

Navigating the New Cultural Landscape

Appropriate Policies and Procedures for Your Church

preachingpoint.org/CS16policies

Three views

- What is **good enough** for now
- What is **better**
- What are the **best practices**

Notice!

This information is designed to help autonomous Baptist churches think through vital issues and formulate their own internal policies. This resource, like all past and present resources from the State Board of Missions, is not binding on local congregations, which are entirely self-governing.

Marriage

Marriage

- Good—Nothing is required—yet.
- Better—Biblical marriage as a core value
- Best practice—Forward thinking policy

Marriage: Best practices

- Bylaws

- We believe that marriage is a union between one man and one woman, following biblical principles (Gen. 2:19-24, Lev. 18:22, Matt. 19:4-6, Rom. 1:18-27, Eph. 5:22-33, Heb. 13:4). We believe that God sanctions only the union in marriage of a man to a woman. Therefore, this church recognizes only a wedding compatible with those standards.
- Addressed by *Baptist Faith and Message*. You don't need both.

Marriage: Best practices

- Bylaws

- Policies

- 1) Due to our belief in the biblical teachings about marriage, same sex couples will not be married in any facilities or on any properties owned by the church.
- 2) Ministers of _____ Baptist Church will not perform any same sex marriages whether on or off church-owned properties. Doing so would be grounds for termination.

Membership

Membership

- Good—Pastor meets the person before
- Better—Take time to get to know the candidate before membership
- Best practice—Formal counseling before membership

Membership practices

- 1) A person not well known by the pastor, delay presenting him/her.
- 2) Vote at the next business meeting.
Not at the end of a worship service.
- 3) Watch-care until you deal with the individual's decision.

Membership practices

4) Direct the individual to a spiritual counselor who will talk with the candidate to ascertain information as to his/her decision.

Following the service, the pastor would meet with the prospective member and the spiritual counselor.

Membership practices

- 5) A membership orientation class to assist the prospective member in understanding their commitment to Christ and the church and to explain the church's doctrine, ministries, practices and values.

Leadership

<https://alsbom.org/thechristianresponsetaskforcereport/>

Leadership

Good—Pastor part of the nominating

Best practices—A bylaw or policy that
“Each paid or volunteer leader shall be
Christ-like in conduct following the
standards in the Bible.”

Facilities Use

Good

Better

Best practices

Exclusive use

IRS Publication 1828

“...the organization is operated exclusively for its tax exempt purpose.”

- We can use our money, buildings, etc. for our exempt purpose.
- We can pay reasonable salaries to those we employ,
- (that is all we can do with our money and assets).

Facilities Use

Good

Policy—The use of church facilities shall be limited to individuals or groups who are compatible with the mission and purpose of _____ Baptist Church.”

Facilities Use

Good

- No private benefit
(allowing members free personal use of funds and/or property).
- No inurement
(allowing key leaders free personal use of funds and/or property).
- All non-church events must be charged fair rental value (even to members).
- No wedding chapel rentals.

Facilities Use

Better

Church activities only. Church wide activities or sponsored church groups.

Weddings are a worship event and permitted only after the **couple** meets with the pastor for counseling.

Facilities Use

Best practice

Weddings are for **members only** and **only** after the **couple** meets with the pastor for counseling.

Questions?