THE CONSTITUTION, ARTICLES OF FAITH, COVENANT, AND BY-LAWS OF FIRST MISSIONARY BAPTIST CHURCH OF ALBION ILLINOIS

PREAMBLE

For the more certain preservation and security of the principles of our faith, and to the end that this body may be governed in an orderly manner consistent with the teachings of the Holy Bible, and for the purpose of preserving the liberties inherent in each individual member of this church and the freedom of action of this body with respect to its relation to other church of the same faith, we do declare and establish this Constitution and Bylaws.

ARTICLE I.

SECTION 1. NAME:

This body shall be known as the First Missionary Baptist Church of Albion, Illinois, affiliated with the Southern Baptist Convention. It is incorporated as the First Missionary Baptist Church of Albion, Illinois.

SECTION 2. OBJECTIVES:

- To be a dynamic spiritual organism empowered by the Holy Spirit to share Christ with as many people as possible in our church, community, and throughout the world.
- To be a worshipping fellowship, experiencing an awareness of God, recognizing His person, and responding in obedience to His leadership.
- To experience an increasing meaningful fellowship with God and fellow believers.
- To help people experience a growing knowledge of God and man.
- To be a church that ministers unselfishly to persons in the community and world in Jesus' name.
- To be a church whose purpose is to be Christlike in our daily living by emphasizing total commitment of life, personality, and possessions to the leadership of Christ.

ARTICLE II. ARTICLES OF FAITH

1. OF THE TRUE GOD

We believe that there is one, and only one true God, an intelligent, spiritual, and personal Being, the Creator, Preserver, and Ruler of the Universe, infinite in holiness and all other perfection to whom we owe the highest love, reverence, and obedience. He is revealed to us as Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, each with distinct personal attributes, but without division of nature, essence or being.

2. OF THE SCRIPTURES

We believe that the Holy Bible was written by men divinely inspired and is a perfect treasure of heavenly instruction; that it has God for its author, salvation for its end, and truth, without an mixture of error, for its matter; that it reveals the principles by which God will judge us; and therefore is, and will remain to the end of the world, the true center of Christian union, and the supreme standard by which all human conduct, creeds and opinions should be tried.

3. OF PROVIDENCE

God from eternity decrees or permits all things that come to pass, and perpetually upholds, directs and governs all creatures and all events; yet so as not in any wise to be the author or approved of sin nor to destroy the free will and responsibility of intelligent creatures.

4. OF THE FALL OF MAN

We believe that man was created in holiness, under the law of his Maker; but by voluntary transgression fell from that holy and happy state; in consequence of which all mankind are now sinners, not by constraint but choice; being by nature utterly void of that holiness required by the law of God, positively inclined to evil; and therefore under just condemnation to eternal ruin, without defense or excuse.

5. OF THE MEDIATOR

We believe that Jesus Christ, the only begotten Son of God is the divinely appointed mediator between God and man. Having taken upon Himself human nature, yet without sin, He perfectly fulfilled the law, suffered and died upon the cross for the salvation of sinners. He was buried, and rose again the third day, and ascended to His Father, at whose right hand He ever lives to make intercession for His people. He is the only Mediator, the Prophet, Priest and King of the Church, and Sovereign of the Universe.

6. OF REGENERATION

We believe that regeneration is a change of heart, wrought by the Holy Spirit, who quickens those dead in trespasses of sins, enlightening their minds spiritually and savingly to understand the Word of God, and renewing their whole nature, so that they love and practice holiness. It is a work of God's free and special grace alone.

7. OF REPENTANCE

We believe that repentance is that condition wherein a person being, by the Holy Spirit, made sensible of the manifold evil of his sin, humbles himself for it, with godly sorrow, detestation of it, and self-abhorrence, with a purpose and endeavor to walk with God so as to please Him in all things.

8. OF FAITH

We believe that Saving Faith is the belief, on God's authority, of whatsoever is revealed in His word concerning Christ; accepting and resting upon Him alone for justification, sanctification and eternal life. It is wrought in the heart by the Holy Spirit, and leads to a life of holiness.

