments

**Section 1.** These By-Laws may be amended, altered, or repealed by a two-thirds vote of the members present at any regular business meeting of the Church; provided, however, that such amendment, alteration, or repeal must be given to the Clerk in writing; and this proposed change shall be presented to the Church at least 15 days prior to the time the vote is taken.

## ARTICLE IV

**Section 1.** The adoption of this Constitution and By-Laws shall affect a repeal of all previously adopted rules.

**Section 2.** A copy of this Constitution and By-Laws shall be kept by the Clerk among their records and the original copy shall be kept in the Church office. All amendments or revisions, after approval by the Church, will be prepared by the Clerk and incorporated in the Constitution and By-Laws and made available to the Church members upon request.

## **ARTICLE V**

The Chairman of the Deacons and the Church Clerk, shall execute all legal papers relating to the Church. In the event of the absence of the Chairman of the Deacons or the Clerk, or in the event they are incapacitated or fail to execute such papers, then the Church shall name such others as they see fit to execute such documents.

The power to buy, sell, mortgage, lease or transfer real property shall be vested solely in the Church, and no such property of the Church shall be sold, mortgaged or leased, except by a two-thirds vote of the members present at any business meeting of the Church, due written notice of such meeting having been given to the members of the Church.

**Adopted in Conference duly assembled on** \_\_\_\_\_

**Signed:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Moderator**

\_\_\_\_\_ **Clerk**