

FORM 3

**SOCIETY ACT  
CONSTITUTION**

**NAME**

1. The name of the Society is **FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH, PRINCE GEORGE**, hereinafter known as the Church.

**PURPOSE**

2. The purposes of the Church are to celebrate our life in Christ and to connect people with God, through:
  - a. Meaningful expressions of worship to God and opportunities for spiritual formation and growth.
  - b. Sharing Christ within our community, country and world.
  - c. Encouraging Sabbath rest, personal renewal, and care for God's creation.
  - d. Giving opportunities to share spiritual gifts within the church family.
  - e. Providing loving care for one another and empathetic compassion for the poor and disadvantaged of our community.

**DOCTRINE**

3. This Church will hold and advocate the doctrines commonly held by the Churches of the Canadian Baptists of Western Canada, namely:
  - a. The Lordship of Jesus Christ
  - b. The Sufficiency of the Bible
  - c. The Priesthood of all believers
  - d. Church Membership by Conviction
  - e. The Observance of Ordinances ordained by Christ, namely Believer's Baptism by Immersion and the Lord's Supper
  - f. Congregational Church government
  - g. Religious Liberty
  - h. A Free Church in a free stateThis article is unalterable.

**AFFILIATIONS**

4. This Church shall be in affiliation with the British Columbia Area of Baptist Churches, the Canadian Baptists of Western Canada, Canadian Baptist Ministries and the Baptist World Alliance; or their successors, and shall support their mission programs. (unalterable)
5. The operations of the Church are to be carried out in the Province of British Columbia, and chiefly in the city of Prince George and area. (alterable)

## **BY-LAWS**

### **Decision Making Within the Membership:**

1. Decision making within the Membership is a process of finding the highest level of agreement without dividing the Members into factions or "camps". This process involves ongoing prayer, humility, trust, mutual respect and a passionate seeking after the heart of God. Consensus seeking will always be the goal of every decision, where each Member or Adherent comes to a place of agreement together or at least to a point of having liberty to submit to the wisdom of the larger group without taking a public position against it, thus bringing disunity to the Body of Christ.

### **Commitment to Caring:**

2. All Members in leadership will demonstrate personal caring for the members of the Church leadership or working groups in which they are involved. This caring will involve prayer, time set aside for getting to know the individual and assuring that a caring spirit is present in all aspects of the work that is being done. It is critical that all Members care for each other and for the adherents to the body.
3. Here set forth, in numbered clauses, the By-laws providing for the matters referred to in Section 6 (1) of the Society Act and any other By-laws.

### **Part 1 – Interpretation**

4. In these By-laws, unless the context otherwise requires, any definitions in the Society Act on the date these By-laws become effective apply to these By-laws.
5. Words importing the singular include the plural and vice versa; and words importing a male person include a female person; and words importing persons will include bodies corporate.

### **Part 2 – Membership**

6. First Baptist Church Prince George is autonomous and democratic under the Lordship of Jesus Christ. The Membership retains the exclusive right of self government in the life of the Church. The Membership reserves the exclusive right to determine who will be Members of this Church and the conditions of Membership.
7. Members will hold and advocate the doctrines as set out in the Constitution, paragraph 3.
8. Application for Membership will be made to the Church Elders. Membership will be granted on the basis of Christian experience.
9. Admission to Membership will be as follows:
  - a. Those eligible for Membership in First Baptist Church will be people who repent of their sins, trust in Jesus Christ as their Lord and Savior, and have been baptized.
  - b. The Church Elders, having been satisfied that the candidate adheres to the Purpose and Doctrine held by the Church stated in the Constitution, will at any regular Worship Service of the Church, state “We have received and now welcome into Membership (the applicants name).” The congregation may then affirm the statement with an “Amen”.
  - c. Accepted candidates will be given the “right hand of fellowship” by one of the Pastors or Church Elders at any regular Worship Service.

- d. Upon acceptance into Membership, the name of the new Member will be added to the Active Roll.

