Constitution and Bylaws

First Baptist Church of Frederick

7040 Bowers Road

Frederick, Maryland 21702

November 15, 2026

CHURCH CONSTITUTION

We constitute ourselves as a Baptist Church and establish this constitution to express and propagate the principles of our faith and to govern the body herein named in an orderly manner. This constitution, in keeping with Baptist tradition and the Baptist Faith and Message of 1963, will ensure the liberties of each individual Church member and the freedom of action of this body.

To this end we do hereby adopt and agree to the following: Name, Statement of Faith, Covenant, and Bylaws.

NAME

This body shall be known as The First Baptist Church of Frederick, Maryland.

STATEMENT OF FAITH

The following Statement of Faith and Church Covenant describe our essentials. We believe that in all things we will have respect for one another.

Having been led by the Spirit of God to receive the Lord Jesus Christ as our Savior:

We believe in God as revealed to us in Jesus Christ.
(John 14:6-9; Colossians 1:15; Hebrews 1:1-3)

We believe that following Christ is central to what it means to be a Christian and that it is our responsibility to practice faith without interference from creeds, clergy or government.
(Matthew 16:24; Matthew 23:8-10; 1 Peter 2:9; 1 John 2:6)

We believe in baptism by immersion as a public profession of faith in Christ and our desire to follow His teaching.
(Matthew 3:13-17: Romans 6:3-4; Acts 8:34-38; Matthew 28:19-20)

We believe the Bible was written by individuals inspired by God's Holy Spirit, and records God's revelation of Himself to us. It is our sole authority in matters of faith and our personal conduct.
(2 Timothy 3:16-17; Luke 24:25-27; 2 Peter 1:20-21; Matthew 5:17-19)

We believe that God has called us to enter not only into a relationship with Him but also into loving relationships with one another in all times and especially in times of crisis or conflict.
(Matthew 22:37-40; James 1:19-20; Colossians 3:13)

We believe that as a church we should be free to determine our own methods for membership, for choosing our leadership, and for our preferences in manner of worship.

(2 Corinthians 3:17; Galatians 5:1)

We believe that as a church we should find ways to cooperate with other Christians, promote friendship with those who are not of the Christian faith, and defend the rights of those who choose to live without faith.
(1 Corinthians 1:2-3; Hebrews 12:14-15; Hebrews 13:16-17)

We believe that we as Christians and as a church should share our faith in Christ locally and collaborate with those who take the Gospel to other places in the world.
(1 Peter 3:15; Matthew 28:19-20; Acts 1:8)

We believe that all who are members of this congregation should worship regularly together, participate in its activities and ministries, and support the Church financially.
(Hebrews 10:24-25; Philippians 4:16-19; 2 Corinthians 8:1-5)

We believe we should strive to uphold justice in every situation in our community.
(Isaiah 56:1; Isaiah 1:17)

We believe that as a Baptist Church we have the freedom to affiliate with whichever Baptist organizations we choose that express the principles of Christian faith.
(Galatians 5:13; Philippians 3:15-17)

We believe in the independence and separation of Church and State.
(1 Timothy 2:1-6; John 8:36; Acts 4:18-20; Matthew 22:21b)

To this end we are known as the First Baptist Church of Frederick, Maryland.

CHURCH COVENANT

We are part of this community because of our commitment to the Lord Jesus Christ as our Savior. We have boldly declared our faith in Him and have been baptized in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

As baptized believers, we make these promises to each other:

With the help of the Holy Spirit, we promise to support each other in Christian love as we journey through life.

We promise to actively participate in the life of this church community to show God's love and we will actively work to assure equality and justice for all people.

We promise to be actively learning more about Christ and how we are to live like Him, and to encourage our children, family, and friends to learn how to pursue a Christ-like life.

We promise to help each other in Christian love, to pray for each other, to give loving support in times of need, to be slow to take offense, and to always be ready to heal broken relationships.

We also promise that this spirit of commitment for each other will spill over from this church community into the larger body of believers, and that we will seek to connect with fellow Christians wherever we are. This is the faith covenant that we shall live by and that undergirds the ministry of First Baptist Church of Frederick, Maryland.