9. OF GOD'S PURPOSE OF GRACE

We believe that election is the eternal purpose of God, according to which He graciously regenerates, sanctifies, and saves sinners; that being perfectly consistent with the free agency of man, it comprehends all the means in connection with the end; that it is a most glorious display of God's sovereign goodness, being infinitely free, wise, holy, and unchangeable; that it utterly excludes boosting and promotes humility, love, prayer, praise, trust in God, and active imitation of His free mercy; that it encourages the use of means in the highest degree; that it may be ascertained by its effects in all who truly

believe the gospel; that it is the foundation of Christian assurance; and that to ascertain it with regard to ourselves demands and deserves the utmost diligence.

10. OF JUSTIFICATION

We believe that justification is God's gracious and full acquittal upon principles of righteousness, of all sinners who believe in Jesus Christ as their personal Saviour. This blessing is bestowed, not in consideration of any works of righteousness which we have done, but through the redemption that is in and through Jesus Christ.

11. OF SANCTIFICATION

We believe that sanctification is the process by which, according to the will of God, we are made partakers of His holiness; and that it is a progressive work; that it is begun in regeneration; and that it is carried on in the hearts of believers by the presence and power of the Holy Spirit, the Sealer and Comforter, in the continual use of the appointed means – especially, the word of God, self-examination, self-denial, watchfulness, and prayer.

12. OF THE PERSEVERANCE OF SAINTS

We believe that such only are real believers as endure unto the end; that their persevering attachment to Christ is the grand mark which distinguishes them from superficial professors; that a special providence watches over their welfare, and that they are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation.

13. OF A GOSPEL CHURCH

We believe that a visible church of Christ is a congregation of baptized believers, associated by covenant in the faith and fellowship of the gospel; observing the ordinances of Christ; governed by His laws; and exercising the gifts, rights and privileges invested in them by His word; that it's only scriptural officers are bishops or pastors and deacons, whose qualifications, claims and duties are defined in the Epistles of Timothy and Titus.

14. OF BAPTISM AND THE LORD'S SUPPER

We believe that Christian baptism is the immersion in water of a believer, into the name of the Father, and Son, and Holy Ghost; to show forth in a solemn and beautiful emblem, our faith in the crucified, buried, and rise Saviour, with its effect, in our death to sin and resurrection to a new life; that it is prerequisite to the privileges of a church relation; and to the Lord's Supper, in which the members of the church by the sacred use of bread and wine, are to commemorate together the dying love of Christ; preceded always by solemn self-examination.

15. OF THE CHRISTIAN SABBATH

We believe that the first day of the week is the Lord's Day, or Christian Sabbath; and it is to be kept sacred to religious purposes, by abstaining from all secular labor and sinful recreations, by the devout observance of all the means of grace, both private and public and by preparation for that rest that remaineth for the people of God.

16. OF CIVIL GOVERNMENT

We believe that civil government is of divine appointment, for the interest and good order of human society; and magistrates are to be prayed for, conscientiously honored, and obeyed; except only things opposed to the will of our Lord Jesus Christ, who is the Only Lord of the conscience, and the Prince of the kings of the earth.

17. OF THE RIGHTEOUS AND THE WICKED

WE believe that there is a radical and essential difference between the righteous and the wicked; that such only as through faith are justified in the name of the Lord Jesus, and sanctified by the Spirit of our God, are truly righteous in His esteem; while all such as continue in impenitence and unbelief are in His sight wicked, and under the curse; and this distinction holds among men both in and after death.

18. OF THE WORLD TO COME

We believe that the end of this world is approaching; that at the Last Day Christ will descend from heaven, and raise the dead from the grave to final retribution; that solemn separation will then take place; that the wicked will be adjudged to endless punishment,

and the righteous to endless joy; and that this judgment will fix forever the final state of man in heaven or hell, on principles of righteousness.

ARTICLE III. CHURCH COVENANT

Having been led, as we believe, by the Spirit of God, to receive the Lord Jesus Christ as our Saviour, and on the profession of our faith, having been baptized in the name of the Father, and the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, 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, discipline and doctrines; to contribute cheerfully and regularly to support of the ministry, the expenses for the church, the relief of the poor and the spread of the gospel through all nations.

We also engage to maintain family and secret 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 abstain from the sale and use of intoxicating drinks as a beverage and to be zealous in our efforts to advance the kingdom of our Saviour.

