

# **Constitution**

## **First Baptist Church of Harvester**

### **Article 1: Preamble**

We the members of the First Baptist Church of Harvester declare and establish this constitution in order to exalt our divine Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ; set forth the principles of our faith and beliefs; exemplify the standard of Christian living portrayed by our Savior; preserve the autonomy of this church; and provide for the honorable and diligent execution of the responsibilities of the members.

### **Article 2: Name**

This church shall be known as the First Baptist Church of Harvester, located in St. Charles County, Missouri, and chartered as a not-for-profit corporation in the State of Missouri.

### **Article 3: Relationships**

The government of this church is vested in the body of baptized believers who compose it, Jesus Christ being the head of the church. This church is subject to the control of no other ecclesiastical body or person(s). All members have equal voice and privilege in the government of this body. Insofar as is practical, this church will cooperate with and support the St. Louis Metro Baptist Association and the Missouri Baptist Convention, which are affiliated with the Southern Baptist Convention. In addition, this church recognizes and sustains the obligation of mutual counsel and cooperation among Christian churches as we are guided by God's Word and His Spirit.

### **Article 4: Statement of Faith**

**The Bible** - We believe that the Bible is God's inspired and inerrant word. It tells us how to know God in a personal way, how to live a life pleasing to Him, and how to treat our fellow man. The Bible is our final authority in all matters relating to what we believe and how we are to live, both in the church and in our personal lives.

**God** - We believe that there is only one true and living God, and that He has revealed Himself in three persons: God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit. God is all-knowing, all-powerful, and all-present. He is the Creator of the world, the Redeemer of the church, the Preserver of the believer, and the Ruler of the universe. To Him we owe the highest love, reverence, and obedience.

**Jesus Christ** - We believe that Jesus Christ is the eternal Son of God. He was conceived of the Holy Spirit and born of a virgin. Living a sinless life, He perfectly revealed the love of God through His miraculous ministry. He died on the cross, making an atonement for the sins of man, and He rose from the dead on the third day. He ascended into heaven and is now seated at the right hand of God, where He acts as the only Mediator between man and God. He shall one day return to the earth in power and glory to judge the world and to usher in His thousand year reign of peace.

**The Holy Spirit** - We believe that the Holy Spirit exalts Jesus Christ. The Holy Spirit inspired men of old to write the Scriptures without error. Today He enables men to understand the truths of those same Scriptures. He convicts men of their sins, shows them their need for salvation, and effects the new birth. The Holy Spirit lives within the believer from the moment of conversion, sealing them so that salvation cannot be lost once gained. He bestows spiritual gifts and produces Christian character in the lives of believers so that Christ is glorified through them.

**Man** - We believe that man was created in the image of God in order to glorify God and enjoy Him forever, and that man is the crowning work of God's creation. In the beginning man was innocent of sin and was endowed with freedom of choice. But by his free choice Adam sinned against God, acting as representative of the human race, and by that one act plunged mankind into sin, condemnation, and spiritual bondage. Born with a nature inclined toward sin, man cannot and will not seek reconciliation with God; only the grace of God can bring man into holy fellowship with his Creator.

**Salvation** - We believe that every individual needs to experience a personal conversion in order to establish a relationship with God--to receive forgiveness of sins and to receive eternal life. This salvation is offered freely to all who will turn from their sins and place their trust in Jesus Christ as Lord, Who died on the cross to satisfy the justice of God. Once converted, the believer is to grow in grace, godliness, and holiness through the ministry of the indwelling Holy Spirit.

**The Church** - We believe that the church is a local body of baptized believers who have made a covenant to serve and worship God together, obey His teachings, observe the two ordinances (baptism and the Lord's Supper), and share the good news of the gospel with all the world. Each church is a totally autonomous body, led by pastors and served by deacons. The twofold task of the church is to evangelize the unbeliever, and to strengthen the believer, thus bringing glory to God.

**The Christian and Culture** - We believe that God established civil government. Thus, we are to submit to the civil authorities unless they direct us to disobey God's Word. We believe in a free church, unfettered by governmental intrusion, and in the right and duty of Christians to be involved in the political arena. It is the responsibility of every Christian to demonstrate the love of God to those in his sphere of influence, and to act as a preservative force for moral and spiritual values in society.

For more information and detail on what we believe, along with supporting Scripture references, you may obtain from the church office a copy of our complete doctrinal statement, entitled, *The Baptist Faith and Message, 2000* Revision. This statement is also available online at [www.sbc.net/bfm/bfm2000.asp](http://www.sbc.net/bfm/bfm2000.asp).

## **Article 5: Objectives**

The mission of the First Baptist Church of Harvester shall be to evangelize the unbeliever and strengthen the believer.

Our purpose is to glorify God by fulfilling the Great Commandment (Matthew 22:36-40) and the Great Commission (Matthew 28:18-20):

**Matthew 22:36-40** - *"Teacher, which is the greatest commandment in the Law?"<sup>37</sup> Jesus replied: "Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind.'<sup>38</sup> This is the first and greatest commandment.<sup>39</sup> And the second is like it: 'Love your neighbor as yourself.'<sup>40</sup> All the Law and the Prophets hang on these two commandments."*

**Matthew 28:18-20** - *Then Jesus came to them and said, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me."<sup>19</sup> 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,<sup>20</sup> and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age."*

- **In Worship:** Worshipping Christ with all of our hearts, He will be the center of our lives.
- **In Discipleship:** Striving to become more like Him in every way, His character in us is our goal.
- **In Ministry:** Using our spiritual gifts, heart, abilities, personality and experience, we serve others in His name.
- **In Fellowship:** Uniting with His family, the church, we pour out our lives for one another.
- **In Evangelism:** Communicating His gospel and His interaction in our lives to the world, they come to know Him and His love.

As a church, our vision is that we, as a people who have come to know God as He has shined the light of His Son into our lives, will share that light with our community as we allow Christ to live in and through us, representing Him to the world:

**John 8:12** - *When Jesus spoke again to the people, he said, "I am the light of the world."*

**2 Corinthians 4:6** - *For God, who said, "Let light shine out of darkness," made His light shine in our hearts to give us the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Christ.*

**Matthew 5:14** - *"You are the light of the world."*

**Matthew 5:16** – *“Let your light shine before men, that they may see your good deeds and praise your Father in heaven.”*

In summary, our vision as a church is to:

***See the light, Be the light, and Share the light.***

### **Article 6: Ordinances**

The ordinances of this church are baptism and the Lord's Supper and, as such, do not convey saving grace. Christian baptism is immersion of a believer in water in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. It is an act of obedience symbolizing the believer's faith in a crucified, buried, and risen Savior. Additionally, it pictures the believer's personal conversion: his death to sin; the burial of his old life; and his resurrection to walk in newness of life in Jesus Christ. Finally, baptism is a testimony to the believer's faith in the final resurrection of the dead. A believer is to be baptized by the Senior Pastor or his designee.

The Lord's Supper is a symbolic act of obedience whereby born-again believers, through partaking of the bread and the fruit of the vine, memorialize the death of Jesus Christ our Redeemer and anticipate His Second Coming. Believers should examine themselves before the Supper, so that they may partake in a biblical and worthy manner.

### **Article 7: Church Covenant**

Having received Christ as my Lord and Savior and been baptized, and being in agreement with First Baptist Church of Harvester's statements, strategy, and structure, I now feel led by the Holy Spirit to unite with the FBCH church family. In doing so, I commit myself to God and to the other members to do the following:

#### **I will protect the unity of my church:**

- by acting in love toward other members;
- by refusing to gossip;
- by following the leaders as they obey God.

**Romans 14:19** - *“So let us concentrate on the things which make for harmony, and on the growth of our fellowship together.”* (PHILLIPS)

**1 Peter 1:22** - *“Have a sincere love for other believers, love one another earnestly with all your heart.”* (TEV)

**Ephesians 4:29** - *“Do not let any unwholesome talk come out of your mouths, but only what is helpful for building others up according to their needs.”*

**Hebrews 13:17** - *“Obey your leaders and submit to their authority. They keep watch over you as men who must give an account. Obey them so that their work will be a joy, not a burden, for that would be not advantage to you.”*

#### **I will share the responsibility of my church:**

- by praying for its growth;
- by inviting the unchurched to attend;
- by warmly welcoming those who visit.

**1 Thessalonians 1:1-2** - *“To the church— . . . We always thank God for you and pray for you constantly.”* (LB)

**Luke 14:23** - *“The Master said to the servant, ‘Go out to the roads and country lanes, and urge the people there to come so my house will be full.’”* (NCV)

**Romans 15:7** - *“So, warmly welcome each other into the church, just as Christ has warmly welcomed you; then God will be glorified.”* (LB)

**I will serve the ministry of my church:**

- by discovering my gifts and talents;
- by being equipped to serve by my pastors;
- by developing a servant's heart.

**1 Peter 4:10** - *"Serve one another with the particular gifts God has given each of you."* (PHILLIPS)

**Ephesians 4:11-12** - *"[God] gave . . . some to be pastors and teachers, to prepare God's people for works of service, so that the body of Christ may be built up."*

**Philippians 2:2-4, 7** - *"Each one of you should look not only to your own interests, but also to the interests of others. Your attitude should be the same as that of Christ Jesus: Who . . . [took on] the very nature of a servant."*

**I will support the testimony of my church:**

- by attending faithfully;
- by living a godly life;
- by giving regularly.

