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CONSTITUTION AND BY- LAWS

Of the

FRANKLIN PARK BAPTIST CHURCH

As adopted

April 15, 2012

ARTICLE I

CHURCH NAME

The corporate name of this church, as chartered by the Common Pleas Court of Allegheny County, Pennsylvania, under date of September 29, 1956, and changed in 1986, shall be the Franklin Park Baptist Church.

ARTICLE II

PURPOSE

The purpose of this Church shall be the advancement of the Kingdom of Jesus Christ. It shall seek to attain this end through the public worship of God, the preaching of the Gospel, consistent Christian living by its members, personal evangelism, missionary endeavor, and Christian education. This church shall maintain affiliation and cooperate with the Pittsburgh Baptist Association (PBA); the American Baptist Churches of Pennsylvania and Delaware (ABCOPAD); and the American Baptist Church, USA (ABCUSA)

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ARTICLE III

ARTICLES OF FAITH AND COVENANT

Mission Statement

We are called to proclaim the Gospel of Jesus Christ to grow spiritually and to serve others. We accept the Bible as our authority for faith and practice.

Articles of Faith and Covenant

We have been led, by the Spirit of God, to accept Jesus Christ as our Lord and Savior. Upon the profession of our faith we were baptized in the name of the Father, and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. Our goal is to walk together in Christian love, to worship together and to contribute cheerfully and regularly to the support of the ministry. We also desire to maintain daily devotional time with God. We will teach our children to love God and others and to believe in Jesus Christ.

We will do our best to live as the scripture teaches to “Love one another.” (I John 3:11). We agree to watch over one another in Christian love; to remember each other in prayer, to help each other in sickness and distress; to act and speak with kindness and grace. If we move from this area we will join another church to carry out the principles of God’s word.

51 **ARTICLE IV**

52 **OFFICERS**

53 **Section 1: Officers**

54 All officers of the church shall be active members. The officers of the
55 church shall consist of the following:

- 56 a. **Pastor**
- 57 b. **Members of the Council.** There shall be seven members of a Council, one
58 of whom shall be elected annually by the Council as moderator of the
59 Council and the church. One shall be elected annually by the Council to
60 serve as assistant moderator.
- 61 c. **Clerk**
- 62 d. **Treasurer**
- 63 e. **Financial Secretary**

64 **Section 2: Ministry Teams**

65 Other tasks of the church will be done by ministry teams and task forces.
66 Ministry teams should include, but are not limited to the following:
67 buildings and grounds, finances, membership, Christian education, and
68 missions. These Ministry Teams will be chaired by a member of the
69 Council with other members nominated by the Nominating Committee. Ad-
70 hoc committees may be developed by the Council for both short and long

71 term concerns.

72 **NOTE:** Members of the same household shall not simultaneously serve on the
73 Council or the same ministry team.

74 **Section 3: Elections**

75 **The officers with the exception of the Pastor shall attain office as follows:**

- 76 a. They shall be nominated by the Nominating Committee or from the floor at
77 the annual meeting of the Church.
- 78 b. They will be elected by ballot at the annual meeting of the Church.
- 79 c. A quorum (20% of the active Church membership) must be present and
80 voting at the annual meeting to hold these elections.
- 81 d. A simple majority vote is required to elect the officers.
- 82 e. Those elected shall hold that office for the specified term of that office or
83 until their successors are elected. If a vacancy in any office shall occur at
84 any time, the Nominating Committee shall appoint a replacement to serve.

85 **Section 4: General Duties of the Officers**

- 86 a. All elected officers of this Church are expected to observe the Articles of
87 Faith and Covenant and strive to be an example for the membership and
88 world at large.
- 89 b. The officers are expected to perform all the duties of the office to which
90 they are elected, to attend meetings regularly and to contribute cheerfully

91 and generously to the financial support of the Church, unless prevented
92 by sickness or other causes beyond their control. If an individual should
93 become unable or unwilling to complete his/her term, he/she may submit
94 a letter of resignation to the Council.

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ARTICLE V

97

PASTOR

98 Section 1: The Call of a Pastor

- 99 a. A call to a pastor may be extended upon a three-fourths ballot vote of the
100 congregation assembled for such purpose.
- 101 b. The notice of above described meeting shall be announced for two (2)
102 weeks through all appropriate forms of communications. (example: pulpit,
103 bulletin, newsletter, web site)
- 104 c. A majority of active members must be present for the election to be held.
- 105 d. Only one candidate shall be presented to the Church at one time.