CHURCH BYLAWS

ARTICLE ONE – MEMBERSHIP

I. A person desiring to affiliate with First Baptist Church as a member may do so in the following ways.

   A. By confession of faith in Jesus Christ followed by baptism. Immersion is the mode of baptism practiced by this congregation. Persons with disabilities who are physically unable to be immersed may be offered an alternate form of baptism agreed to by the Pastor.

      1. A person requesting membership by confession of faith and baptism must receive counsel from the Pastor prior to baptism. The purpose of that counseling should be to explain how one's confession of faith and baptism is a public statement of his/her declaration of Jesus Christ as their Savior and their desire to follow Christ's teachings and example.

      2. The Pastor normally administers baptisms. The Pastor or others designated by the Church or Pastor may baptize individuals confessing their faith as Christians.

   B. By statement of a previous confession of faith in Jesus Christ and Christian Believer's Baptism.

   C. By promise of a letter of transfer from another Christian congregation that practices Believer's Baptism.

II. A person desiring to affiliate with First Baptist Church will be received into its fellowship following affirmation by the congregation.

III. A person will be removed from the membership roll of First Baptist Church for the following reasons:

   A. Death

   B. Joining another congregation

C. An individual's request to be removed from the membership roll

D. Action by the Pastor and Deacons, following the New Testament example, on behalf of the Church and for its protection. Such action shall be taken with regret of its necessity, only after attempts by the Pastor and Deacons to bring about reconciliation, and with discretion to protect the identity and reputation of the individual.

ARTICLE TWO – CHURCH OFFICERS

I. PASTOR

A. The Church shall have a Pastor. The Pastor is responsible for leading the Church to function as a New Testament Church. The Pastor will lead the congregation, organization and the Church staff. The Pastor shall supervise all Church employees in line with the Policies and Procedures of the FBC Personnel Handbook.

B. The Pastor is leader of pastoral ministries in the Church. As such, the Pastor works with the Deacons, Committees, and Church staff to:

1. Engage the Church to be a community of worship, discipleship, and mission
2. Proclaim the gospel to believers and unbelievers
3. Care for the Church's members and other persons in the community
4. Work in collaboration with the Deacons and the Nominating Committee to recommend new Deacons and returning Deacons to be considered by a congregational vote.

C. THE CALLING OF A PASTOR

The Nominating Committee for that year shall nominate to the Church, in a special called business meeting, seven (7) persons to serve as a Pulpit Committee. Additional nominations may be made from the floor of the meeting. The Church will then elect seven (7) persons to serve as a Pulpit Committee. Those seven (7) must include the following:

1. At least two (2) active Deacons
2. At least two (2) men and two (2) women

The Pulpit Committee shall elect a Chairperson and Secretary from their number and shall proceed with as little delay as possible to select a Minister of the Gospel whose Christian character and credentials qualify him/her for the Office of Pastor of this Church. The Pulpit Committee shall consult with the Finance Committee and Personnel Committee in determining a salary and benefits package to be voted by the church if it exceeds the approved budgeted amount. When the Committee has made a choice, it shall give at least two (2) weeks' notice to the Church Membership (by mail or email and in the Sunday bulletin) of the meeting at which time it will submit its report. The meeting notice (by mail or email) shall include the salary package, agreed upon responsibilities, and other pertinent information related to the position. See Article V Section 2 for quorum requirements.

At any meeting held for the calling of a Pastor, no name shall be considered, nor any nominations made except that presented by the Pulpit Committee. The vote shall be on the adoption, after discussion, of the report of the Pulpit Committee, and the question put by the moderator shall be "Shall the report of the Pulpit Committee be received, and its recommendation adopted?" If three-fourths (3/4) of the members present, voting by ballot, vote to approve the Pulpit Committee's recommendation, the moderator shall declare the nominee 'called'. Should the Pulpit Committee's recommendation fail to receive the necessary three-fourths (3/4) vote, the moderator shall declare the nominee 'not called', and shall refer the matter to the Pulpit Committee to select another candidate. The meeting shall then be adjourned without debate.

D. TERMINATION OF THE PASTOR

The Pastor shall serve until the relationship is terminated by his request or by the Church's request. Any requests for dismissal of the Pastor shall be presented to the Deacons for a recommendation in consultation with the Personnel Committee. If the Deacons recommend dismissal, the recommendation will be brought to the Church for a three-fourths (3/4) vote, voting by ballot, in the next business meeting.