10. Responsibilities of Active Members are to:

- a. "Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind... and love your neighbor as yourself." Mt 22:37, 39.
- b. Nurture their relationship with Jesus Christ, listening for His guidance daily, following His leading and, in obedience, growing in maturity through life's experience.
- c. Walk together in Christian love, maintaining Christian unity. Eph. 4:16
- d. Pray for each other, watching over one another in Christian love. Eph. 6:18; 1 Peter 1:22
- e. Engage in service using the gifts of the Holy Spirit for the edification and encouragement of each other. Eph. 4:7-16; 2 Cor. 5; 1 Cor. 12:1-14, 40.
- f. Support the worship, ordinances, discipline and doctrines of the Church. Acts 2:42-47; 1 Peter 5:1-11.
- g. Contribute cheerfully and regularly to the financial support of the ministry of the Church, the relief of the poor, and the spread of the gospel in the community and among the nations. 1 Cor. 9:1-14; 2 Cor. 9:6-15; Eph. 4:28; Phil. 4:10-19.
- h. Be present as often as possible at the regular Worship Services and the business meetings of the Church. Heb. 10:25.
- i. Inform the Church office of any change in contact information.

11. The Church Membership Roll:

- a. The Active Roll will include the names of all Active Members and those on the Non-Resident Roll. The Non-Resident Roll will include the names of Members who reside outside the bounds of the community but who give evidence of their continued interest and support of the ministries of the Church.
- b. The Active Roll will be reviewed annually by the Church Elders for the purpose of considering and recommending revision:
  - i. The Church Elders will identify Members who are not fulfilling the responsibilities of Membership.
  - ii. The Church Elders will attempt to contact those Members identified in part 1 of this section and seek to restore them into active support of the Church. If this fails, the Church Elders will recommend to the Board of Trustees their removal from the Active Roll. (Matthew 18:15-17). The Member may request an appeal of the recommendation. That request will be made, in writing, to the Moderator and the appeal will be to the Board.
  - iii. The Church Elders may recommend to the Board of Trustees the reinstatement to the Active Roll, those who seek restoration and who are consistently fulfilling the responsibilities of Membership for a period of at least 3 months.

12. Only those Members on the Active Roll and 16 years or older, will have the right to vote.

### **Part 3 – Meetings of Members**

13. The Annual General Meeting will be held within four months of the fiscal year end.
14. A Business Meeting will be held in November to approve the annual budget.
15. All duly called Meetings of the Church will be chaired by the Moderator.
16. A Special Meeting may be called by the Board of Trustees or at the request, in writing, by fifteen percent (15%) of the Members.
17. Notices of a Meeting will be given by oral and written announcements at the regular worship services for two Sundays immediately preceding the date of such meeting.
18. If required, Roberts Rules of Order will govern all Meetings.
19. All Meetings will be opened by prayer for Divine Guidance.

20. The quorum of any Meeting will be fifteen percent (15%) and never fewer than 35 of those Members 16 years and older.
21. Notwithstanding By-law 20, any Meeting dealing with the call or termination of any Pastor, the acquisitions, disposal or encumbrance of the real property of the Church, or changes to the Constitution or Bylaws, the quorum will be twenty percent (20%) and never fewer than 50 of those Members 16 years and older. The question concerning such actions will require an affirmative vote of seventy-five percent (75%) of those present and voting. Other than Constitution and By-Law changes, the voting will be by ballot.
22. A Member who is 16 years or older is entitled to one vote. Voting is by show of hands, except as otherwise specified. Voting by proxy is not permitted.
23. The fiscal year of the Church will be from January 1 to December 31 inclusive each year.

#### **Part 4 – Church Leadership Structure**

24. Wherever possible, the church will encourage participation in leadership positions from all areas of the membership.
25. The Church Leadership Structure will include:
  - a. A Board of Trustees
  - b. An Administration Group
  - c. A Ministry Group
26. The Board of Trustees will consist of:
  - a. The Moderator (Chair)
  - b. The Lead Pastor (ex-officio)
  - c. The Treasurer
  - d. An Elder
  - e. An Administration Group Representative other than an Elder
27. The Administration Group will consist of:
  - a. The Moderator (Chair)
  - b. The Lead Pastor (ex-officio)
  - c. The Treasurer
  - d. The Leader from each of the following teams:
    - i. Elders
    - ii. Property
    - iii. Finance
    - iv. Governance
    - v. Nominations
    - vi. Others as mandated by the Administration Group
28. The Ministry Group will consist of:
  - a. The Lead Pastor (Chair)
  - b. The Pastoral Staff
  - c. Others as invited by the Ministry Group
29. Individuals who sit on the Board of Trustees, Administration Group and Ministry Group will be Active Members.
30. Individuals on the Board of Trustees and the Administration Group will serve a maximum of 4 consecutive years.
31. The Moderator, Treasurer and Property, Finance, and Governance Team Leaders will be elected at the Annual General Meeting for a one-year term.