**Hebrews 10:25** - *"Let us not give up meeting together . . . but let us encourage one another."*

**Philippians 1:27** - *"Whatever happens, make sure that your everyday life is worthy of the gospel of Christ."* (PHILLIPS).

**1 Corinthians 16:2** - *"Each one of you, on the first day of each week, should set aside a specific sum of money in proportion to what you have earned and use it for the offering."* (LB)

**Leviticus 27:30** - *"A tenth of [all you] produce . . . is the Lord's, and is holy."* (NCV).

# Bylaws Section 1.0: Membership<sup>1</sup>

*“Those who accepted his message were baptized, and about three thousand were added to their number that day.”*

– Acts 2:41 –

## 1.1 General

This organization shall consist of the present membership of the First Baptist Church of Harvester and others hereafter admitted as provided below.

## 1.2 Admission of New Members

The requirements for new membership into the First Baptist Church of Harvester are as follows.

1. A personal profession of faith in Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior.
2. Baptism by immersion as a believer as a symbol of salvation.
3. Completion of the new member's class curriculum.

## 1.3 Transfer of Membership

1. Membership may be transferred from other churches of similar doctrine.
2. Transfer members must meet the criteria stated in section 1.2.
3. Transfer members who have not participated in believer's baptism as defined in the church constitution must do so prior to being accepted into membership.

## 1.4 Approval of Members

Each new member applicant will be interviewed by a deacon, deacon's wife, or deacon designee, to ensure that the requirements for membership have been met. Persons are received into membership upon deacon recommendation and fulfillment of all membership requirements (see Section 1.2).

## 1.5 Responsibilities of Membership

1. It is the mission of each member of this body to evangelize the unbeliever and strengthen the believer.
2. Members are responsible to focus on obedience to God by doing His eternal and timeless will in a contemporary and timely way:
  - **In worship:** Worshipping Christ with all of our hearts, He will be the center of our lives.
  - **In discipleship:** Striving to become more like Him in every way, His character in us is our goal.
  - **In ministry:** Using our spiritual gifts, heart, abilities, personality and experience, we serve others in His name.
  - **In fellowship:** Uniting with His family, the church, we pour out our lives for one another.
  - **In evangelism:** Communicating His gospel and His interaction in our lives to the world, they come to know Him and His love.

## 1.6 Voting Rights of Membership

All members of the church aged 14 years and over shall be eligible to vote on all matters presented to the church for consideration. Each member is entitled to one vote. Voting by proxy and by absentee ballot is permitted and shall be overseen by the Board of Stewards Chair.

<sup>1</sup> In this document, “church” is used in the sense of the entire organization and entire body. “Congregation” is used in sense of how pictured in Figure 2.2.4A: its role in relationship to the Board of Stewards, Senior Pastor, and Nominating Committee in decision making.

## 1.7 Termination of Membership

Members may be removed from the church membership roll for the following reasons:

1. Death.
2. Personal request to transfer membership.
3. Church discipline: Procedures for dismissal of a member shall be according to Matthew 18:15-17. All matters of church discipline shall be guided by a concern for redemption, reformation, and reconciliation rather than punishment. Matters of church discipline shall be referred to the deacon body. If the deacon body determines that disciplinary action is required, a motion to terminate membership shall require a  $\frac{3}{4}$  assenting vote of a quorum of the deacon body.
4. Inactivity: If after a twelve month period there has been no verifiable attendance and/or financial contributions from a member, the church has the option to terminate the membership after sufficient efforts have been made to contact the member.

## 1.8 Restoration of Membership

The ultimate purpose of all church discipline is to seek the spiritual restoration to fellowship for any individual who has been disciplined by the church (2 Corinthians 2:5-11). When repentance has occurred, they are invited to seek re-admittance through the deacon body.

# Section 2.0: Church Governance

*“Respect those who work hard among you, who are over you in the Lord and who admonish you.  
<sup>13</sup> Hold them in the highest regard in love because of their work.”*

– 1 Thessalonians 5:12-13 –

## 2.1 General

The governance of the First Baptist Church of Harvester (FBCH) shall be in accordance with biblical guidelines regarding polity, organizational structure, and spiritual leadership. Thus, the church shall be Pastor-led, Board-supported, Deacon-served, and Congregationally approved; bathing all decisions in prayer and with careful consideration. Final authority for all matters related to the church shall be vested in this local Congregation, as expressed in actions during legitimately convened business meetings. Thus, no ecclesiastical body or entity shall be construed as having a higher authority than that vested in this local Congregation.

In view as a legal corporation, the following shall constitute the church's officers:

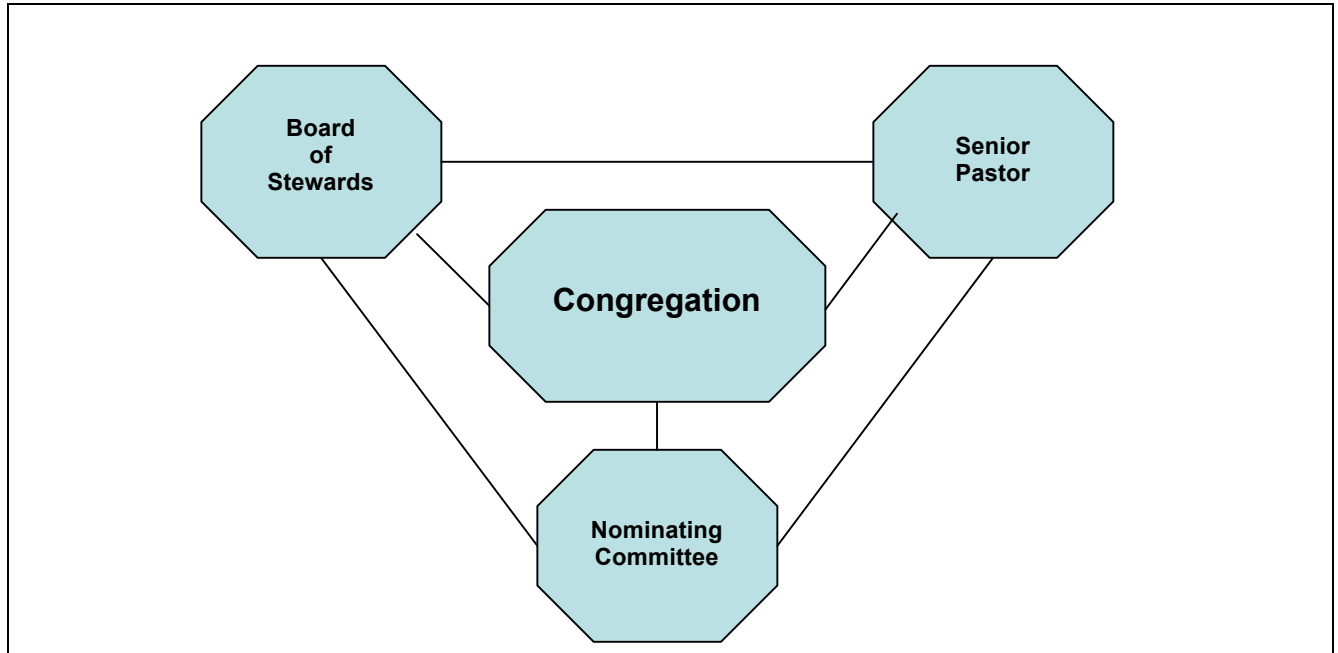
- The officers of FBCH shall be the members of the Board of Stewards and the Senior Pastor.
- The Chair of the Board of Stewards shall be the President of the corporation.
- The Vice-Chair of the Board of Stewards shall be the Vice-President of the corporation.
- The Treasurer of the church shall be the Secretary and Treasurer of the corporation.
- The Senior Pastor shall be the Chief Executive Officer of the corporation.

These officers will have the responsibility and authority to represent and govern the church in accordance with the Scriptures, these By-Laws, and the laws of the State of Missouri.

In view as a spiritual organism, the functioning Body of Christ, the following are the four component parts that participate in church governance:

- The Senior Pastor
- The Board of Stewards
- The Congregation
- The Nominating Committee

**Figure 2.2.4A: The Four Component Parts that Participate in Church Government**



## 2.2 Senior Pastor

The leadership of the church is committed into the hands of the Senior Pastor, as described in 1 Timothy 3:1-7, 1 Peter 5:1-4, Acts 20:18-35, and 1 Thessalonians 5:12-13.

