

HISTORY, PROCESS, and FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

FBC EDNA - CONSTITUTION & BYLAWS

CHURCH REVIEW OF REVISED CONSTITUTION AND BYLAWS

3/25

To the Membership of FBC Edna,

Greetings from the Constitution and Bylaws (C&B) revision committee. This committee was established in June of 2023, for the purpose of reviewing and revising the FBC Edna C&B documents to ensure that they provide understandable and legally defensible procedures and policy definition.

This letter is written to encourage you to read the Final Draft of the Constitution and Bylaws which can be found on the FBC website (<https://www.fbcedna.org>). You may also pick up a copy from the Church office.

In the course of the review, the C&B committee reviewed numerous comparable Baptist Churches' constitutions and bylaws and used their best practices. In addition, we used our legal consultant, Alliance Defending Freedom (ADF), to review the work and provide suggestions for defensible contents that protect the Church and membership from legal challenges to what we believe.

The review process consisted of providing our Drafts to key leadership individuals first and then to the whole Deacon body. All comments and suggestions were considered by the Committee and the drafts revised as necessary. Consequently, the Committee is now providing the Final Drafts to you, the entire membership, for final review and approval in accordance with the current FBC bylaws.

The following points will provide you some background on the rationale for some of the provisions contained in the documents and seek to answer the frequently asked questions that we received from the reviewers. You will need to read the proposed Drafts to fully understand this letter.

1. **What we Believe:** Although FBC Edna is an independent non-profit corporation, for Federal tax purposes FBC operates under the auspices of the Baptist General Convention of Texas (BGCT) and uses the BGCT IRS tax ID number. The BGCT has adopted the Baptist Faith and Message (BFM 1963) as their Statement of Faith. Currently FBC Edna seeks to replicate these precepts in our Constitution which adds excessive volume to the Constitution and contains the same information. Consequently, the C&B Committee recommends that we simply adopt the BFM 1963, as amended in 1998. We can add to or remove anything we don't like by Constitutional amendment.
2. **Ministerial Exception:** This defines a legal situation where the Church has limited liability as an organization and protects FBC Edna's right to define beliefs and manage personnel. Consequently, the Church will have Pastors (who are ordained) and a "ministerial community" which is comprised of everybody else who serves the Church as either paid staff or volunteers. This "exception" allows the Church to specify the qualifications and acceptable lifestyles of everyone representing the

Church. This includes but is not limited to, teachers, music leaders, youth leaders, missionaries, evangelistic witnesses, OCC volunteers, Upward volunteers, and any service ministries.

3. Committees: Article V of the proposed bylaws provides for three types of Committees plus Ministry Teams. The Church Administrative Committee is being created to determine active/inactive membership status and nominate members of the Ministry Enlistment Committee. The Church Administrative Committee is comprised of up to seven individuals who are the leaders of various functions of the Church. Next are the Standing Committees of which there are seven. Their responsibilities are defined in the proposed bylaws as:
 - a. Those committees necessary for day-to-day operation of the Church.
 - b. Committees controlling more than 20% of the Church budget.
 - c. Have a membership of qualified individuals with relevant skills.
 - d. Other Committees that the Church may approve from time to time with Bylaw revision.

Supporting these committees and the work of the Church are committees defined as Other Committees. Currently there are about 15 such committees and sub-committees who are supported by Ministry Teams as needed. These committees can come and go, upon Church approval, but such changes do not require Bylaw amendments.

4. Supporting Procedures: As a response to the review and recommendation of ADF (legal consultant) we revised and, in some cases, drafted several new policies and procedures which contain ADF recommended wording intended to avoid legal action. The major Policies affected are the FBC Code of Conduct, FBC Wedding Policy, FBC Facility Use Policy, plus several others.
5. WEBSITE: The FBC website now has a section called DOCUMENTS which contains (or will contain) the current, approved copies of the Constitution, Bylaws, BFM1963, Code of Conduct, Wedding Policy, Facility Use Policy, plus more. These documents may be accessed by any Church member at will and whenever necessary.

The Website is: <https://www.fbcedna.org>

This whole process has been very complex and detailed. There is much new information in all these documents and we urge you to review them all. Please feel free to contact any member of the C&B Committee if you have any questions or need clarification.

Final adoption of the NEW Constitution and Bylaws will be done as defined in the EXISTING Bylaws (2013).

Respectfully,

Evan Anders/Clay Whitley, co-chairmen

Members: Margaret Bell, Charlotte Frenzel, Sam Matlock, Jan McClanahan, Garrett Ritter,
John Shutt, Tange Hamilton, Jay Walthall