We further engage to watch over one another in brotherly love; to remember each other in prayer; to aid each other in sickness and distress; to cultivate Christian sympathy in feeling and courtesy in speech; to be slow to take offense, but always ready for reconciliation and mindful of the rules of our Saviour 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 work.

ARTICLE IV. CHARACTER OF THIS CHURCH

SECTION 1. 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, but it recognizes and sustains obligation of mutual counsel and practice, this church will cooperate with and support such organizations as may be affiliated with the Southern Baptist Convention.

SECTION 2. Doctrine:

This church receives the Scriptures as its authority in matters of faith and practice. Its understanding of Christian truth as contained therein is in essential accord with the belief of the Baptist churches as indicated in the Articles of Faith herein.

SECTION 3. Cooperation:

Cooperation between various Christian denominations is permissible and desirable when the end to be attained is justified and when such cooperation involved no violation of conscience or compromise of loyalty to Christ.

BY-LAWS

ARTICLE I. MEMBERSHIP

SECTION 1. Composition:

This body shall be composed of persons who have confessed Jesus Christ to be their Savior and Lord, have been scripturally baptized, and have been regularly received into the fellowship of this church.

SECTION 2.

Any person may offer themselves as a candidate for membership in this church. All such candidates shall be introduced to the church at any regular church service for membership. Such candidates may be presented at the next regular business meeting, after having been visited by the pastor and a deacon, or two deacons.

SECTION 3.

Petition for Membership: Petition for membership may be made by the following methods:

A. Professions of faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, requesting baptism and church membership. (see Section 2)

B. Transfer by letter from another Southern Baptist Church. (see Section 2)

C. Statement claiming membership in a Southern Baptist Church provided that neither the applicant nor the church can secure a letter of transfer.

(see Section 2)

D. A person professing Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord, and afterwards having been scripturally baptized (by immersion, not for salvation). (see Section 2)

SECTION 4. Duties:

New member will be expected to participate in the church's new member orientation plan. Members are expected, first of all, to be faithful in all the duties essential to the Christian life; and also to attend faithfully the services of this church, to give regularly to its support and to its causes, according to God's plan of tithes and offerings, and to share in its organizations.

SECTION 5. Rights:

All members who are in good standing may act and vote in the transactions of the church.

SECTION 6. Termination:

The continuance of membership shall be subject to the principles and usage of Southern Baptist Churches, and especially as follows:

A. Transfer of letter. A letter will be granted to another Southern Baptist Church upon the request of such church, and will not be given to the individual as he leaves.

B. Any member who has made a change of faith shall be removed from the church roll by erasure. Such action is to be confirmed by action of the church in a regular business meeting. An acknowledgment of their membership and removal from our church roll shall be sent to the requesting church.

C. Upon the death of any member, the name is removed from the roll of membership.

D. When a member become an offense to the church and to its good name by reason of immorality or unchristian conduct or by persistent breech of his covenant vows, or by advocating doctrines out of harmony with those held by

the church, the church may terminate his membership, but only after due notice and hearing, and after faithful efforts have been made to bring such member to repentance and amendment.

E. If a member in good standing requests to be released from his covenant obligations to the church for reasons which the church may finally deem satisfactory, after it shall have patiently and kindly endeavored to secure his continuation in its fellowship, such requests may be granted and church membership terminated.

SECTION 7. Inactive Roll:

An inactive roll of all membership shall be kept which shall be composed of these people who at the end of the church year have not been in attendance or contributed to the church in any way during the past year, except in case of illness or physical disability, upon recommendation of the Deacons. The church roll shall thus be revised annually by the Deacons and the Church Clerk.

SECTION 8. Restoration:

Any person whose membership has been terminated for any offense may be restored by vote of the church (must have quorum) upon evidence of his repentance or reformation. Such persons may present themselves for membership at any regular church service, following the guidelines of Section 2.

ARTICLE II. CHURCH OFFICERS

PASTOR

Selection of Pastor

A pastor shall be chosen and called by the church whenever a vacancy occurs in this office. His election shall take place in a meeting called for that purpose. A pastor search committee, consisting of five members and an alternate, shall be elected by the church to seek out a suitable pastor, and its recommendation will constitute a nomination. Any member has the privilege of recommending individuals to the pastor search committee. The committee shall bring to the consideration of the church only one man at a time. Election shall be by ballot, and affirmative vote of three-fourths of those present, (quorum required) being necessary for election.