II. CHURCH STAFF

The Church shall call or employ such staff members as the Church shall need. A job description shall be written by the Personnel Committee when the need for a staff member is determined. Staff members, other than the ministerial staff, shall be employed by the Personnel Committee.

The ministerial staff shall be recommended to the Church by a Search Committee that includes the Chairperson of the Personnel Committee and employed by Church action. The Personnel Committee may appoint an interim ministerial staff person who may begin service prior to employment by Church action, but shall be confirmed at the next business meeting.

In addition to these Bylaws, all employees are governed by the Personnel Committee and are subject to the Policies and Procedures of the FBC Personnel Handbook.

Staff employment (with the exception of the Pastor) may be terminated with a two (2) week notice by the staff member or by the Personnel Committee to the staff member.

III. DEACONS

A. In accordance with the meaning of the work and practice of the New Testament, Deacons are to be servants of the Church. The task of the Deacons is to serve with the Pastor and staff in performing pastoral and ministry tasks, to proclaim the gospel to believers and unbelievers, to care for Church members and other persons in the community, and to work with the Pastor and staff to engage the Church to be a community of worship, discipleship, and mission.

B. The number of Deacons shall be contingent on the growth of the Church. Any increase or decrease in number shall be recommended by the current Deacon body.

C. Persons shall be considered for the Office of Deacon based on his/her personal commitment to Christ.

D. One-third (1/3) of the Deacons shall be presented by the Nominating Committee and elected by the Church each year at the November business meeting and they shall serve for three (3) years. Each Deacon will be a member of the Church and will be ordained by the Church prior to beginning service. In case of death, removal, or incapacity to serve, the Church may elect to fill the unexpired term. After serving a term of three (3) years, no Deacon shall be eligible for re-election until the lapse of at least one (1) year.

E. The Deacons shall be organized as a unit, with Chairperson, Vice-Chairperson, and a Secretary. They shall meet regularly and may organize themselves as they desire for efficiency in service.

F. All ministries of the Church, or ministries conducted on Church property, will be reviewed by the Pastor and the Chair of the Deacons to determine

if they align with the vision of the Church. All ministry descriptions will be reviewed periodically by the Pastor and the staff to ensure continuity of purpose and alignment with the vision and ongoing activities of other ministries for the Church. All ministries must follow standard procedure for procuring resources.

G. Deacons will actively identify potential Deacons and make recommendations to the Nominating Committee and Pastor.

H. The Chair of the Deacons and the Chair of the Church Council will present nominations to fill the vacancies on the Nominating Committee at the November business meeting.

I. The Chair of the Deacons and the Chair of the Personnel Committee will evaluate the Pastor every May as provided in the FBC Personnel Handbook.

J. Communion is an act of Worship led by the Pastor and Deacons. It is symbolic in nature and commemorates with bread and cup all that is meant to draw together faith that Christ took upon Himself the weight of our sin on the cross. The Pastor and Deacons will schedule and serve Communion. Communion is most often served by passing trays of bread and the cup among the congregation. The Pastor and Deacons, however, are free to serve it in other ways that carry through its meaning. Communion served at First Baptist Church is for all people who look to Jesus Christ as their Savior and seek to follow Him.

IV. MODERATOR

The Moderator shall be the Pastor and will preside at all business meetings of the Church. In the absence of the Pastor, the Chairperson of the Deacons shall preside. In the absence of both, the Clerk shall call the Church to order and a Moderator pro-tem shall be elected.

V. CLERK

The Clerk shall be elected annually by the Church from the Church membership. The Clerk shall oversee all actions of the Church, except as otherwise herein noted. The Clerk shall oversee the register of the names of members, with dates of admission, transfer or death, together with a record of baptisms. The Clerk shall issue letters of transfer, voted by the Church, as well as preserve and file all communications, and written official reports. The Clerk will also manage legal notice of all meetings where such notice is necessary, as indicated in these

Bylaws. The Pastor will meet with the Clerk each January to review their responsibilities according to the Bylaws.

The Clerk may delegate some of the clerical responsibility to the Church Office Manager. All Church records are Church property and should be filed in the Church office.

The Clerk shall take the minutes of all business meetings. The Clerk shall maintain an up-to-date copy of this Constitution and Bylaws with all amendments. A copy shall be kept in the Church office.