### 2.2.1 Responsibilities and Accountability

The Senior Pastor is responsible for leading the church to accomplish its five-fold mission of evangelism, fellowship, discipleship, worship, and ministry:

- 2.2.1.1** The chief and primary duty of the Senior Pastor is to study, teach and proclaim the gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ and the doctrines of the Christian faith, as embodied in the Old and New Testaments and outlined in the church's doctrinal confession of faith, the *Baptist Faith and Message* (2000 revision).
- 2.2.1.2** The Senior Pastor is responsible to oversee arrangements, conduct, and speakers of all the church's public and regular services.
- 2.2.1.3** With guidance from the Holy Spirit and with input from various appropriate constituent parts of the church and community, the Senior Pastor is to lead the church in identifying the God-ordained vision for the church's future. Once identified, he shall communicate that vision to the membership of the church in a compelling and winsome manner.
- 2.2.1.4** The Senior Pastor is responsible for the development and implementation of appropriate strategies for equipping and enabling the church to bring that vision to reality through the power of the Holy Spirit.
- 2.2.1.5** The Senior Pastor is responsible for providing strategic spiritual direction to the key leadership teams of the church, especially the Board of Stewards, the Deacons, and the executive ministerial and administrative staff.
- 2.2.1.6** The Senior Pastor is responsible for administrating the day-to-day operations of the church. This includes the maintenance and supervision of the physical plant, of all church properties, and of the church's financial affairs; and oversight and supervision of all paid and volunteer staff of the church.
- 2.2.1.7** The Senior Pastor is responsible for overseeing all church-sanctioned ministries and church-related organizations.

- 2.2.1.8** The Senior Pastor is responsible for seeing that spiritual care and nurturing are provided to the members of the church.
- 2.2.1.9** The Senior Pastor is responsible to meet periodically with the Board of Stewards, working with them to fulfill together the purposes for which God created the church and placed it in this community. There shall be mutual accountability between the Board of Stewards and the Senior Pastor.
- 2.2.1.10** The Senior Pastor shall deliver to the Board of Stewards an annual report in which he reviews and evaluates the church's effectiveness in ministry over the last twelve months, presents vision for the future, and projects strategies and goals for bringing those vision items to reality through the power of the Holy Spirit. This should be an opportunity for mutual encouragement, valuable input and counsel, and prayerful commitment of the church's future into the hands of God.
- 2.2.1.11** The Senior Pastor is responsible to oversee the process of hiring qualified paid personnel, and to oversee the process of terminating paid personnel when such need arises.

The Pastor may delegate many of these matters into the hands of his appointed designees: competent church staff members as well as volunteer workers of the church. By virtue of his position, however, he retains executive authority and responsibility in the day-to-day management of church operations.

## 2.2.2 Qualifications

The Senior Pastor shall be a man called of God into the gospel ministry, orthodox in theology as defined by the church's statement of faith, and committed to living and serving in a manner consistent with the standards set forth in Scripture for such leaders:

**1 Timothy 3:1-7** – *Here is a trustworthy saying: If anyone sets his heart on being an overseer, he desires a noble task. <sup>2</sup> Now the overseer must be above reproach, the husband of but one wife, temperate, self-controlled, respectable, hospitable, able to teach, <sup>3</sup> not given to drunkenness, not violent but gentle, not quarrelsome, not a lover of money. <sup>4</sup> He must manage his own family well and see that his children obey him with proper respect. <sup>5</sup> (If anyone does not know how to manage his own family, how can he take care of God's church?) <sup>6</sup> He must not be a recent convert, or he may become conceited and fall under the same judgment as the devil. <sup>7</sup> He must also have a good reputation with outsiders, so that he will not fall into disgrace and into the devil's trap. [NIV]*

## 2.2.3 Term

The call of the Senior Pastor shall be an indefinite call; i.e., he shall serve in that capacity until action by the Senior Pastor (resignation), action by the Congregation (termination), or death. A 14 day notice shall be given by the Senior Pastor in the case of resignation, and this notice shall be honored by the church unless deemed inappropriate by the Board of Stewards and/or Personnel Committee.

## 2.2.4 Selection

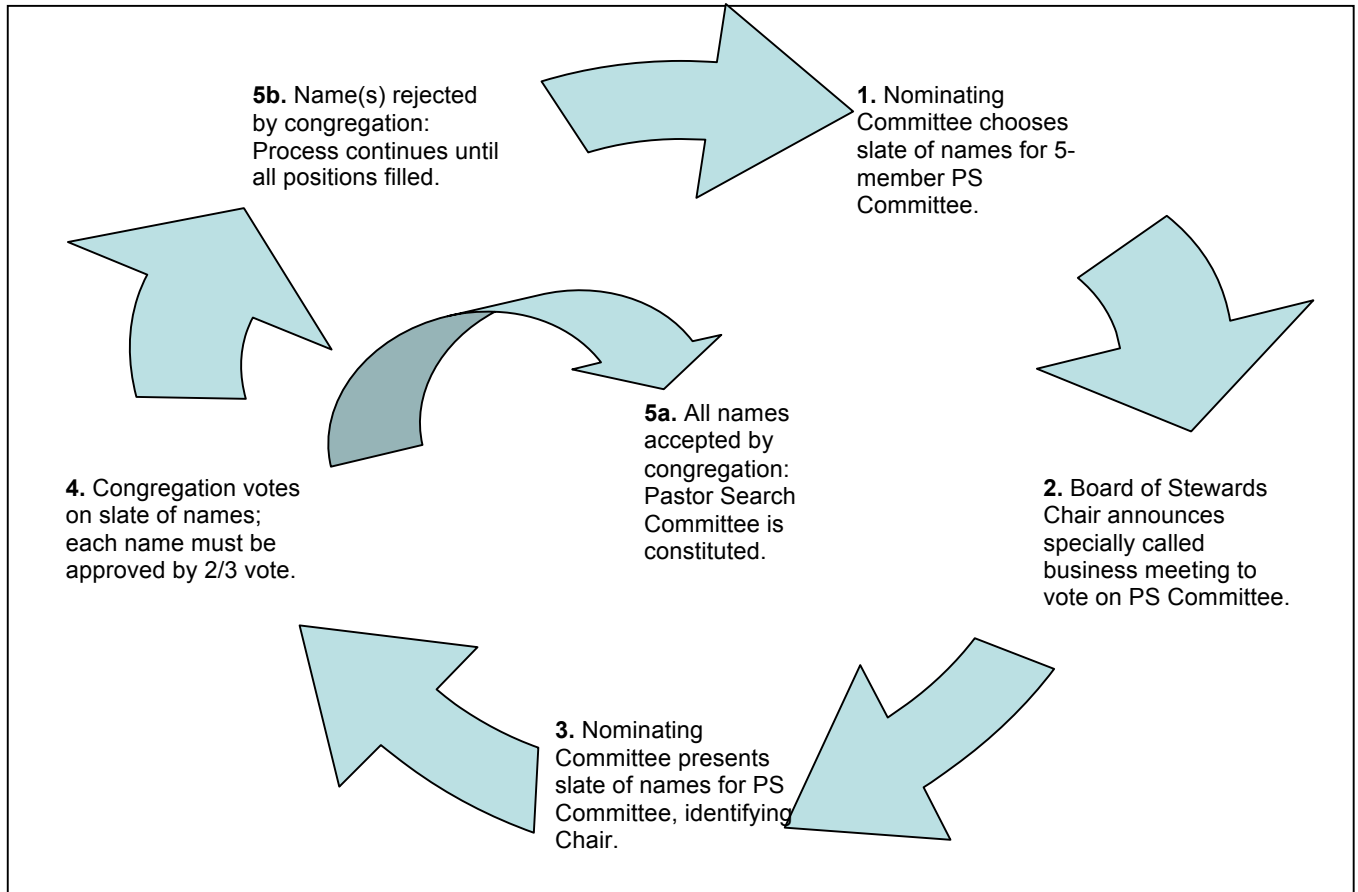
In the event that the office of Senior Pastor is vacated, the Board of Stewards shall be responsible for seeing that the pulpit is filled and the administrative duties of Senior Pastor are carried out until a Senior Pastor is called.

A specially called business meeting shall be announced for the purpose of electing a Pastor Search Committee. This Pastor Search Committee shall be considered an *ad hoc* committee. During this specially called business meeting, the Nominating Committee shall present to the Congregation a slate of five (5) nominees to serve on the Pastor Search Committee. This slate shall be comprised of members who are held in high esteem, who are noted for their spiritual maturity and personal commitment to the Lord Jesus Christ, and who are drawn from a broad spectrum of the church. This slate shall contain at least one but no more than two Board of Stewards members. Paid staff members and church employees, as well as immediate family members (spouse, parents, children) of paid staff members and church employees, shall not be selected to the Pastor Search Committee.

Substitution of individual names on this slate via nominations from the floor is not permitted. The Nominating Committee's slate shall be voted upon by ballot. Each individual nominee must be approved by the Congregation by a 2/3 affirmative vote. In the event that any nominee is not acceptable to the Congregation, the Nominating Committee, after careful prayer and consultation, shall present an alternative nominee in a subsequent specially called business meeting. This process shall continue until a full slate is affirmed by the Congregation.