Duties of Pastor

The pastor is spiritual leader of the congregation. He shall have in charge the welfare and oversight of the church. He shall preside at all meetings of the church, except herein after provided. He shall be member ex-officio of all committees and auxiliary organizations.

Declaring a Vacancy

The pastor, once elected, shall serve until the relationship is terminated by mutual consent of the church and the pastor, upon his resignation, or a vote by the church to relieve him of his duties. In the event of the pastor resigning or a vote by the church to relieve him of his duties, his compensation shall continue for thirty days.

Should any member of the church have a formal complaint against the pastor, they should bring in writing such complaint, signed by the complainer to a deacon, to be presented to the Body of Deacons. If such complaint has merit and cannot be settled between the Body of Deacons, pastor and complainer, it will then be brought by the Body of Deacons to the church.

In the event of the necessity to declare the office of pastor vacant, the Chairman of the Body of Deacons or deacon designee shall announce a special meeting at two regular scheduled worship services, for said purpose, and advance notice of one week having been given to the church; and an affirmative vote of two-thirds of those present and voting, (quorum necessary), shall be necessary to declare a vacancy. In case a vacancy is declared, thirty days compensation shall be given the pastor.

Pulpit Supply in the Event of a Vacancy

In the event of a vacancy in the office of pastor, the deacons shall secure a pulpit supply until a pastor is called, it being understood that the wishes of the pastor search committee shall prevail in regard to the matter of the pulpit supply, inasmuch as they have been charged with responsibility of recommending a suitable man for the office of pastor.

DEACONS

SECTION I.

All Deacons shall be ordained by the local church. When candidate selected by the church for the office of Deacon, is not ordained he shall be ordained at a time

established by the church before he may assume the duties of the office.

SECTION II. Chairman and meeting of Deacons:

A chairman of the Body of Deacons shall be recommended annually by the Administrative Committee. The Body of Deacons shall meet monthly. Every member of the Body of Deacons is expected to attend all Deacon's meetings.

SECTION III. General duties of the Deacons:

It shall be the duty of all the Deacons, in cooperation with the pastor, to have general supervision of the moral, spiritual, and temporal welfare of the Church. It shall be the duty of the deacons in cooperation with the pastor, to visit the membership of the church, particularly the sick and distressed; to care for the discipline of the church – guided by the principles set forth in Matthew 18:15-17; I Corinthians 5:9-13; I Thessalonians 5:12-14; to distribute the Lord's Supper and to cooperate in every department of the church work. The deacon's wives shall be in charge of all arrangements for the ordinance of baptism and the ordinance of the Lord's Supper. In the event that there may not be enough Deacons to serve the Lord's Supper, the deacons will maintain a list of men who are current members of the church, and in good standing, who are of the right heart and mind, that could be asked to help serve.

SECTION IV. Deacon Emeritus:

Any deacon may request the status of Deacon Emeritus who has reached the age of sixty-five and who has served six or more years as a member of the Body of Deacons of this church.

Upon recommendation of the Body of Deacons and approval of the church, they shall receive the status of Deacon Emeritus in the recognition of loyal Christian service. This also applies to any and all Deacons who are in ill health and cannot serve in the full capacity as Deacon.

When a Deacon retires to Deacon Emeritus, he shall continue to serve the Lord's Supper and sit in on ordination services, and to enjoy all other privileges of office of Deacon, except they shall have no vote in decisions of the active body of Deacons.

Should a deacon of emeritus status request to be re-instated to the Active Body of Deacons, such request must be first approved by the Deacons then approved by the church body.

SECTION V.

This church is under no obligation, but may accept, with majority vote, as deacon, a brother who comes to the church from another Southern Baptist Church where he has served as deacon.

MODERATOR

The moderator shall be elected annually. In the absence of the moderator, the assistant moderator, who shall also be elected annually, shall preside. In the absence of both, the chairman of the deacons shall preside and in his absence the clerk shall call the church to order and moderator pro-tem shall be elected.