32. The Nominating Team will consist of four Active Members. Each person will serve for a 2-year term, 2 retiring each year and 2 remaining. The Nominating Team will present the names of the 2 new Members to the Annual General Meeting for endorsement.
33. The Active Members may, by Special Resolution, remove a member of the Board of Trustees and Administration Group before the expiration of the term of office, and may elect a successor to complete the term.
34. New Elders will be selected by the Lead Pastor and Elders Team and be affirmed by the Congregation.
35. The Active Members may, by Special Resolution, remove an Elder.

### **Part 5 – The Pastorate**

36. In the event of a Pastoral vacancy, the Board of Trustees will appoint a Pastoral Search Committee and a Chairperson. A suitable candidate will be presented to the Board of Trustees. If endorsed by the Board of Trustees, the candidate will be presented to the Church for consideration.
37. The Pastor(s) will co-operate with the Administration Group and Ministry Group in the supervision and leadership of the life of the Church so as to enable its people to fulfill their mission in the world. They will conduct services of worship, preach the Gospel, expound the Scriptures, administer the ordinances, and have the responsibility for the oversight of the congregation through visitation and counseling. They will also act as resource persons in the matter of belief and practice, guide the educational program of the Church and encourage social concern and evangelism.
38. The employment of a Pastor may be ended in accordance with the terms of an employment contract or as otherwise mutually agreed upon. The matter of termination will be voted on at a regularly called or special meeting in accordance with By-law 21.

### **Part 6 – Duties of Board of Trustees**

#### **The Duties of the Board of Trustees are to:**

39. Act honestly and in good faith and in the best interests of the Church and exercise the care, diligence and skill of a reasonably prudent person, in exercising the powers and performing the functions as a Trustee.
40. Ensure the current Lead Pastor’s Memorandum of Understanding is accurate and satisfactorily fulfilled.
41. Meet at least three times a year or at the call of any two Trustees or the Moderator.
42. Appoint a Pastoral Search Committee and Chairperson in the event of a Pastoral vacancy.
43. Approve Financial Statements of the Church as evidenced by the signatures of at least two (2) Trustees.
44. Determine the Signing Officers of the Church.
45. Ensure compliance with all applicable Federal and Provincial statutes and regulations.
46. Oversee the approved Church budget.
47. Approve the chartered financial institution for the Church.

#### **The Duties of the Moderator are to:**

48. Chair (or appoint an Alternate for) Meetings of the Church.
49. Prepare the agenda for the Meetings of the Church.
50. Prepare a report for the Annual General Meeting.

51. Chair (or appoint an Alternate for) the Board of Trustees meetings.
52. Prepare the agenda of the Board of Trustees meetings.
53. Chair (or appoint an Alternate for) Administration Group meetings.
54. Prepare the agenda of the Administration Group meetings.
55. Facilitate the harmonious functioning of the Church.
56. Attend any Team or Group meeting.

**The Duties of the Treasurer are to:**

57. Keep a true book of account.
58. Ensure the presentation of the Financial Statements at the Annual General Meeting.
59. Ensure all funds received by the Church are deposited in the accounts of the Church in the approved chartered financial institution.
60. Ensure payments be made in accordance with the approved or duly amended budget on the instruction of the Finance Team. Payments must be endorsed by any two signing officers.
61. Ensure charitable receipts are issued and dispersed in a timely manner.

**Part 7 - The Duties of the Administration Group and Its Teams**

**The Duties of the Administration Group are to:**

62. Meet at least 4 times a year and as needed.
63. Ensure the organizational structure reflects the needs of the Church.
64. Ensure the Church adheres to its Constitution and Bylaws.
65. Require reports from all Teams for presentation to the Annual General Meeting or as otherwise required.
66. Ensure adequate representation to denominational meetings.
67. Oversee the general administration of the Church.
68. Select a representative to the Board of Trustees.
69. Ensure vacancies of the Administration Teams are filled.
70. Amend the budget as required to reflect the needs or financial status of the Church within a 10% variance of the gross budget amount.