The following diagram illustrates the process for selecting a Pastor Search Committee:

**Figure 2.2.4B: Selecting a Pastor Search Committee**



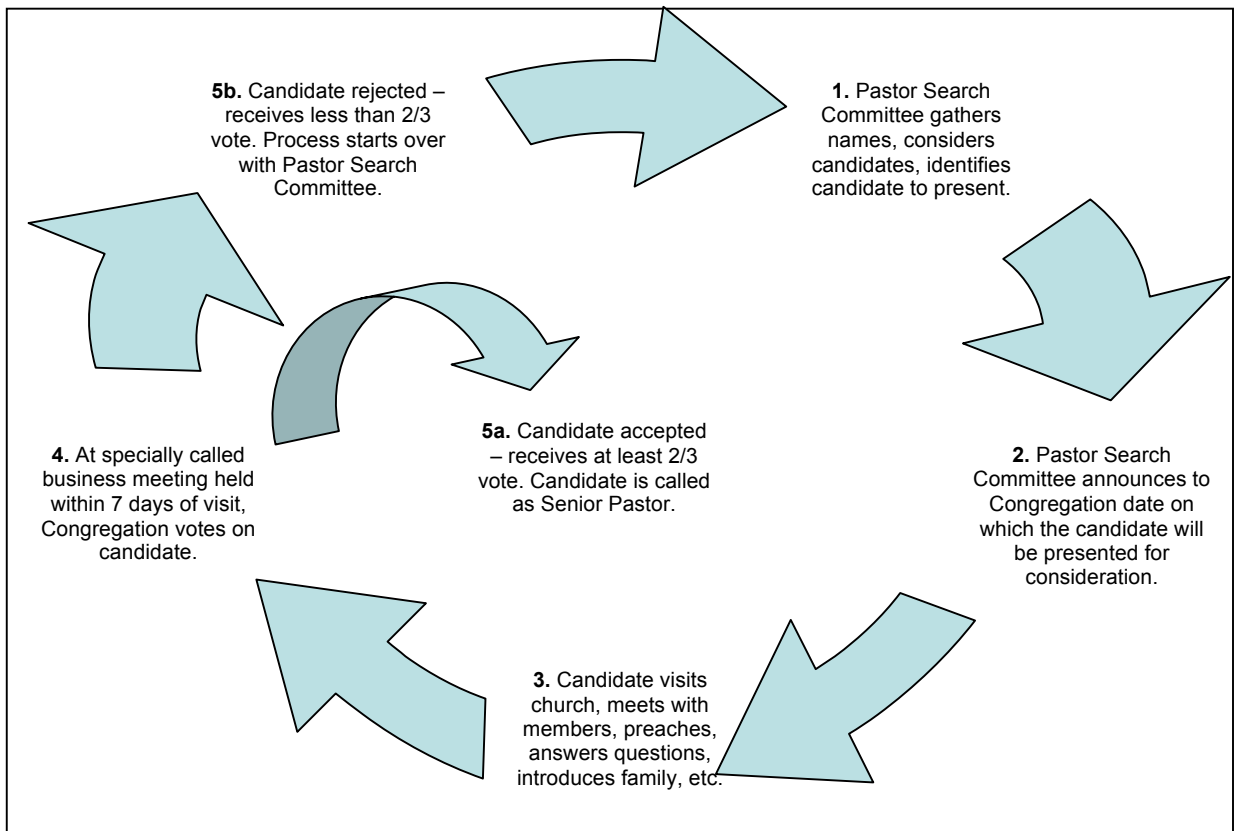
The Pastor Search Committee shall prayerfully solicit names of potential candidates, and shall consider all candidates whose names are submitted. The Interim Pastor shall not be considered an eligible candidate for the position of Senior Pastor. When, after much prayer and seeking of God the suitable candidate is identified, the Pastor Search Committee shall announce to the Congregation the date(s) on which the candidate shall be presented to the Congregation for consideration. Opportunities shall be given for the church to meet the candidate (and his family, if applicable), hear him preach God's Word, and interact with him.

At a specially called business meeting, announced in advance and held within seven days of the candidate's presentation to the church, the Congregation shall act upon the recommendation of the Pastor Search Committee to call (employ) the candidate as Senior Pastor. A 2/3 affirmative vote shall be required.

The following diagram illustrates the process for voting to call the Senior Pastor:



**Figure 2.2.4C: Voting to Call the Senior Pastor**



## 2.2.5 Removal

Any charges brought against the Senior Pastor with a view toward disciplinary action or termination must be handled in a thoroughly biblical and upright manner. The guidance of Matthew 18:15-20 shall be followed:

**Matthew 18:15-20** – “If your brother sins against you, go and show him his fault, just between the two of you. If he listens to you, you have won your brother over. <sup>16</sup> But if he will not listen, take one or two others along, so that ‘every matter may be established by the testimony of two or three witnesses.’ <sup>17</sup> If he refuses to listen to them, tell it to the church; and if he refuses to listen even to the church, treat him as you would a pagan or a tax collector. <sup>18</sup> I tell you the truth, whatever you bind on earth will be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth will be loosed in heaven. <sup>19</sup> Again, I tell you that if two of you on earth agree about anything you ask for, it will be done for you by my Father in heaven. <sup>20</sup> For where two or three come together in my name, there am I with them.” [NIV]

In light of this biblical injunction, the following steps are to be observed:

- 2.2.5.1** In the spirit of Matthew 18:15-20, these charges must have first been brought directly to the Senior Pastor by the person or persons raising the concerns, thus giving opportunity for resolution in a biblical and expeditious manner, and outside the public eye.
- 2.2.5.2** If resolution is not achieved, then the charges must be submitted, in writing and identifying those bringing the charges, to a member of the Board of Stewards.
- 2.2.5.3** These charges shall then be considered prayerfully and carefully by the Board of Stewards in order to discern the accuracy and seriousness of the charges. At least two

or three witnesses shall be required for a charge to be considered as substantiated; see Titus 5:19.

- 2.2.5.4** If after consultation with the Senior Pastor it is determined that the charges are serious enough to warrant dismissal, then the Board of Stewards shall make such a formal recommendation to the Congregation during a legitimately assembled, specially called business meeting. The purpose of this specially called business meeting – to consider a motion relative to termination of the Senior Pastor – shall be clearly communicated to the Congregation beforehand.
- 2.2.5.5** The Congregation shall not act upon a motion relative to the termination of the Senior Pastor without affording the Board of Stewards thirty (30) days to study the matter and make a recommendation to the Congregation.
- 2.2.5.6** Any motion to terminate must have a 2/3 affirmative vote to succeed.

## **2.2.6 Additional Ministerial Staff**

All other church staff positions shall be recommended by the Senior Pastor and approved by the Board of Stewards. Those who will serve at the level of Associate Pastor or above shall also be confirmed by a majority vote of the church. All members of the church staff shall be selected by, are accountable to, and serve at the discretion of the Senior Pastor. The Pastor shall be responsible to solicit candidates for any open position, and investigate each regarding their personal beliefs, education, ministry record, giftedness, and qualifications for the position. Each member of the church staff shall be employed subject to the terms and conditions set forth in the Personnel Policy and Procedures Manual.

## **2.3 Board of Stewards**

Christ described the radical difference between the concept of leadership in His Church and in the world:

**Mark 10:42-45** - *Jesus called them together and said, "You know that those who are regarded as rulers of the Gentiles lord it over them, and their high officials exercise authority over them. <sup>43</sup>Not so with you. Instead, whoever wants to become great among you must be your servant, <sup>44</sup>and whoever wants to be first must be slave of all. <sup>45</sup>For even the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many."* [NIV]

First and foremost, the spiritual leader must be the slave of Christ, understanding that all he is and has come from God and still belongs to God. He must be willing to serve others selflessly. And he must understand that, at core, Christian leadership is a divine stewardship: God commits into his hands the weighty responsibility of watching over the things of God, not as owner but as caretaker. In Luke 12:42-43, Jesus paints a picture of the faithful steward:

**Luke 12:42-43** - *The Master said, "Let me ask you: Who is the dependable manager, full of common sense, that the master puts in charge of his staff to feed them well and on time?"* [The Message]

The Board of Stewards, then, is to be a group of godly believers who see their role as serving Christ, His flock, and His undershepherds as they help to oversee the concerns of God's church.

### **2.3.1 Responsibilities**

The principal responsibilities of the Board of Stewards shall be to ensure the financial, legal, and fiduciary integrity of the church; to provide support and accountability for the Senior Pastor; and to set policies on behalf of the church.

#### **2.3.1.1 Ensure Financial, Legal, and Fiduciary Integrity**

The Board of Stewards is accountable to the Congregation for maintaining the integrity of all the financial activities of the church. Specific financial responsibilities of the Board of Stewards are listed in Section 4.3 ("*Financial Responsibilities of the Board of Stewards*"). The Board is responsible for ensuring that the church meets all legal requirements, and that it is operating in accordance with the mission and purpose for which it exists. Individual Board members must exercise the duty of care;

i.e., they must attend meetings, be prepared to make informed decisions by reading the information provided and requesting additional information if necessary, and carry out their duties in a reasonable and responsible manner. As safeguards of a public trust, Board members are responsible for protecting the organization's assets.