106 Section 2: Term of the Pastorate

- 107 a. The Pastor shall serve as long as the Pastor and the Church feel it is
108 advisable.
- 109 b. In the event of a resignation, the Pastor shall render notice thirty (30) days
110 in advance unless an emergency shall cause the congregation to accept a

111 shorter notification.

112 c. In case the Pastor's ministry should prove unsatisfactory to the Church for
113 moral or spiritual reasons, an appeal by any active member may be made to
114 the Council for investigation. If warranted, the Personnel Committee may
115 bring these issues to the attention of the whole Church in special
116 congregational business meeting, (See Article XVIII, Section 2b) where a
117 three-fourths majority vote may request the Pastor's resignation or sever the
118 employment relationship.

119 **Section 3: Qualifications**

120 The Pastor shall be an ordained American Baptist minister eligible for
121 recognition by and in the American Baptist Churches U.S.A. (ABCUSA).

122 **Section 4: Benefits for the Pastor**

123 All benefits, such as salary and vacation shall be mutually agreed upon by
124 the Pastor and Council.

125 **Section 5: Duties of the Pastor**

126 a. The Pastor shall preach the Gospel, administer the ordinances, and as the
127 church's spiritual leader, exercise Pastoral concern for the members and
128 welfare of the congregation and conduct services of public worship and
129 carry out the duties generally assumed by Baptist ministers.

130 b. The Pastor shall be an ex-officio member, without vote, of the Church

- 131 Council, Ministry Teams, and all committees of the Church.
- 132 c. The Pastor shall cooperate with the Council and committees in coordinating
- 133 the total program of the Church.
- 134 d. The Pastor shall work cooperatively with the denominational leaders and
- 135 maintain an active role as a part of the ABCUSA.

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ARTICLE VI

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CHURCH COUNCIL

139 Section 1: Selection of the Church Council Members

- 140 a. The Members of the Church Council shall be elected in the manner
- 141 described in Article IV, Section 3, for a term of two (2) years.
- 142 b. A second term may be served, but further terms may not be served before a
- 143 lapse of one (1) year.
- 144 c. Terms will be staggered so that approximately half of the council will be
- 145 elected each year.

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147 Section 2: Duties of the Church Council

- 148 a. The Council shall be the general planning body of the church.
- 149 b. The Council shall promote the spiritual welfare of the church.
- 150 c. The Council shall appoint ad-hoc committees, individuals, and task forces to

- 151 carry out the work of the church.
- 152 d. The Council shall, in consultation with the Pastor, appoint delegates to
153 organizations with which this church is affiliated.
- 154 e. The Council, in consultation with the Pastor, shall provide leadership for
155 meetings in absence of the Pastor. It shall be responsible for obtaining an
156 interim pastor or supply preacher when necessary.
- 157 f. The Council shall constitute the standing committee of the Church for
158 purpose of discipline, and it shall be its duty to report to the Church after
159 having taken the proper steps in any case of misconduct needing action.
- 160 g. Members desiring to make complaints against the Church, or any member
161 of it, must first submit those complaints in writing to the Council, who are to
162 be certain that the described steps of Matthew 18:15-17 are duly taken.
- 163 h. The council shall prepare an annual budget for the Current Expense and
164 Building Funds and present it to the Church for approval.
- 165 i. The Council shall be responsible for the properties of the Church in
166 accordance with the laws of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, and shall
167 discharge their duties in good faith and with that diligence, care and skill
168 which ordinary prudent persons would exercise under similar circumstances
169 in business affairs.
- 170 j. The Council may be authorized at any business meeting of the Church to

171 borrow money required for the needs of the Church. However, in the event
172 of any catastrophe or emergency affecting the protection or preservation of
173 church property, the Council shall have authority to make or contract
174 necessary expenditures not to exceed the sum of \$25,000. A report of any
175 such special expenditures or contracts shall be made at the next business
176 meeting of the Church.

177 k. The Council may be authorized at any business meeting of the Church, to
178 purchase real estate, or to sell, lease or otherwise dispose of any real estate
179 or other assets owned by the Church, provided that such authority shall be
180 voted by an actual majority of the active members of the Church.

181 l. The Council shall have the authority to establish policies for use of the
182 church building by individual church members, denominational and
183 community groups.

184 m. The Council has the authority to grant or withhold approval for fund raising
185 held within the church building or by any group that is a part of the
186 congregation.

187 n. The Council and Ministry Teams shall submit a written report to the
188 church at its annual meeting.

189 o. Contracts and church appropriations must be approved by a simple majority
190 of members of the Council. Two (2) signatures are required for all contracts

191 and appropriations. Two (2) of the following have signature authority;
192 Clerk, Moderator, and Assistant Moderator.