CLERK

The church shall elect a clerk annually. The clerk of the church shall keep in a suitable book, a record of all actions of the church, except as otherwise herein provided. He (or she), shall keep a register of the names of the members, with dates of admission, dismissal, or death, together with a report of baptisms. He (or she), shall see that all officers, members of committees, and delegates are notified of their election or appointment. He (or she), shall issue letters of dismissal voted by the church, preserve all communication and written official reports and give a legal notice of all meetings where such notice is necessary, as indicated in these by-laws. The clerk shall consider it a part of his or her responsibility to promote loyalty and efficiency in the church life.

TREASURER

The church shall elect a Church Treasurer annually, unless they are hired as paid staff. It shall be the duty of the treasurer to receive, preserve, and pay out, upon approval of the church, all money, or things of value paid or given to the church, keeping, at ALL times an itemized account of all receipts and disbursements. Payment of bills for local work and expenses shall be made promptly by check, and all funds received for denominational or other causes shall be remitted at least monthly by check. It shall be the duty of the treasurer to render the church at regular monthly business meetings an itemized report of all receipts. All books and records, and accounts kept by the treasurer shall be considered the property of the church. The books shall be open at all times to inspection by any member of the church. The treasurer shall consider it a part of their responsibility to

promote in every proper way, scriptural giving on the part of the entire membership.

FINANCIAL SECRETARY

The financial secretary shall be elected annually. They shall keep a record of all gifts received by the church through the regular envelopes and give each donor individual credit for the gift that they have given. This information shall be made available to anyone desiring to know their gifts to the church, BUT no member shall be give information concerning the gifts of any other member with the exception of the financial secretary, who shall hold this information in confidence.

OFFICERS OF THE CHURCH ORGANIZATIONS

All organizations of the church shall be under church control, all officers being elected annually by the church and reporting regularly to the church. It is understood that the pastor is ex-officio head of all organizations named and his leadership is to be recognized in them all.

ARTICLE III. STANDING COMMITTEES

The following standing committees shall be elected annually.

1. The **Board of Trustees** shall consist of six (6) members, serving three (3) years; 2 retiring and 2 being elected annually. They shall elect a chairman each year from the board of trustees. Two-thirds of the trustees will constitute a quorum for transacting any business. The Board of Trustees shall hold in trust the property of the church. They shall have the actual care of all the church property, but shall have no power to buy, sell, mortgage, lease, or transfer any property without a specific vote of the church authorizing such action. They shall supervise the custodians and shall set up a schedule of duties and are also responsible for evaluating all paid staff and salaries.

2. The **Finance Committee** shall consist of seven members, one shall be the church treasurer, one shall be the assistant treasurer, one shall be the financial secretary, the clerk, and three elected members who will serve

no more than three consecutive years and must take a one year break before being eligible to serve again. This committee shall prepare and submit to the church a budget, which will include all items and amounts needed for the expense and purpose of the church.

3. The **Administrative Committee** shall consist of seven members. The pastor, a deacon, the church clerk and four members elected by the committee. The four elected church members may serve in their positions for up to three consecutive years. After which they must take a one year break before being eligible to serve again. The Administrative Committee is responsible for evaluating church members' skills and distributing interest information about serving on committees. The Committee will be nominating church members to fill the elected committee positions and yearly church positions. The committee is also responsible for evaluating all paid staff and salaries. They are also to ensure the church is following through on all voted on business meeting motions and following the church's constitution and Bylaws.

Job Description of Administrative Committee:

1. Coordinating the administrative tasks within the church.

I. Nominate persons to fill voluntary committees and positions.

II. Ensure church is following through on business meeting motions and following the church's constitution and Bylaws.

III. Make nomination of organizational heads (Discipleship Training, W.M.U., Brotherhood, Sunday School Director) to the church.

IV. Make nomination for church approval of those who are to serve in the positions of the church.

V. Responsible for drawing up job descriptions for those church Positions nominations are made for.

VI. Communication with all staff concerning ministry done.

VII. Provide an evaluation of new employees within 90 days and evaluate staff no less than once annually, and no less than 4

prior to the drawing up of the new budget of staff members.

VIII. Bring compensation recommendations to Finance Committee when budget is prepared.

IX. Interview and then recommend all personnel, except pastor and Custodian to church in business meeting.

X. Chairman is a member of the Church Council.

2. People on the Committee:

a. Pastor – not as a voting member

b. Deacon – Should rotate every 3 years

c. Church Clerk – Stays on

d. 4 Elected Church Members* (*Church members may serve in this position for up to 3 years consecutively. After a 1 year break, the same person may serve again.)