### **2.3.1.2 Provide Support and Accountability for the Senior Pastor**

- 2.3.1.2.1** The Board shall provide advice and counsel in the planning, budgeting, staffing, coordination, and implementation functions of the various ministries of the church as requested by the Senior Pastor.
- 2.3.1.2.2** Serving as a source of encouragement, counsel and feedback, the Board shall assist the Senior Pastor in identifying and communicating to the church God's vision for the church's future.
- 2.3.1.2.3** The Board shall provide annual written evaluation and feedback to the Senior Pastor regarding his performance in leading the church to carry out its primary biblical purposes, and regarding his performance in carrying out the primary biblical roles of Senior Pastor.
- 2.3.1.2.4** The Board shall make a recommendation to the Congregation, when and if necessary, regarding the dismissal of the Senior Pastor. The Congregation shall not act upon a motion relative to the termination of the Senior Pastor without affording the Board thirty (30) days to study any alleged offense and make a recommendation to the Congregation.
- 2.3.1.2.5** The Board shall provide encouragement and accountability for the Senior Pastor in the areas of moral integrity and of personal spiritual growth and fitness.

### **2.3.1.3 Set Policies on Behalf of the Church**

The Board of Stewards shall approve and set such policies and procedures as are necessary for the effective and orderly functioning of the church. With input and assistance from the Senior Pastor and other church staff, they shall see that Policies and Procedures Manuals are developed and maintained in the areas of Personnel, Finance, Ministry Teams, Church Property, and any other areas deemed appropriate.

In the time between the church's business meetings, the Board of Stewards is authorized to act on behalf of the Congregation in all matters with the exception of the following:

- 2.3.1.3.1** The amending of the church's Articles of Incorporation, Constitution, or Bylaws;
- 2.3.1.3.2** Any non-budgeted capital expenditure in excess of an amount equal to 5% of that current year's annual budget.
- 2.3.1.3.3** The tenure of the Senior Pastor.

## **2.3.2 Qualifications**

Those serving on the Board of Stewards shall be church members noted for their commitment to the Lord Jesus Christ, for personal godliness, and for their significant leadership gifting. They must be held in high esteem by all the church and by the community. They must have a demonstrable record of commitment to the church and shall be noted for their encouragement of the Senior Pastor in his leadership of the church. They shall be men or women of evident Christian grace and courtesy in all their dealings. They must have been members of the church for at least 12 months prior to their election to the Board. Except for the Senior Pastor (who serves in an *ex officio* capacity on the Board), paid staff members and church employees, as well as immediate family members (spouse, parents, children) of paid staff members and church employees shall not be selected to the Board of Stewards.

## **2.3.3 Number and Term**

The Board of Stewards shall be composed of seven (7) individuals from the church membership. The Senior Pastor shall be a non-voting *ex officio* member of the Board, with the exception of votes involving the removal of a Board member; see Section 2.3.5 (Removal).

Each Board member shall serve one term of two (2) years. If requested by the Nominating Committee, each may serve up to two (2) more years, following which he shall then be ineligible for re-election to the Board for a period of 12 months.

Terms shall begin October 1 and end September 30. A rotation system with approximately one-half of the members elected annually shall be effected upon adoption of these Bylaws, thus ensuring stability and continuity of leadership.

### **2.3.4 Selection**

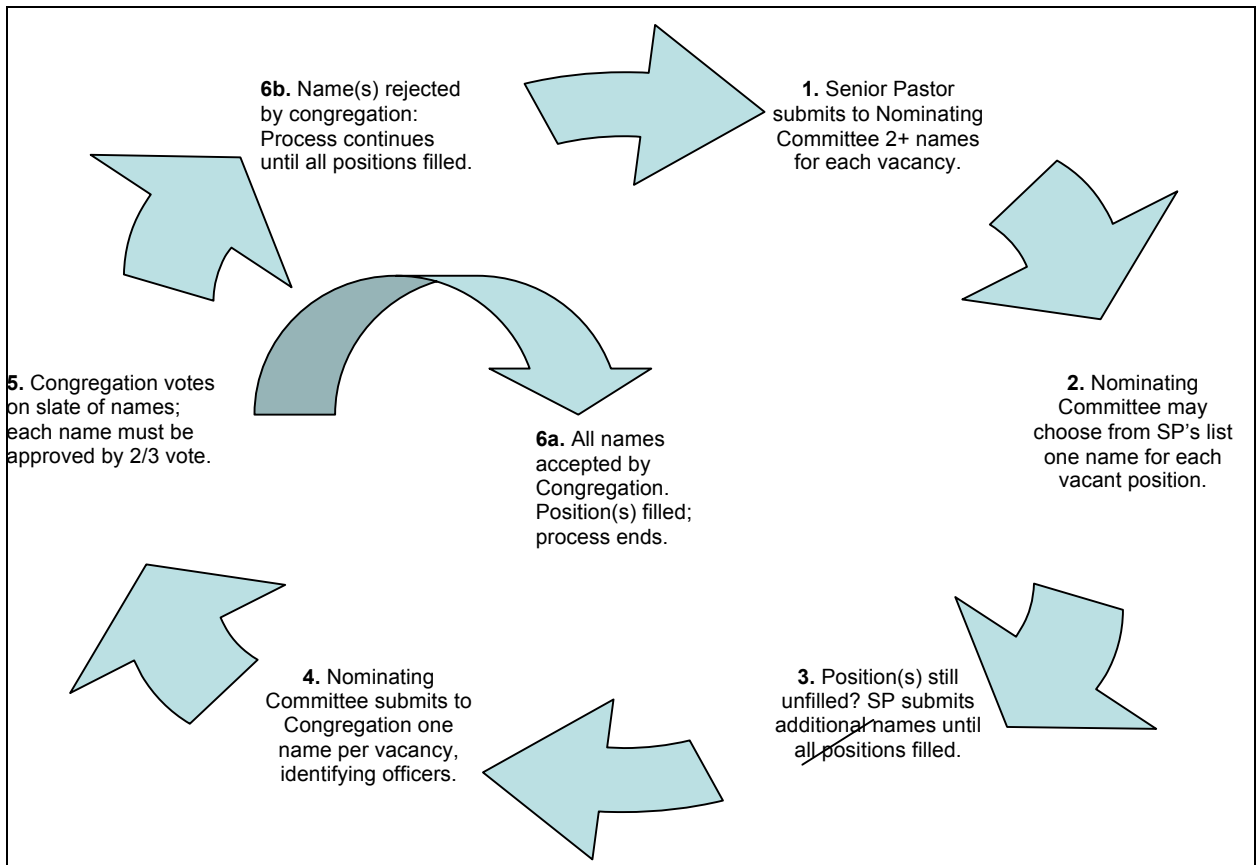
When a vacancy occurs on the Board of Stewards, the Senior Pastor shall submit to the Nominating Committee a list of names – at least two (2) names for each vacant position – of potential Board of Stewards members. From that list, the Nominating Committee may choose one name for each vacant position. If for any reason the Nominating Committee is unable to fill the slate from the names submitted, or disapproves of the slate of names submitted by the Senior Pastor, then he shall submit additional names to the Nominating Committee until they are able to fill all vacancies.

The Nominating Committee shall then submit to the Congregation, in a legitimately convened business meeting, their slate of candidates to fill the vacant position(s) on the Board. Only one name per vacant position shall be presented. Substitution of individual names on this slate via nominations from the floor is not permitted. The Nominating Committee's slate shall be voted upon by ballot. Each individual nominee must be approved by the Congregation by a 2/3 affirmative vote. In the event that any nominee is not acceptable to the Congregation, the Nominating Committee, after careful prayer and consultation, shall select a new (slate of) nominee(s) per the process outlined above: receiving names from the Senior Pastor, etc. The Nominating Committee will then present this new slate to the Congregation at a subsequent, legitimately convened business meeting. The same procedural guidelines shall be followed as stated above, and each individual nominee must be approved by the Congregation by a 2/3 affirmative vote. This process shall continue until a full slate is affirmed by the Congregation.

It shall be the responsibility of the Nominating Committee to choose who shall serve as the Board's Chair, Vice-Chair, and Treasurer. Any nominee who will also be serving as one of these officers shall be so identified by the Nominating Committee when the slate of Steward nominees is presented to the Congregation for approval.

The following diagram illustrates the process for selecting members of the Board of Stewards:

#### **Figure 2.3.4D: Selecting Members for the Board of Stewards**



### 2.3.5 Removal

A Board of Steward position shall be considered vacant upon the death or resignation of the member, the establishment of residency in another locality which prevents him/her from fulfilling the duties of the office, failure to attend ninety percent (90%) of the regularly scheduled meetings without a valid reason within a six (6) month period, or removal from his/her position by action of the Board of Stewards or Congregation.

If a Board member's qualifications for service come into question or if he is unwilling to carry out the duties of the Board in a responsible fashion, then the remaining members of the Board of Stewards may, by a 2/3 vote, remove that member from the Board of Stewards. In such cases, the Senior Pastor shall cast a vote; the Board member under consideration of dismissal shall not.

A member of the Board of Stewards may also be removed at any time by a majority vote of the Congregation in a legitimately convened business meeting.