VI. TREASURER

The Church shall elect annually at the November business meeting a Church Treasurer from the Church membership. It shall be the duty of the Treasurer to oversee, receive, preserve, and make payment, upon receipt of vouchers approved by the proper authority, all money, or things of value paid or given to the Church, keeping always an itemized account of all receipts and disbursements. Upon presentation of the full annual financial report at the next business meeting after the end of each fiscal year, and its approval by the auditing committee, and its acceptance and approval by the Church, the same shall be delivered by the Treasurer to the Church Clerk, who shall keep and preserve it as a part of the permanent records of the Church. The Pastor will meet with the Treasurer each January to review the responsibilities according to the Bylaws.

The Treasurer shall be responsible for the oversight of an accurate, current, personal contribution record for each constituent of the Church.

The Treasurer shall assign duties or delegate some of the clerical responsibilities to the Church Office Manager as he/she deems necessary.

VII. TRUSTEES

There shall be six (6) Trustees, one third (1/3) of whom shall be elected each year to serve for three (3) years, and will hold as a body in trust as the corporate officers the property of the Church until their successors shall be elected. The Chair of the Trustees shall be the designated signatory of legal documentation. The Trustees shall be staffed by members of the Church. They shall have the responsibility for the repair and maintenance of the place of worship, the grounds, and buildings as the need arises, including purchasing needed parts, materials, and/or contractors through the Repair Reserve fund, coordinating with the Treasurer on repairs or maintenance above $100. The Chair shall review and approve all rental and lease agreements involving the Church. They shall have

no authority to buy, sell, mortgage, lease, or transfer any property without a specific **three-fourths (3/4)** vote of the Church authorizing such action.

ARTICLE THREE – COMMITTEES AND COORDINATION GROUPS

All Church Committee members, except the Nominating Committee itself (see Article Three I. G. below (page 11)), shall be recommended by the Nominating Committee and elected by the Church. The members of each Committee listed below shall serve on a three (3) year rotation system with one-third (1/3) to be elected each year. Terms of service will begin in January. All Committees are to meet in January for orientation and electing a chair. The Committee chairs from the previous year shall moderate the election of the new chair. They will review their responsibilities as defined by the Church Bylaws and develop an action plan to accomplish them.

I. CHURCH COUNCIL

A. The Church Council, in consultation with the Pastoral staff, is the primary planning organization of First Baptist Church. The Church Council shall have as its regular members the Chair, the Pastoral staff, the Chairs and/or Directors of all Committees (Finance, Trustees, Nominating, Personnel, Worship, Missions as well as the Deacons and the Bible Study Director), and others as deemed proper by the Council.

B. In planning for growth and ministry, the Church Council shall formulate and recommend to the congregation objectives and goals.

C. The Church Council will meet at least four (4) times a year with Committees and organizations tasked to meet between Council meetings. The Council Chair may call for extra meetings as may be deemed necessary.

D. The Church Council will review yearly its program organizations and ministries and make recommendations for changes.

E. To coordinate the many activities of the Church, the Church Council will oversee a master Church calendar that schedules major events, Council and organizational meetings and any other activities where the use of the building is involved. They will keep the office staff updated on the master calendar to ensure the usage of the building is not double booked and all appropriate paperwork is on file in the Church office.

F. The Church Council shall give needed reports in scheduled business meetings and refer to the congregation for a vote on any action and/or motion authorized in the regular or special business meeting.

G. The Chair of the Church Council and the Chair of the Deacons will present nominations for the member vacancies on the Nominating Committee at the November business meeting.

II. NOMINATING COMMITTEE

The Nominating Committee coordinates the staffing of all Church leadership positions that are filled by volunteers. The Nominating Committee recommends persons for all volunteer positions, except for positions on the Nominating Committee, to be elected by the Church. They will work with all program directors, as necessary, for recruiting volunteers for open positions. The Nominating Committee shall be staffed by members of the Church. Persons needed to fill open Nominating Committee positions will be solicited from the Church by the Church Council/Deacons and voted into their positions at the November business meeting. The term of service will begin in January. For nominating a Pulpit Committee, refer to Article Two, Section I.C.

III. PERSONNEL COMMITTEE

The Personnel Committee shall be staffed by members of the Church. The Personnel Committee may consult with the Finance Committee as needed.