4. The **Missions Committee** shall consist of seven members. The pastor, youth leader, Thanksgiving and Summer Lunch Coordinators and three elected church members. The three elected church members may serve in their positions for up to three consecutive years. After which they must take a one year break before being eligible to serve again. The Missions Committee is responsible to promote, plan and educate members of the church of all local, state, national and international missions. They will coordinate programs for reaching men, women, children, youth and seniors outside the church, and Vacation Bible School.

5. The **Discipleship Committee** shall consist of seven members. The pastor, youth leader, children's church director and four elected church members. The four elected church members may serve in their positions for up to three consecutive years. After which they must take a one year break before being eligible to serve again. The committee will be responsible for assisting the pastor in establishing and evaluating a discipleship program to grow deeper the people of the church and assisting in strengthening the spiritual health and accountability of church

members in their participation in discipleship programs. The committee shall also be responsible for the Sunday School program and teachers along with developing and maintaining the church library as a resource for the church body.

6. The **Worship Committee** shall consist of ten members. The pastor, a deacon, music director, audio visual coordinator, nursery coordinator, children's church director, Greeter/usher coordinator, Safety/Security coordinator, Special Events Coordinator and secretary. The worship committee will be responsible for planning and evaluating the worship services of the church, assisting the pastor in planning and promoting revivals, crusades and other special services. The committee shall also ensure adequate greeters, ushers and door security is available for all services. They will assist the nursery coordinator in ensuring adequate and safe nursery services are available for all. They will also be responsible for ensuring there are members trained in running the sound and computer for services. Ushers: The head usher shall be elected annually ad shall be responsible for the seating and comfort of the congregation, the greeting and introduction of visitors, the prevention of interruptions and disturbances and similar needed services. The music director shall be elected annually and shall be charged with the responsibility of providing worshipful music for all services of the church and have general oversight and direction of it in cooperation with the pastor.

7. The **Service Committee** shall consist of up to ten members. The pastor, the Senior Adult Coordinator, Memorial Coordinator, Decoration Coordinator, Kitchen Coordinator, Prayer Breakfast Coordinator, Scholarship Coordinator and enough elected church members to fill positions. The elected church members may serve in their positions for up to three consecutive years. After which they must take a one year break before being eligible to serve again. The service committee is responsible for promoting church members who have been hospitalized, handling memorials and funeral dinners for the families of church members, arranging for the service of food for all church functions and ensuring the church kitchen is kept clean and organized, decorating the church as they

deem fit, working to promote the church and Forest Jostes scholarship and selecting team to choose winners of scholarship.

8. The **Church Development Committee** shall consist of nine members. The pastor, two deacons, two trustees, the treasurer, financial secretary, Stewardship Director/Coordinator and one elected church member. The elected church member may serve in this position for up to three consecutive years. The church development committee shall be over the trustees and the finance committee. The committee is to work to plan for the future of the church along with managing the church's current resources in a unified and biblical manner. This includes, but is not limited to, promoting stewardship within the church, evaluating the present facilities and growth potential in the coming years, assist trustees to maintain the current church building and properties in a cleanly and appealing manner, and make recommendations to finance committee on any budgeting needs for the future.

9. The **Safety and Security Coordinator** shall ensure the safety and well-being of all Sunday morning attendees while maintaining a welcoming and peaceful environment. Ensures all first aid kits are stocked with appropriate supplies. Ensures that the AED is up to date and ready for use. Creates and oversees a security personnel list for Sunday morning services and provides a description of duties to those on the list.

ARTICLE IV. LITERATURE

All literature used regularly by the various departments of the church shall be those published and or recommended by the Southern Baptist Convention or other literature approved by the pastor and church council.

ARTICLE V. MEETINGS

SECTION I.

Public Services shall be held regularly on the Lord's Day and on some regular evening or evenings of each week.

The Lord's Supper shall be observed at least once each quarter.

SECTION II. Business

(1). At any of the regular meetings for worship, the church may without notice, make appointments of delegates to councils or conventions, not upon any other business.