### 2.3.6 Officers of the Board

- Chair: One Board member shall serve as Chair. The Chair shall also be the President of the corporation.
- Vice-Chair: One Board member shall serve as Vice-Chair. The Vice-Chair shall also be the Vice-President of the corporation. The Vice-Chair shall be responsible for maintaining minutes for all Board meetings and church business meetings.
- Treasurer: One Board member shall serve as Treasurer. The Treasurer shall also be the Secretary and Treasurer of the corporation. If the Board chooses to create a Finance Committee of the Board, the Treasurer shall chair the Finance Committee.
- Additional Board Members: Four (4) additional at-large members shall serve on the Board. If the Board chooses to create a Personnel Committee of the Board, one of these shall chair the Personnel Committee.

It shall be the responsibility of the Nominating Committee to choose who shall serve as the Board's Chair, Vice-Chair, and Treasurer. See Section 2.3.4 ("*Selection*") above. Due to the need for the Senior Pastor

to work closely with the Board Chair, and to maintain moral propriety, the Chair, and Vice Chair shall be male.

### **2.3.7 Committees of the Board**

The Board of Stewards may establish committees as needed to assist in the performance of their duties. These committees shall answer to the Board of Stewards unless otherwise noted. If the Board chooses to create a Finance Committee, the Treasurer shall serve as its chair; if a Personnel Committee, then one of the four (4) at-large Board members shall serve as its chair. Additional committees may also be established at the Board's discretion. Committee members and their chairs shall be appointed jointly by the Chair of the Board of Stewards and the Senior Pastor.

### **2.3.8 Meetings**

For votes on routine business, 2/3 of the Board members must participate.

In the cases of removal of the Senior Pastor, removal of a board member, consideration of an expenditure in excess of 1% of annual budget, and any other situations deemed critical by the board, 100% of the members must participate in the voting..

The Board of Stewards shall meet monthly and as necessary on such dates and at such times as it shall fix from time to time.

## **2.4 The Congregation**

Final authority for all matters related to the church shall be vested in this local Congregation, as expressed in actions during legitimately convened business meetings.

The Congregation shall have one standing committee: the Nominating Committee. Additional *ad hoc* committees (Pastor Search Committee, Constitution and Bylaws Review Committee, etc.) may be constituted by vote of the Congregation in any legitimately convened business meeting, and these committees shall be accountable to the Congregation.

For additional details related to the role of the Congregation in church governance, see **Section 5: *Business Meetings and Procedures***.

## **2.5 Nominating Committee**

A Nominating Committee shall be maintained as a standing committee of the Congregation; as such, they are accountable to the Congregation.

### **2.5.1 Responsibilities**

The Nominating Committee is responsible for bringing to the Congregation for approval the names of suitable nominees to serve on the Board of Stewards, the Pastor Search Committee, and any additional committees established by the Congregation. Additionally, it shall be the responsibility of the Nominating Committee to identify on the slate of nominees who shall serve as the Board's Chair, Vice-Chair, and Treasurer, as well as the chair of any other committee established by the Congregation. This identification is to be made prior to submission of the slate of candidates to the Congregation.

Each potential position and person should be carefully considered, with the Committee's final decisions bathed in prayer. The Committee is to serve in a spirit of cooperation with the Senior Pastor and the Board of Stewards in carrying out its assigned responsibilities.

### **2.5.2 Qualifications**

Members of the Nominating Committee must have been members of the church for at least 12 months prior to their election to the Committee. They must be noted for their commitment to the Lord Jesus

Christ and personal godliness. They must have a demonstrable record of committed, biblical churchmanship. They must be noted for their hearts of servanthood, for their support of the church's mission, and for their encouragement of the Senior Pastor in his leadership of the church. Paid staff members and church employees, as well as immediate family members (spouse, parents, children) of paid staff members and church employees, shall not be selected to the Nominating Committee.

### **2.5.3 Number and Term**

The Nominating Committee shall be composed of seven (7) members. Each member shall serve one (1) term of two (2) years. If requested by the Senior Pastor and Board of Stewards, each may serve one additional term of two (2) years, following which he shall then be ineligible for re-election to the Committee for a period of 12 months.

Terms shall begin October 1 and end September 30. A rotation system with approximately one-half of the members elected annually shall be effected upon adoption of these Bylaws, thus ensuring stability and continuity of leadership.

### **2.5.4 Selection**

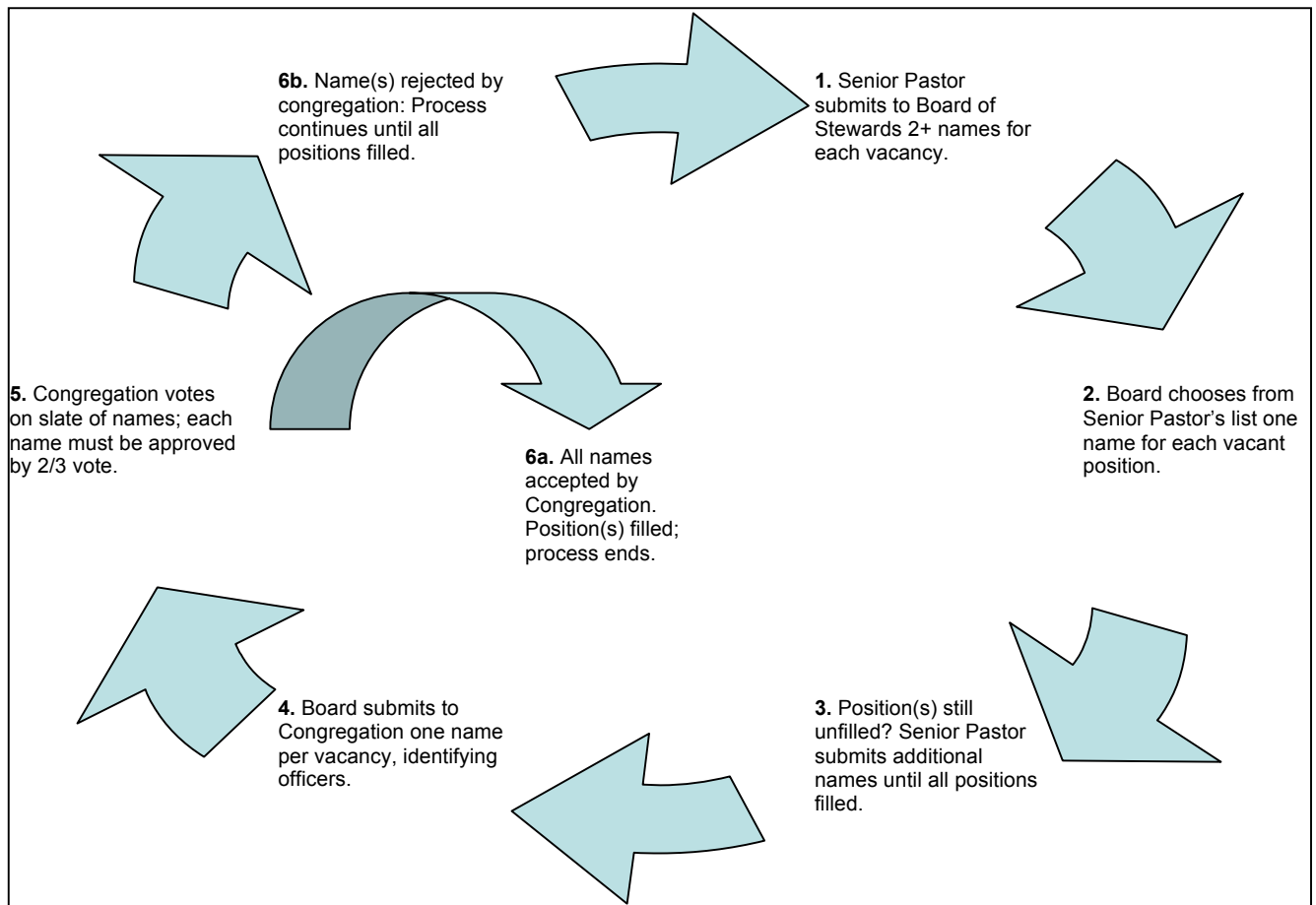
When a vacancy occurs on the Nominating Committee, the Senior Pastor shall submit to the Board of Stewards a list of names – at least two (2) names for each vacant position – of potential Nominating Committee members. From that list, the Board of Stewards may choose one name for each vacant position. If for any reason the Board of Stewards is unable to fill the slate from the names submitted, or disapproves of the slate of names submitted by the Senior Pastor, then he shall submit additional names to the Board until they are able to fill all vacancies.

The Board of Stewards shall then submit to the Congregation, in a legitimately convened business meeting, their slate of candidates to fill the vacant position(s) on the Nominating Committee. Only one name per vacant position shall be presented. Substitution of individual names on this slate via nominations from the floor is not permitted. The Board of Steward's slate shall be voted upon by ballot. Each individual nominee must be approved by the Congregation by a 2/3 affirmative vote. In the event that any nominee is not acceptable to the Congregation, the Board of Stewards, after careful prayer and consultation, shall select a new (slate of) nominee(s) per the process outlined above: receiving names from the Senior Pastor, etc. The Board of Stewards will then present this new slate to the Congregation at a subsequent, legitimately convened business meeting. The same procedural guidelines shall be followed as stated above, and each individual nominee must be approved by the Congregation by a 2/3 affirmative vote. This process shall continue until a full slate is affirmed by the Congregation.