The Personnel Committee shall:

A. Recruit, interview, and employ qualified persons to fill all staff vacancies and other staff positions, except for the ministerial staff.

B. Recommend salaries, benefits, hours, and policies regarding vacations, holidays, sick leave, etc., to the Church through the Finance Committee.

C. Provide written job descriptions for all personnel.

D. Process problems relating to employee-employer relationships that the Pastor is unable to resolve, bringing recommendations to the Church when necessary.

E. Survey the need for additional employees and new positions.

IV. FINANCE COMMITTEE

The Finance Committee shall consist of the Treasurer and six (6) other members presented by the Nominating Committee and elected by the Church. The Finance Committee will be staffed by members of the Church. The Pastor and the Chairperson of the Deacons will select the Chairperson of the Finance Committee from the six (6) members of the Committee (annually). The ministerial staff are ex-officio members of the Committee. The term of service will begin in January.

Duties include developing and recommending a Church budget, planning and directing the budget subscription, and conducting studies and making recommendations concerning proposed expenditures not included in the budget. It shall be the duty of the Treasurer or the Chairperson of the Finance Committee to present to the Church Council at each meeting, and to present a report of assets, receipts, and disbursements at the regular business meetings of the Church.

The annual budget shall be presented for discussion to the Church Council and subsequently provided to each Church member one (1) week before presentation for a vote of approval at the November business meeting.

Furthermore, the Finance Committee shall review expenditures in terms of approved budget allocations and adjust as necessary to maintain the good credit of the Church; establish procedures for handling offerings, including counting methods; and develop and recommend to the Church individuals to form an auditing committee to conduct an annual audit of all financial records.

In addition, the Finance Committee shall develop and recommend an overall stewardship, information, and education plan for the Church.

V. MISSIONS COMMITTEE

The Missions Committee seeks to discover possibilities for local mission projects, shares findings with the Deacons for Church presentation, and serves the Church in establishing and conducting mission projects. Additionally, they shall teach missions, support world missions through prayers and gifts as approved by the Deacons, and interpret information regarding the work of the Church and denomination. All officers shall be members of the Church and shall be elected by and report regularly to the Church.

VI. HOSPITALITY COMMITTEE

The mission of the Hospitality Committee is to cultivate a Christ-centered environment where every member and visitor feels seen, valued, and welcomed through intentional hospitality and shared fellowship.

The Nominating Committee will propose a Hospitality Committee Chairperson each year in the November business meeting. The Chairperson will enlist the committee Leads and Team Members.

The Committee is comprised of the Hospitality Committee Chairperson, a Welcome Lead & Team, a Coffee Hour Lead & Team, a Bereavement Lead & Team, and other Team Members. The Committee Chairperson and all Team Leads should be members of the Church. The term for these positions is one calendar year; however, no lapse in service is required.

Main Responsibilities

- Committee Chair: Enlists Committee Leads & Team Members as required for events. Sits on the Church Council and provides a representative to the Worship Committee. Point of first contact when the church is planning events requiring assistance or leadership from the Hospitality Committee. Also, first point of contact when needing the Bereavement Team's assistance. Responsible for ensuring the kitchen is clean, organized, supplied and being used appropriately by all groups.
- Greeters: Greet people at the door, supply new attendees with nametags, steer new attendees to the Welcome Desk.
- Newcomer Welcome (Welcome Desk) Team: Prepare and distribute welcome packets to first-time guests and provide information to the Deacons for followup.
- Coffee Hour Team: Prepare and set up coffee, juice, and snacks after the worship service.
- Bereavement Care Team: Provides a comforting, organized environment for the grieving family and guests so they can focus on remembrance without logistical stress. Communicates with the family to confirm family's requirements are met.
- For a church-wide fellowship event, the Hospitality Committee acts as the main planning and hosting team to ensure the entire congregation can socialize in a relaxed, well-organized environment.

VII. ALL OTHER COMMITTEES AND ORGANIZATIONAL GROUPS

All Committees and organizational groups not specifically described in this document shall be created and maintained in accordance with Article 2, Section III.F.

ARTICLE FOUR – PROGRAM ORGANIZATION

All organizations of the Church shall be under Church control. All officers shall be members of the Church and shall be elected by and report regularly to the Church.