(2). The pastor, clerk, or moderator may call from the pulpit, special business meetings, the particular object clearly stated in the notice. In either case when a special meeting is called, it must be done so at a regular worship service, and no business can be transacted until the next regular worship service or thereafter. This does not affect Article 2 - Declaring a Vacancy.

(3). Unless otherwise stated and provided for in these Bylaws at all business meetings fifteen (15) active members shall constitute a quorum and the majority of those present and voting shall decide all questions. For the call of a pastor, 25% of the active members shall be necessary to constitute a quorum and the affirmative vote of three-fourths of those present are necessary to a choice.

(4). Regular business meetings shall be held monthly second Wednesday of the month.

(5). The parliamentary authority exercised shall be "Robert's Rules of Order".

SECTION III. Order and Procedures of business meeting.

(1). All business meetings shall follow the following order of business.

1. Reading of the minutes of the previous meeting.
2. Report of Officers.
3. Report of Boards and Committees.
4. Unfinished Business.
5. New Business.
6. Correspondence.
7. Adjournment.

ARTICLE VI. DISCIPLINE

SECTION 1.

Should any unhappy differences arise between the members, the aggrieved member should follow, in tender spirit, the rules given by our Lord in the 18th chapter of Matthew.

SECTION 2.

Should any case of gross breach of covenant, or of public scandal occur, the deacons shall endeavor to remove the offense; and if such efforts fail, shall report the case to the church.

SECTION 3.

If the church votes to entertain a complaint, which must be made in writing for all complaints, it shall appoint a reasonable time and place of hearing and notify the person in question thereof, furnishing him with a copy of the charges.

SECTION 4.

At such hearing, the accused member may call to his aid any member of the church as counsel. If he shall not present himself at the appointed, or give satisfactory reasons for his neglect to do so, the church may proceed in his absence.

SECTION 5.

All such proceedings shall proceed with a spirit of Christian kindness and forbearance, but should an adverse decision be reached, the church may proceed to admonish or declare the offender to be no longer in the membership of the church.

ARTICLE VII. THE CHURCH COUNCIL

SECTION 1.

The Church Council, upon being established by authorization of the church, shall seek to correlate and coordinate the activities of the organizations of the church and to help promote it evangelistically, yet with advisory powers only.

SECTION 2.

The Council shall be composed of the pastor, all committee chairmen, and organization heads.

SECTION 3.

The Council shall meet as often as it deems necessary to promote the program of the church, but at least once quarterly.

SECTION 4.

All matter agreed upon by the Council, but not already approved by the church needing church approval, shall be referred to the church for approval or disapproval.

ARTICLE VIII. WEDDINGS AND USE OF FACILITIES

SECTION 1. WEDDINGS

This Church believes in the sanctity of marital union as described in Scripture:

1) God created the first marriage as a sacred covenant relationship between one man and one woman for the purposes of procreation, companionship, and dominion over creation, in keeping with the covenant relationship God himself established with his own creation (Genesis 2:15-24; Romans 1:16-32); and

2) Jesus blessed a marriage celebration between a man and a woman with his presence and his first public miracle, thereby affirming the traditional definition of marriage as a cornerstone of every culture and community (John 2:1-11); and further that he advised those who are for congenital or psychological reasons unable to enter into marriage (i.e. between a man and a woman) to remain single and therefore celibate (Matthew 19:4-12); and

3) Society historically has embraced this traditional definition of marriage, eschewing all other unions as unnatural, inappropriate, and anti-social, and has advocated the family unit of husband and wife and their children as the chief building block of society (Leviticus 18:22-30; Psalm 127:3-5; Romans 1:16-32; 1 Corinthians 7:1-2; Hebrews 13:4).

This Church adheres to the doctrinal statements on Marriage and Family by our denomination, the Southern Baptist Convention, as stated in the most recent version of the *Baptist Faith and Message*, that marriage is to be defined biblically and theologically in God's own terms rather than man-made terms; and further that this church intentionally adheres to the highest standards for marriage, namely biblical standards, and that other legal definitions and court actions are secondary to biblical mandate.

This Church affirms that all marriage ceremonies performed in the name of this church and any related celebrations or activities allowed in its facilities shall be for unions that meet the standards named in this church constitution, and further, that church ministers and staff engage only in marriage ceremonies in keeping with this church's adopted biblical and theological definition of marriage.