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ARTICLE VII

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MODERATOR

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a. The Moderator shall act as chairperson of all regular and special meetings of
197 the Church and Council. In the absence of the Moderator, the Assistant
198 Moderator will lead the meeting.

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b. The Moderator shall assure that all officers, boards, and committee
200 members are made aware of their responsibilities.

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ARTICLE VIII

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CLERK

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Section 1: Selection of the Clerk

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a. The Clerk shall be elected in the manner described in Article IV, Section 3,
206 for a term of two (2) years.

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b. A second term may be served, but further terms may not be served before a
208 lapse of one (1) year.

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Section 2: Duties of the Clerk

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a. The Clerk shall keep a complete and permanent record of all meetings held

211 and business transacted, all resolutions passed, and reports of all committees
212 and officers.

213 b. The Clerk shall keep a complete registry of membership showing name,
214 date and manner of reception, and date and manner of dismissal. These
215 records shall be available for inspection by any active member of the
216 church.

217 c. The Clerk shall conduct the official correspondence, preserve all documents,
218 letters, papers and reports; and issue letters of dismissal and certificates of
219 Christian character and be custodian of the Church seal.

220 d. The Clerk shall prepare the Annual Letter to the Pittsburgh Baptist
221 Association, and the annual statement of the usual statistical information of
222 the Church.

223 e. At the annual meeting, the Clerk shall make a report of the membership
224 changes of the preceding year, giving the names and manner of both
225 additions and dismissals, as well as the names of those who have died
226 during the year.

227 f. The Clerk will be an ex-officio member of the Church Council.

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ARTICLE IX

TREASURER

Section 1: Election of the Treasurer

- a. A Treasurer shall be elected to serve for three (3) years, in the manner described in Article IV, Section 3.
- b. The Treasurer may be elected to subsequent terms.
- c. The Treasurer shall be bonded by a reliable bonding company, with the premiums paid out of church funds.

Section 2: Duties of the Treasurer

- a. The Treasurer shall keep an accurate record of all receipts and disbursements except for the Benevolence Fund, which shall be handled entirely by the Benevolence Committee of the Mission Ministry Team.
- b. The Treasurer shall make disbursements in accordance with the approved budget and as directed by the Council of the Church.
- c. The Treasurer of the Church shall submit a written report to the church at its annual meeting.
- d. The Treasurer shall be an ex-officio member of the Council.

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ARTICLE X

FINANCIAL SECRETARY

Section 1: Election of the Financial Secretary

- a. A Financial Secretary shall be elected to serve for three (3) years, in the manner described in Article IV, Section 3.
- b. The Financial Secretary may be elected to subsequent terms.

Section 2: Duties of the Financial Secretary

- a. The Financial Secretary shall maintain a tracking system for contributions to the church funds. He/She shall treat the amount of each individual's pledge and contributions as confidential and shall not disclose them to anyone other than such persons as may be required by law to be granted access to such information.
- b. The Financial Secretary shall keep a record of all pledges and identified contributions.
- c. The Financial Secretary shall send statements to all identified contributors at least annually.
- d. The Financial Secretary shall be a member of the Finance Committee, and by such shall assist in the counting of all offerings, with the exception of the Benevolence Fund.

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ARTICLE XI

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MINISTRY TEAMS

Section 1: Membership

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Ministry Teams will consist of at least 2 and not more than 5 members

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nominated by the Nominating Committee and elected to one year terms. A

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team member may serve up to four consecutive terms on the same

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committee. (See Article IV Section 2).

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Section 2: Function

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Ministry teams are groups that perform specific functions in the life of the

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church. They are authorized to spend money or do specific tasks by the

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Church Council. Each Ministry Team is chaired by a member of the Church

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Council.

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Section 3: Recommended Ministry Teams

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The following Ministry Teams are recommended:

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- Christian Education will be responsible for the organization, administration

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and supervision of the Christian Education Program.

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- Finance will monitor the financial resources of the church and make

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recommendations to the Council.

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- Building and Grounds will maintain and repair as needed the property and

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building consulting with the Council as needed.

- 291 • Membership will oversee issues of membership and congregational caring,
292 and encourage opportunities for fellowship within the congregation.
- 293 • Missions will encourage the activities and support of ministries to our
294 community, and the world around us. This will also serve as the Benevolence
295 Committee of the church and encourage denominational offerings for
296 ministry.

297 Ministry teams may be added or deleted at the discretion of the Church Council.

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ARTICLE XII

300

NOMINATING COMMITTEE

Section 1: Membership

302 The Nominating Committee shall consist of five (5) members nominated by
303 the previous year's Nominating Committee and elected at the annual
304 business meeting.