I. BIBLE STUDY

Bible Study shall have a Director and an Assistant Director to be nominated by the Nominating Committee and approved by the Church.

The Bible Study Director will report to the Church the status of Bible Study at each business meeting.

The Bible Study Director will be a member of the Church Council.

The Bible Study Officers shall:

A. Coordinate the organization of Bible Study classes

B. Identify and recruit teachers for existing and new classes

C. Budget for, distribute, and see that required literature is provided

D. See that up-to-date Bible Study membership and attendance is reported to the Church staff

E. Facilitate teacher training and the use of a variety of materials in classes.

II. WORSHIP COMMITTEE

The Worship Committee shall meet at least quarterly and shall consist of the Music Director and one member each of the following church work groups: ushers, greeters, welcome desk, hospitality, praise team, choir, Lord's Supper, baptism and technology. Each Work Group shall designate their own Worship Committee representative. The Pastor is the chair of this committee.

ARTICLE FIVE – CHURCH MEETINGS

I. WORSHIP SERVICES

The Church shall meet regularly for worship services as decided by the Church. These services shall be for the entire membership of the Church and for all people.

Special services shall be held as deemed appropriate by the Pastor and the Worship Committee.

II. BUSINESS MEETINGS

Every member of the First Baptist Church is entitled and encouraged to participate in Church business meetings by addressing questions to the Chair, proposing or making motions or amendments, and voting on all matters of business.

Twenty-five (25) members shall constitute a quorum for regular and called business meetings of the Church, except for the calling of a Pastor which shall require two-thirds (2/3) of the average worship service attendance for the past six (6) months or 25, whichever is greater.

Business meetings shall be held three times a year, in February, May, and November. The business meetings will be held on the second Sunday of the month.

- All items of business will be announced at least two (2) weeks in advance of each business meeting,
- Roberts Rules of Order, latest edition, is the authority for parliamentary rules of procedure for all business meetings of the Church.

In February, among other business that will be presented, the Treasurer shall present the full annual financial report for the previous year.

In November the Chair of the Finance Committee will present its recommendations for the Church budget that will go into effect on January 1 of the following year. The Chair of the Deacons will present nominations to fill the vacancies on the Nominating Committee and the Nominating Committee will present nominations for election for all other committees, and work groups as reviewed by the Church Council. The Pastor will present the nominations of Deacons. All of the above recommendations and nominations are presented for church approval.

Special business meetings may be held after due notice is given to the congregation by a combination of methods including U. S. mail, electronic communication, Church bulletin and the Church website at least two (2) weeks prior to the meeting. The purpose of the special business meeting will be stated in the notice.

ARTIICLE SIX – AMENDMENTS AND REVIEWS

A change in this Constitution or a significant change to a theological position of the Church may be made at any regular or special business meeting of the Church, providing such proposed change has been presented in writing to the Church membership at least two (2) months prior to the meeting. Amendments to the Constitution or theological position shall be by a three-fourths (3/4) vote of the members present.

Amendments to the Bylaws shall be by a majority vote of the members present at any regular or special business meeting providing such proposed change has been presented in writing to the Church membership at least two (2) weeks prior to the meeting.

In addition, all documents concerning the governance of the Church shall be reviewed every five (5) years or as needed to ensure the smooth operation of the Church, compliance with Church policies and alignment to Church vision and stated mission. These reviews will be conducted by the Church Council and other individuals appointed by the Church.

Appendix

First Baptist Church, Frederick, Maryland

STATEMENT OF FAITH

The following Statement of Faith describes our essentials. We believe that in all things we will have respect for one another.

Having been led by the Spirit of God to receive the Lord Jesus Christ as our Savior:

1. **We believe in God as revealed to us in Jesus Christ**.

   John 14:6-9 Jesus answered, "I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me. If you really know me, you will know my Father as well. From now on, you do know him and have seen him." Philip said, "Lord, show us the Father and that will be enough for us." Jesus answered: "Don't you know me, Philip, even after I have been among you such a long time? Anyone who has seen me has seen the Father. How can you say, 'Show us the Father'?"

   Colossians 1:15 The Son is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn over all creation.