SECTION 2. USE OF FACILITIES

The church's facilities were provided through God's benevolence and by the sacrificial generosity of church members. The church desires that its facilities be used for the fellowship of the Body of Christ and always to God's glory. Although the facilities are not generally open to the public, we make our facilities available to approved non-member persons and groups as a witness to our faith, in a spirit of Christian charity, and as a means of demonstration the Gospel of Jesus Christ in practice.

However, facility use will not be permitted to persons or groups holding, advancing, or advocating beliefs, or advancing, advocating, or engaging in practices that conflict with the church's faith or moral teachings, which are summarized in, among other places, the church's constitution and by-laws. Nor may facilities be used for activities that contradict, or are deemed by the pastor and deacons and/or the church membership as inconsistent with, or contrary to the church's faith or moral teachings.

This policy applies to all church facilities, regardless of whether the facilities are connected to the church's sanctuary, because the church sees all of its property as holy and set apart to worship God. See Colossians 3:17.

ARTICLE IX. AMENDMENTS

SECTION 1.

These Constitution and By-laws may be amended by a two-thirds vote of the members, (quorum necessary), at any meeting called for that purpose.

SECTION 2.

No changes shall be made in Article II (Articles of Faith) or in Article III (the church covenant) or in Article IV (Character of this church) except by three-fourths majority vote of all resident members of the church, with the proposed changes having been laid before the church in writing at a business meeting not less than one month before the time for the proposed action and having been read from the pulpit each Sunday during the morning worship after the written proposition is submitted in business session until the time of the voting on the change.

ARTICLE X. ENACTMENT

This Constitution and By-laws with corrections shall become effective upon its passage by a three-fourths majority vote of those voting in the business session for that purpose.

This Constitution, Articles of Faith, Covenant and By-laws was adopted by the First Missionary Baptist Church of Albion, IL., on the 13 day of November, 1996 by a unanimous vote.

Article V, Section II (4) was amended April 14, 1999 by a unanimous vote.

Article VIII was added and articles on Amendments and Enactment renumbered on March 12, 2014.

Article II Church Officers, Treasurer was amended October 13, 2021

Article II Church Officers, Ushers removed October 13, 2021

Article III Standing Committees: Ordinance Committee removed October 13, 2021

Article III Standing Committees: Nominating Committee removed October 13, 2021

Article III Standing Committees: Finance Committee amended October 13, 2021

Article VII. The Church Council, Section 2 amended October 13, 2021

Article III Standing Committee: Committees 4-9 added on November 10, 2021. Passed with two abstentions.

Bylaws Amended October 11, 2023. Passed by Unanimous vote.

Deacons: Section II: changed Nominating to Administrative Committee. Amended October 11, 2023.

Clerk: Added membership to Administrative and Finance Committee. Amended October 11, 2023.

Article III: Standing Committees

#1 Service year and number retiring/elected changed. Amended October 11, 2023.

#2 Budget Committee name changed to Finance Committee. Amended October 11, 2023.

#3 Administrative Committee: added clerk, adjusted number of members and length of service.; moved janitor supervision to trustees; added job description. Amended October 11, 2023.

#4 Mission Committee: removed Nursery and Children's church directors as members, added Thanksgiving Coordinator, added Summer Lunch Coordinator and moved medical equipment to Safety/Security. Amended October 11, 2023.

#5 Discipleship Committee: Changed length of term. Amended October 11, 2023.

#6 Worship Committee: Change length of term, added Greeter/Usher Coordinator, Safety/Security and Special Event Coordinator. Amended October 11, 2023.

#7 Service Committee: changed years of service, number of members, added Senior Adult, Memorial, decoration, kitchen, prayer breakfast and scholarship coordinators. Amended October 11, 2023.

#8 Church Development: adjust years of service; added Stewardship Director/Coordinator and number of members selected. Amended October 11, 2023.

Article V: Section 1: added after each baptism. Amended October 11, 2023.

Section II: #4 reworded date of meeting. Amended October 11, 2023.

Article III: Deacons added, In the event that there may not be enough Deacons to serve the Lord's Supper, the deacons will maintain a list of men who could be asked to serve. Amended November 12, 2025.