**The Duties of the Nominating Team are to:**

71. Present the names of the 2 new candidates for the Nominating Team to the Annual General Meeting for endorsement.
72. Consult with the Administration Teams as to their specific needs for leadership personnel.
73. Nominate the Moderator, Treasurer and Team Leaders of the Property, Finance, Nominating, and Governance Teams for endorsement at the Annual General Meeting. Other persons for any position may be nominated from the floor at the Annual General Meeting provided that the nominee has given consent for his/her name to be submitted. Where the number of persons nominated exceeds the number to be elected, the Chairperson of the Meeting will cause ballots to be distributed to all Members present at the Meeting and an election will take place.
74. Carefully consider the experience, knowledge, suitability, willingness and faithfulness of Nominees to serve. Through prayer and observation they should learn of the specific "spiritual gifts" that God has given through His Spirit to certain people.
75. Provide the Elders with the slate of names before it is posted.

76. Post a list of the Members nominated in the Church on the Sunday preceding the Annual General Meeting. All persons listed must have given consent for their names to appear.
77. Serve until the next Annual General Meeting and will be responsible to suggest names to the Administration Group, to fill vacancies in any position that occurs during the year. If a vacancy occurs on the Nominating Team, a replacement will be appointed by the Administration Group.

**The Duties of the Governance Team are to:**

78. Review the administration and ministries of the Church on an annual basis to ensure compliance with the Constitution, Bylaws, Policies and Procedures.
79. Recommend changes to the Constitution, Bylaws, Policies, and Procedures as required.
80. Develop Policies and Procedures for the Church.
81. Develop terms of reference and review annually.
82. Ensure succession of team members.

**The Duties of the Elders Team are to:**

83. Model lives fully devoted to Jesus Christ.
84. Be available to consult with individuals and groups when requested (e.g. projects, missions, conflicts).
85. Manage Church Membership Roll.
86. Serve as the Personnel Committee for the Church.
87. Commission ministries on behalf of First Baptist Church.
88. Select an Elder who will represent the Team on the Administration Group and Board of Trustees.
89. Develop terms of reference and review annually.
90. Ensure succession of team members.

**The Duties of the Finance Team are to:**

91. Recommend an Annual Church Budget to the Administration Group and Board of Trustees for presentation at the November Business Meeting of the Church.
92. Oversee the general administration and implementation of the approved Annual Church Budget.
93. Submit financial reports to the Ministry Group, Administration Group, Board of Trustees and Church Business Meetings or when required.
94. Oversee stewardship and financial management training.
95. Establish development funds as required.
96. Appoint Tellers and the Envelope Secretary.
97. Develop terms of reference and review annually.
98. Ensure succession of team members.

**The Duties of the Property Team are to:**

99. Assess, provide and maintain the property and equipment needs of the church ministries.
100. Determine uses of the Church property and equipment.
101. Submit an annual budget for proposed expenditures to the Finance Team for their consideration and inclusion in the Annual Church Budget.
102. Develop terms of reference and review annually.
103. Ensure succession of team members.

**Part 8 - Seal**

104. The Society (First Baptist Church, Prince George) will not have a Seal.

**Part 9 – Borrowing**

105. The Board of Trustees may, on behalf of and in the name of the Church, raise or secure payment or repayment of money to a maximum of ten thousand dollars (\$10,000) in a manner they may decide. Any borrowing above ten thousand dollars (\$10,000) will require approval by the Members at a Business Meeting.

**Part 10 – Auditor**

106. At the Annual General Meeting of the Church an Auditor may be appointed.  
107. The Auditor will not be a Trustee or employee of the Church.  
108. The Auditor will examine the books, records and accounts of the Treasurer, reporting to the Administration Group as required, and to the Annual General Meeting.

**Part 11 – Constitution and By-laws**

109. Those provisions of the Church Constitution that are alterable may be amended at any Business Meeting of the Church, provided notice of such motion will have been given by written and oral announcement to Members no fewer than four Sundays prior to the date of such Meeting.  
110. The By-laws of the Church may be amended at any Business Meeting of the Church, provided such notice will have been given by written and oral announcement to the Members no fewer than two Sundays prior to the date of such Meeting.  
111. In the event of dissolution, all assets remaining, after all debts have been paid, will be transferred to the Canadian Baptists of Western Canada (CBWC), Calgary, Alberta.

Dated this \_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_, 2008

\_\_\_\_\_  
Director of the Society

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Witness

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Director of the Society

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Witness