Section 2: Meetings of the Nominating Committee

306 a. The Assistant Moderator of the Council shall be the chair of the Nominating
307 Committee.

308 b. This committee shall meet as frequently as deemed necessary for the
309 purpose of determining nominees for each office.

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311 **Section 3: Duties of the Nominating Committee**

- 312 a. The Nominating Committee shall present nominations for each elective
313 office which is to be filled at the annual meeting of the Church.
- 314 b. The Nominating Committee shall place the names of nominees for elective
315 office on a printed ballot, allowing space for additional nominations, which
316 may be made from the floor.
- 317 c. The Nominating Committee shall publicize the names of candidates for
318 church offices no later than the Sunday preceding the annual meeting.
- 319 d. In the event of a vacancy in any elected office occurring during the year,
320 this committee shall appoint an individual to fill the remainder of the term.
- 321 e. Within 30 days of the resignation of a Pastor or the vacating of the pulpit for
322 any reason, a business meeting will be called (Article XVIII Section 2) for
323 the purpose of electing a pulpit committee. It will be the responsibility of the
324 Nominating Committee to prepare a slate of nominees for this committee.

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ARTICLE XIII

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AUDITING COMMITTEE

328 **Section 1: Membership**

- 329 a. The Auditing Committee shall consist of two (2) members.
- 330 b. The members of this committee shall be elected by the Church for a term of

331 two (2) years, only one of which is to be elected each year.

332 **Section 2: Duties of the Auditing Committee**

333 a. This committee shall audit all financial reports within ten (10) days before
334 the annual Church business meeting. Included in those reports are the
335 following:

336 *Financial Secretary's Report*

337 *Church General Fund*

338 *Financial reports from any other organization desiring an audit*

- 339 b. The Auditing Committee shall report any discrepancies found during its
340 audit to the Council, immediately.
- 341 c. The Auditing Committee shall provide a report of its findings at the annual
342 meeting of the Church.

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ARTICLE XIV

345

PERSONNEL COMMITTEE

346 The Personnel Committee will be an enacted committee appointed by the Council per

347 Article VI, Section 2, Paragraph C. (Feb. 1 2015)

348 **Section 1: Membership**

349 a. The Personnel Committee shall consist of five (5) members.

350 **Section 2: Meetings**

351 The Personnel Committee shall meet as needed to establish personnel
352 policy, and resolve issues related to filling staff positions not covered by the
353 Pulpit Committee.

354 **Section 3: Duties of the Personnel Committee**

- 355 a. This committee will annually review the church's responsibility for the
356 pastor and staff compensation and make recommendations to the Council.
- 357 b. This committee will counsel with the pastor regarding a continuing
358 education program.
- 359 c. This committee will provide reports of non-confidential nature and
360 recommendations to the Council and other appropriate groups.
- 361 d. No staff member or member of the staff's household may serve on the
362 personnel committee. The committee shall serve as the mediator in dealing
363 with conflict as defined in Article V, Section 2, Paragraph c.

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ARTICLE XV

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PULPIT COMMITTEE

367 **Section 1: Membership**

- 368 a. The Pulpit Committee shall consist of seven (7) representative members of
369 the church.
- 370 b. This committee shall be nominated by the Nominating Committee and

371 elected by the church as described in Article XII, Section 3 e.

372 **Section 2: Meetings of the Pulpit Committee**

373 a. The Pulpit Committee must meet within thirty (30) days after being elected
374 to elect a chairperson of this committee.

375 b. This committee shall meet as frequently as necessary.

376 **Section 3: Duties of the Pulpit Committee**

377 a. This committee shall take all necessary steps to determine a suitable
378 candidate for the pastorate, including consultation with the American
379 Baptist Churches of PA and Delaware.

380 b. This committee shall make its recommendation to the Church for
381 consideration after finding the suitable candidate. (Reference Article V)

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383 **ARTICLE XVI**

384 **MEMORIAL COMMITTEE**

385 The Memorial Fund and Committee are merged into the Finance Ministry Team

386 (Feb. 1 2015)

387 **Section 1: Membership**

388 a. The Finance Ministry Team shall consist of the Finance Chair of Council
389 and two (2) members: nominated by the Nominating Committee and elected
390 by the Church for a term of two (2) years. The Church Treasurer will join

- 391 the Committee as needed.
- 392 b. The committee should receive suggestions for Memorial Fund projects from
393 individuals and groups.
- 394 c. The committee shall make certain that each memorial gift is recorded in the
395 Memorial Fund Record Book and appropriately acknowledged.