   Hebrews 1:1-3 In the past God spoke to our ancestors through the prophets at many times and in various ways, but in these last days he has spoken to us by his Son, whom he appointed heir of all things, and through whom also he made the universe. The Son is the radiance of God's glory and the exact representation of his being, sustaining all things by his powerful word. After he had provided purification for sins, he sat down at the right hand of the Majesty in heaven.

2. **We believe that following Christ is central to what it means to be a Christian and that it is our responsibility to practice faith without interference from creeds, clergy or government.**

   Matthew 16:24 Then Jesus said to his disciples, "Whoever wants to be my disciple must deny themselves and take up their cross and follow me.

   Matthew 23:8-10 "But you are not to be called 'Rabbi,' for you have one Teacher, and you are all brothers. And do not call anyone on earth 'father,' for you have one Father, and he is in heaven. Nor are you to be called instructors, for you have one Instructor, the Messiah.**"**

   1 Peter 2:9 But you are a chosen people, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, God's special possession, that you may declare the praises of him who called you out of darkness into his wonderful light.

   1 John 2:6 Whoever claims to live in him must live as Jesus did.

3. **We believe in baptism by immersion as a public profession of faith in Christ and our desire to follow His teaching.**

Matthew 3:13-17 Then Jesus came from Galilee to the Jordan to be baptized by John. But John tried to deter him, saying, “I need to be baptized by you, and do you come to me?” Jesus replied, “Let it be so now; it is proper for us to do this to fulfill all righteousness.” Then John consented. As soon as Jesus was baptized, he went up out of the water. At that moment heaven was opened, and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove and alighting on him. And a voice from heaven said, “This is my Son, whom I love; with him I am well pleased.”

Romans 6:3-4 Or don’t you know that all of us who were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death? We were therefore buried with him through baptism into death in order that, just as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, we too may live a new life.

Acts 8:34-38 The eunuch asked Philip, “Tell me, please, who is the prophet talking about, himself or someone else?” Then Philip began with that very passage of Scripture and told him the good news about Jesus. As they traveled along the road, they came to some water and the eunuch said, “Look, here is water. What can stand in the way of my being baptized?” And he gave orders to stop the chariot. Then both Philip and the eunuch went down into the water and Philip baptized him.

Matthew 28:19-20 Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age.”

4. **We believe the Bible was written by individuals inspired by God’s Holy Spirit, and records God’s revelation of Himself to us. It is our sole authority in matters of faith and our personal conduct.**

2 Timothy 3:16-17 All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness, so that the servant of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work.

Luke 24:25-27 He said to them, “How foolish you are, and how slow to believe all that the prophets have spoken! Did not the Messiah have to suffer these things and then enter his glory?” And beginning with Moses and all the Prophets, he explained to them what was said in all the Scriptures concerning himself.

2 Peter 1:20-21 Above all, you must understand that no prophecy of Scripture came about by the prophet’s own interpretation of things. For prophecy never had its origin in the human will, but prophets, though human, spoke from God as they were carried along by the Holy Spirit.

Matthew 5:17-19 “Do not think that I have come to abolish the Law or the Prophets; I have not come to abolish them but to fulfill them. For truly I tell you, until heaven and earth disappear, not the smallest letter, not the least stroke of a pen, will by any means disappear from the Law until everything is accomplished. Therefore anyone who sets aside one of the least of these commands and teaches others accordingly will be called least in the kingdom of heaven, but whoever practices and teaches these commands will be called great in the kingdom of heaven.

5. **We believe that God has called us to enter not only into a relationship with Him but also into loving relationships with one another in all times and especially in times of crisis or conflict.**

   Matthew 22:37-40 Jesus replied: “ ‘Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind.’ This is the first and greatest commandment. And the second is like it: ‘Love your neighbor as yourself.’ All the Law and the Prophets hang on these two commandments.”

   James 1:19-20 My dear brothers and sisters, take note of this: Everyone should be quick to listen, slow to speak and slow to become angry, because human anger does not produce the righteousness that God desires.

   Colossians 3:13 Bear with each other and forgive one another if any of you has a grievance against someone. Forgive as the Lord forgave you.

6. **We believe that as a church we should be free to determine our own methods for membership, for choosing our leadership, and for our preferences in manner of worship.**

   2 Corinthians 3:17 Now the Lord is the Spirit, and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is freedom.

   Galatians 5:1 It is for freedom that Christ has set us free. Stand firm, then, and do not let yourselves be burdened again by a yoke of slavery.