It shall be the responsibility of the Senior Pastor and Board of Stewards jointly to propose who shall serve as the Nominating Committee's Chair and Vice-Chair. Any nominee who will also be serving as one of these officers shall be so identified by the Board when their slate of nominees is presented to the Congregation for approval.

The following diagram illustrates the process for selecting members to the Nominating Committee:

### **Figure 2.5.4E: Selecting Members to the Nominating Committee:**



### 2.5.5 Removal

A Nominating Committee position shall be considered vacant upon the death or resignation of the member, the establishment of residency in another locality which prevents him/her from fulfilling the duties of the office, failure to attend fifty percent (50%) of the regularly scheduled meetings without a valid reason within a six (6) month period, or removal from his/her position by action of the Congregation.

If a Nominating Committee member's qualifications for service come into question or if he is unwilling to carry out the duties of the committee in a responsible fashion, then the Congregation may, by a majority vote in a legitimately convened business meeting, remove that member from the Nominating Committee.

### 2.5.6 Meetings

The Nominating Committee shall meet as needed to prayerfully consider suitable nominees for open positions in the church. It should be noted that the bulk of this committee's work will be done between May and September, in preparation for the September business meeting.

## Section 3.0: Ministry Leadership Teams

*"From Him [Christ] the whole body, joined and held together by every supporting ligament, grows and builds itself up in love, as each part does its work."*

– Ephesians 4:16 –

## 3.1 General

In keeping with Ephesians 4:11-12, every believer is called to minister:

**Ephesians 4:11-12** - *It was He [Christ] Who gave some to be apostles, some to be prophets, some to be evangelists, and some to be pastors and teachers,<sup>12</sup> to prepare God's people for works of service, so that the body of Christ may be built up. [NIV]*

Ministry Teams shall be developed by the pastoral staff to effectively mobilize members for ministry. The pastoral and program staff will have primary responsibility for identifying, recruiting, equipping, deploying, and leading all members to be in ministry (cf. Eph 4:11-13). The teams shall function in accordance with the established Ministry Team Policies and Procedures Manual.

## 3.2 Term

Ministry team leaders shall be recruited by the pastoral staff. They shall serve one-year terms, which are renewable with the consent of the pastoral staff.

Ministry team members shall be recruited by ministry team leaders. They shall serve one-year terms, which are renewable with the consent of the pastoral staff and ministry team leader.

## 3.3 Qualifications

All ministry team leaders shall be members of the church and shall affirm our purpose statement, faith statement, and philosophy of ministry. Each ministry team leader shall give testimony of God's calling and giftedness for the ministry he or she leads.

## 3.4 Deacon Ministry Team

In that the office of deacon is identified in the New Testament and prescribed for every congregation, the Deacon Ministry Team shall be a standing ministry team of the church.

### 3.4.1 Responsibilities

Understanding their mission in light of Acts 6:1-7 and 1 Timothy 3:8-13, the chief purpose of the Deacon Ministry Team shall be to assist the pastoral staff in caring for the physical and spiritual needs of every member of the congregation, thus maintaining the spiritual health and unity of the body of Christ.

As servants of the church, the duties of the deacons shall be:

- 3.4.1.1** To assist the Senior Pastor, at his direction, in the care of all church members;
- 3.4.1.2** To provide support consistent with their giftedness and calling to ministry for new or existing ministries, as requested by the pastoral staff;
- 3.4.1.3** To minister to those with material and financial needs by administering the benevolence funds of the church;
- 3.4.1.4** To deal with matters of conduct among members overtaken with a fault, in accordance with the guidelines set forth in Galatians 6:1;
- 3.4.1.5** To prepare and serve the Lord's Supper;
- 3.4.1.6** To assist candidates in the ordinance of believer's baptism by instructing them biblically regarding salvation and the meaning of baptism, and by reviewing and scripturally evaluating their qualifications for baptism and church membership;
- 3.4.1.7** To provide spiritual guidance to the pastoral staff and the congregation through word and action.

### **3.4.2 Qualifications**

The deacon shall be a man whose character parallels that of the pastor as recorded in the New Testament in I Timothy 3:8-13:

**1 Timothy 3:8-13** - *Deacons, likewise, are to be men worthy of respect, sincere, not indulging in much wine, and not pursuing dishonest gain. <sup>9</sup> They must keep hold of the deep truths of the faith with a clear conscience. <sup>10</sup> They must first be tested; and then if there is nothing against them, let them serve as deacons. <sup>11</sup> In the same way, their wives are to be women worthy of respect, not malicious talkers but temperate and trustworthy in everything. <sup>12</sup> A deacon must be the husband of but one wife and must manage his children and his household well. <sup>13</sup> Those who have served well gain an excellent standing and great assurance in their faith in Christ Jesus. [NIV]*

No person shall serve as deacon who feels that for any reasons he cannot support and work with the pastor in love and unity for the furtherance of the cause of Christ and the good of the church. He shall be diligent in the stewardship of his time, tithe, talents, and service to this church.

In order to be eligible for nomination and election as a deacon, one must have been an active member of this church a minimum of one year prior to nominating ballots being cast, except in the case of an ordained deacon that has served in that office for at least one year in a sister church of like faith and order.

### **3.4.3 Organization and Term**

The deacon body will determine the organization and rules needed to fulfill their mission and ministry, including the number of deacons required for service. Additional information regarding organizational structure is available in the Deacon Handbook.

The deacon body shall elect such officers as necessary to carry out their duties. The term of office for any officers shall be one year, and they may be elected for no more than two consecutive terms in any office.

The deacon term is perpetual.

### **3.4.4 Selection**

It shall be the responsibility of the pastor and/or deacons to initiate the process of selecting men to serve in the office of deacon. This process of selecting men to serve as deacons shall consist of the following steps:

### 3.4.4.1 Nominations

The deacons shall define and conduct an annual process for accepting nominations from each member of the church body for men to serve in the office of deacon. Men ordained as deacons prior to joining FBCH, as well as unordained men, may be nominated by the church.

### 3.4.4.2 Interviews and Screening

The names of those nominees satisfying the qualifications set forth in these Bylaws shall be interviewed by deacons who are actively serving. Those willing to accept the call to serve in the office of deacon if confirmed by the church shall be presented for election in a duly called business meeting.

### 3.4.4.3 Election by the Congregation

In a duly called business meeting, the Deacon Ministry Team shall present to the Congregation the slate of men who have been nominated, interviewed and judged to be suitable candidates, and who have agreed to serve if elected by the church. The Congregation shall act upon this slate of deacon candidates without substitute motions from the floor. Additionally, the Congregation shall act upon the slate as a whole (*en toto*), not voting for or against individual nominees, but rather voting either for or against the entire slate. The slate must be confirmed by a majority vote of the Congregation.

Newly elected deacons shall take office immediately.

### 3.4.4.4 One Year Probationary Service for Men Not Ordained

Men who are elected by the church to serve as deacons, but not yet ordained, shall serve for one year before being ordained, thus demonstrating their commitment to ministry and servant leadership.

### 3.4.4.5 Ordination

At the end of the one year probationary period, and upon agreement of the candidate and recommendation by a deacon ordination council, all deacons that have not been ordained shall be ordained.

## Section 4.0: Finance

*“We want to avoid any criticism of the way we administer this liberal gift. <sup>21</sup> For we are taking pains to do what is right, not only in the eyes of the Lord but also in the eyes of men.”*  
– 2 Corinthians 8:20-21 –

### 4.1 General

The fiscal year of the church shall be October 1 through September 30.

Three parties share responsibility for the financial concerns of the church: the Congregation, the Board of Stewards, and the Senior Pastor. These responsibilities are outlined below.

In summary, all non-budgeted expenditures & budget reallocations require the following approvals, and cannot be used for staff compensation or personal gain:

- Staff Discretion with Board Notification: \*: ----- Less than 1% of annual budget;
- Board Approval: ----- 1% to 5% of annual budget;
- Congregational Approval: ----- More than 5% of annual budget.

## **4.2 Financial Responsibilities of the Congregation**

- 4.2.1** The Congregation shall approve the annual budget.
- 4.2.2** The Congregation shall receive written quarterly financial reports.
- 4.2.3** The Congregation shall approve any increases in the total annual budget.
- 4.2.4** The Congregation shall approve all non-budgeted expenditures or budget reallocations exceeding 5% of the annual budget.
- 4.2.5** The Congregation shall receive written reports of non-budgeted expenditures exceeding 1% of the annual budget.
- 4.2.6** The Congregation shall receive the written end-of-year financial statement.
- 4.2.7** The Congregation shall act upon any recommendation from the Board of Stewards relative to the acquisition of land, construction of new buildings, borrowing of funds, and sale of real property.

## **4.3 Financial Responsibilities of the Board of Stewards**

The principal financial responsibilities of the Board of Stewards shall be to ensure the financial, legal, and fiduciary integrity of the church; and to set financial policies on behalf of the church. In all these areas, the Board of Stewards is accountable to the Congregation.

The following are the specific financial responsibilities of the Board of Stewards. The Board may choose to delegate to its Finance Committee some of these responsibilities; see Section 4.3.4 below: "Finance Committee of the Board (optional)."