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ARTICLE XVII

398

MEMBERSHIP

399 Section 1: Church Membership

400 Church membership is based upon a stated and lived out profession of faith
401 in Jesus Christ and a public statement of salvation through Jesus Christ our
402 Lord and Savior. Upon recommendations from the Membership
403 Committee, the Council shall consider all requests for church membership
404 and shall make recommendations to the church or to the applicant.

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406 a. Any person having reached the age of accountability and professing
407 Jesus Christ as his/her personal Lord and Savior may become a member of
408 Franklin Park Baptist Church by any of the following:

- 409 1. Baptism by immersion upon profession of faith in the Lord Jesus
410 Christ, or

- 411 2. Letter of recommendation and dismissal from another Baptist
412 Church, or
- 413 3. Providing a satisfactory statement of Christian faith and experience,
414 or
- 415 4. Reinstatement from the inactive roll upon resuming proper
416 relationship with the Church and giving satisfactory evidence of
417 Christian conduct and spiritual faith.
- 418 b. The Membership Ministry Team will make recommendations to the
419 Council regarding any requests for letters of dismissal or transfer to
420 another church.
- 421 (Note Article XVII, Section 1)
- 422 c. Upon ratification of these by-laws any current member or associate
423 member will be recognized as an active member.

424 **Section 2: Definition of Membership**

- 425 a. Active members are those who show their interest in the welfare of the
426 Church and the Kingdom of our Lord by participation in the life and
427 activities of the Church.
- 428 b. Inactive members are those who, without reasonable cause, have not
429 participated in the life and activities of the Church for a twelve month
430 period. Inactive members shall be ineligible to participate in any business

431 meeting of the Church, and shall not be counted in any statistical report.

432 c. Non-resident members are those who now permanently reside beyond
433 commuting distance of the Church. Any non resident member shall be
434 counted separately in any statistical report.

435 **Section 3: Termination of Membership**

436 A letter of dismissal or transfer to any other church may be provided to any
437 member requesting such.

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ARTICLE XVIII

440

MEETINGS

441 **Section 1: Worship Service**

442 a. A worship service shall be held weekly at a time and place established by
443 the Council in cooperation with the Pastor.

444 b. A communion service shall be held regularly as determined by the Council.

445 c. Additional worship services may be held as the church calendar,
446 community, national events or church leadership warrant.

447 **Section 2: Business Meetings**

448 a. The annual business meeting of the Church shall be held between January
449 15th and 30th, with the date determined by the pastor and Moderator. The
450 date shall be announced for two (2) weeks through all appropriate forms of

451 communications. (example: pulpit, bulletin, newsletter, web site)

452 b. A special congregational business meeting may be called at any time by
453 written request to the Church Clerk signed by six (6) adult active members
454 of the Church, or by two (2) of the following officers: Pastor, Moderator, or
455 member of the Council. Such meeting and its purpose shall be announced
456 for two (2) weeks through all appropriate forms of communications.

457 **Section 3: Quorum at Business Meetings**

458 a. A quorum for a business meeting shall consist of 20% of the active
459 members.

460 b. If less than a quorum is present at a business meeting, the meeting shall be
461 rescheduled no sooner than 14 days later. The rescheduled meeting will be
462 announced for two (2) weeks through all appropriate forms of
463 communications. At such rescheduled meeting, the number of members
464 present shall constitute a quorum.

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466 **Section 4: Procedure of Business Meetings**

467 All business meetings will be conducted in accordance with Robert's Rules
468 of Order, unless specified differently in this Constitution and By Laws.

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471 **ARTICLE XIX**

472 **GENERAL**

473 **Section 1: Fiscal Year**

474 The fiscal and reporting year of this Church shall be January 1 to December
475 31.

476 **Section 2: Debts**

477 No debts (not to include monthly charges) shall be contracted in the name of
478 the Church for material or services to be performed without approval of the
479 Council.

480 **Section 3: Formation of New Organizations**

481 Any future organization shall be approved by the Council before it can exist
482 as part of the Franklin Park Baptist Church.

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484 **ARTICLE XX**

485 **CONSTITUTION AND BY LAWS**

486 **Section 1: Amendments**

487 This constitution may be amended at any regular or special business
488 meeting of the church by a two-thirds vote of those present and voting,
489 provided that a quorum is present and voting. Notice of the proposed
490 change shall have been announced for a minimum of two weeks through all

491 appropriate forms of communications before such meeting.

492 **Section 2: Official Copies**

493 Two official copies of this constitution shall be kept at all times, one (1) by
494 the Pastor and one (1) by the Clerk.

Revision History:
Revised 2/1/15 by Church Clerk, Christy S Nichols