7. **We believe that as a church we should find ways to cooperate with other Christians, promote friendship with those who are not of the Christian faith, and defend the rights of those who choose to live without faith.**

   1 Corinthians 1:2-3 To the church of God in Corinth, to those sanctified in Christ Jesus and called to be holy, together with all those everywhere who call on the name of our Lord Jesus Christ—their Lord and ours: Grace and peace to you from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

   Hebrews 12:14-15 Make every effort to live in peace with everyone and to be holy; without holiness no one will see the Lord. See to it that no one falls short of the grace of God and that no bitter root grows up to cause trouble and defile many.

   Hebrews 13:16-17 And do not forget to do good and to share with others, for with such sacrifices God is pleased. Have confidence in your leaders and submit to their authority, because they keep watch over you as those who must give an account. Do this so that their work will be a joy, not a burden, for that would be of no benefit to you.

8. **We believe that we as Christians and as a church should share our faith in Christ locally and collaborate with those who take the Gospel to other places in the world.**

1 Peter 3:15 But in your hearts revere Christ as Lord. Always be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks you to give the reason for the hope that you have. But do this with gentleness and respect,

Matthew 28:19-20 Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age."

Acts 1:8 But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth."

9. **We believe that all who are members of this congregation should worship regularly together, participate in its activities and ministries, and support the Church financially.**

Hebrews 10:24-25 And let us consider how we may spur one another on toward love and good deeds, not giving up meeting together, as some are in the habit of doing, but encouraging one another—and all the more as you see the Day approaching.

Philippians 4:16-19 for even when I was in Thessalonica, you sent me aid more than once when I was in need. Not that I desire your gifts; what I desire is that more be credited to your account. I have received full payment and have more than enough. I am amply supplied, now that I have received from Epaphroditus the gifts you sent. They are a fragrant offering, an acceptable sacrifice, pleasing to God. And my God will meet all your needs according to the riches of his glory in Christ Jesus.

2 Corinthians 8:1-5 And now, brothers and sisters, we want you to know about the grace that God has given the Macedonian churches. In the midst of a very severe trial, their overflowing joy and their extreme poverty welled up in rich generosity. For I testify that they gave as much as they were able, and even beyond their ability. Entirely on their own, they urgently pleaded with us for the privilege of sharing in this service to the Lord's people. And they exceeded our expectations: They gave themselves first of all to the Lord, and then by the will of God also to us**.**

10. **We believe we should strive to uphold justice in every situation in our community.**

Isaiah 56:1 This is what the Lord says: "Maintain justice and do what is right, for my salvation is close at hand and my righteousness will soon be revealed.

Isaiah 1:17 Learn to do right; seek justice. Defend the oppressed. Take up the cause of the fatherless; plead the case of the widow.

11. We believe that as a Baptist Church we have the freedom to affiliate with whichever Baptist organizations we choose that express the principles of Christian faith.

Galatians 5:13 You, my brothers and sisters, were called to be free. But do not use your freedom to indulge the flesh ; rather, serve one another humbly in love.

Philippians 3:15-17 All of us, then, who are mature should take such a view of things. And if on some point you think differently, that too God will make clear to you. Only let us live up to what we have already attained. Join together in following my example, brothers and sisters, and just as you have us as a model, keep your eyes on those who live as we do.

12. We believe in the independence and separation of Church and State.

1 Timothy 2:1-6 I urge, then, first of all, that requests, prayers, intercession and thanksgiving be made for everyone—for kings and all those in authority, that we may live peaceful and quiet lives in all godliness and holiness. This is good, and pleases God our Savior, who wants all men to be saved and to come to a knowledge of the truth. For there is one God and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus,

John 8:36 So if the Son sets you free, you will be free indeed.

Acts 4:18-20 Then they called them in again and commanded them not to speak or teach at all in the name of Jesus. But Peter and John replied, “Which is right in God’s eyes: to listen to you, or to him? You be the judges! As for us, we cannot help speaking about what we have seen and heard.”

Matthew 22:21b Then he said to them, “So give back to Caesar what is Caesar’s, and to God what is God’s.”

To this end we are known as the First Baptist Church of Frederick, Maryland.