### **4.3.1 Core Responsibilities:**

The following are the core financial responsibilities of the Board of Stewards:

- 4.3.1.1** The Board shall receive the proposed annual budget from the Senior Pastor and his staff, and review and approve the budget. The Board shall be responsible for recommending the compensation package for the Senior Pastor. The Board of Stewards and Senior Pastor must come to consensus on the proposed budget, which is then recommended to the Congregation for final approval.
- 4.3.1.2** The Board shall receive from the Senior Pastor and his staff detailed monthly financial statements on all church financial activities.
- 4.3.1.3** The Board shall oversee organizational financial planning.
- 4.3.1.4** The Board shall safeguard organizational assets.
- 4.3.1.5** The Board shall develop fiscal policies.
- 4.3.1.6** The Board shall anticipate financial problems.
- 4.3.1.7** The Board shall approve non-budgeted expenditures or budget reallocations exceeding 1% of the annual budget.
- 4.3.1.8** The Board shall recommend to the Congregation for approval all non-budgeted expenditures or budget reallocations exceeding 5% of the annual budget.
- 4.3.1.9** The Board shall oversee and provide mechanisms for the handling of collections, tithes, and offerings.

### **4.3.2 Audit-Related Responsibilities:**

The following are the audit-related responsibilities of the Board of Stewards:

- 4.3.2.1** Hire an independent auditor for the annual audit.
- 4.3.2.2** Review the end-of-year audit report with the auditor and make available to the church.
- 4.3.2.3** Ensure that appropriate internal controls are in place.
- 4.3.2.4** Request internal audits from time to time.
- 4.3.2.5** Adopt a conflict-of-interest policy.
- 4.3.2.6** See that all laws and regulations are respected.
- 4.3.2.7** See that all financial affairs in the church are conducted ethically.

### **4.3.3 Investment-Related Responsibilities:**

The following are the investment-related responsibilities of the Board of Stewards:

- 4.3.3.1** Draft investment policies for the church.
- 4.3.3.2** Set performance goals for the investment portfolio.
- 4.3.3.3** Follow closely the markets and their developments.
- 4.3.3.4** Follow new regulations and judicial interpretation of investment-related rules.
- 4.3.3.5** Plan scenarios for unforeseen situations affecting invested assets.
- 4.3.3.6** Consider all morally responsible investment concerns.

### **4.3.4 Finance Committee of the Board (optional):**

The full Board of Stewards has the ultimate responsibility and fiduciary obligation to the church, but it may, if it so chooses, create committees of the Board, delegating various tasks to those committees. It is understood that these committees of the Board make recommendations to the Board, not organizational decisions; i.e., they are accountable to the Board.

If the Board chooses to create a Finance Committee of the Board, then the Treasurer of the Board shall serve as that committee's chairman. Committee members shall be appointed jointly by the Chair of the Board of Stewards and the Senior Pastor.

## **4.4 Financial Responsibilities of the Senior Pastor**

- 4.4.1** The Senior Pastor is responsible for managing the financial activities of the church according to the financial policies and procedures established by the Board of Stewards, and within the parameters of the annual budget approved by the Congregation. It is understood that some of these day-to-day tasks may be delegated to senior staff, including but not limited to the church Business Administrator and Associate Pastor(s).
- 4.4.2** The Senior Pastor and senior staff shall prepare, with input from the lay leaders of all church ministries, an annual budget for approval by the Board of Stewards and the Congregation.
- 4.4.3** The Senior Pastor and senior staff shall prepare monthly financial reports for approval by the Board of Stewards.

# ***Section 5.0: Business Meetings and Procedures***

*"Everything should be done in a fitting and orderly way."  
– 1 Corinthians 14:40 –*

## **5.1 Place**

Business meetings shall be held at the church property.

## **5.2 Semi-Annual Business Meeting**

The semi-annual business meetings will be in the second and fourth quarter of each year, with the meeting date to be set by the Board of Stewards not less than 30 days prior to the meeting. The meeting will be conducted according to the procedures and standards defined below.

## **5.3 Special Business Meetings**

In addition to the semi-annual business meetings, special business meetings may be scheduled as needed at any time by the Board of Stewards to conduct church business. No business shall be transacted at a special business meeting other than that stated in the notice.

A group of voting age members from the church may request a special business meeting through the Board of Stewards. If that request is denied then that group of church members must collect signatures of 10% of the membership, as reported in the last business meeting, and present it to the Chairman of Deacons. The Chairman of Deacons will then call a Special Business Meeting within 30 days and due notice will be given per Section 5.4 of these by-laws. The Chairman of Deacons will moderate the Special Business Meeting.

## **5.4 Notice Requirements**

At least two (2) weeks prior to any business meeting (either semi-annual or special), notice shall be given to the members. Notification of business meetings shall be given in all of the following manners:

- Notice of the meeting and its agenda printed in worship bulletins for two (2) sequential weeks.
- Oral announcement of the meeting and its agenda to the church at regularly scheduled worship services for two (2) sequential weeks.
- Delivery of printed notice of the meeting and its agenda by United States mail to each voting-eligible member on the membership roll.

No business shall be transacted at a business meeting other than that stated in the notice.

## **5.5 Procedures**

### **5.5.1 Quorum**

The presence of voting-eligible members equivalent to at least 1% of the previous months average Sunday Morning Worship attendance, at a business meeting duly noticed and called, shall constitute a quorum of the membership for the transaction of business. If less than a quorum is present, then the business meeting is automatically postponed. Notification of the rescheduled meeting time shall be given within 30 days by the Board of Stewards, per the procedures and standards above in Section 5.4 (*"Notice Requirements"*).

### **5.5.2 Voting**

All members of the church ages fourteen (14) years and older shall be eligible to vote. A simple majority shall be required to pass a motion unless specified elsewhere in these Bylaws. In case of a tie vote, the motion is lost. Unless specified elsewhere in these Bylaws, voice vote may be used unless a decision is called for from the floor, in which case the alternate voting procedure must receive majority approval.

### **5.5.3 Absentee Ballot**

An official ballot must be used for voting on a church action when a member cannot be present at a business meeting. The member can vote absentee by going to the church office, obtaining a ballot from the church business administrator, voting, and immediately returning the ballot. For a member physically unable to go to the church office, a deacon will be assigned by the Board Chairman to sign out an absentee ballot from the church business administrator, deliver it to the person, and return it to the church business administrator.

### **5.5.4 Discussion**

When members speak, they shall confine their remarks to the question under debate and shall direct their remarks to the moderator. No member shall speak more than once on the same subject until all members desiring the floor have spoken. No member may speak more than three times on the subject at hand without a majority approval vote of the members present.

### 5.5.5 General Procedure

All church business meetings shall be moderated by the Senior Pastor or his designee, or the Chairman of the Board of Stewards, or a member of the Board, except in the case of Section 5.3, paragraph 2..

All business meetings shall be conducted, first and foremost, according to Scripture. Then, wherever applicable and not inconsistent with this Constitution and Bylaws or with any special order established by the Board, all business shall be conducted according to Robert's Rules of Order, Revised.

Business meetings may be continued by assenting majority vote at any business meeting. In case of continuation, members shall be notified of the new date for the business meeting continuance per Section 5.4 (*"Notice Requirements"*).

If any member has an issue for discussion and vote at a business meeting, he must submit it to the Board of Stewards 30 days prior to the date of the meeting, for consideration and inclusion in the business meeting agenda. For a vote to be taken on an issue it must be on the agenda.

## Section 6.0: Church Meetings

*"They devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and to the fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer. <sup>43</sup> Everyone was filled with awe, and many wonders and miraculous signs were done by the apostles. <sup>44</sup> All the believers were together and had everything in common. <sup>45</sup> Selling their possessions and goods, they gave to anyone as he had need. <sup>46</sup> Every day they continued to meet together in the temple courts. They broke bread in their homes and ate together with glad and sincere hearts, <sup>47</sup> praising God and enjoying the favor of all the people. And the Lord added to their number daily those who were being saved."*

– Acts 2:42-47 –

### 6.1 Regular Meetings

Meetings for worship, prayer, and fellowship will be held at least weekly at the church property.

### 6.2 Lord's Supper

Not less than once each quarter, the church shall hold a worship meeting where the ordinance of the Lord's Supper is observed.

### 6.3 Baptism

Not less than once each quarter, the church shall hold a meeting where the ordinance of baptism is conducted, if there are any scriptural candidates for baptism.

## Section 7.0: Records, Policies, and Procedures

*The LORD spoke to Moses in the Tent of Meeting in the Desert of Sinai on the first day of the second month of the second year after the Israelites came out of Egypt. He said: 2 "Take a census of the whole Israelite community by their clans and families, listing every man by name, one by one."*

– Numbers 1:1-2 –

## **7.1 Church Records**

The church shall maintain the following records and reports:

- 7.1.1** A system of financial records which will supply accurate and detailed information on receipts, disbursements, balances, and the financial condition of the church.
- 7.1.2** Written minutes of all church business meetings and meetings of the Board of Stewards.
- 7.1.3** A record of the members of the church, setting forth the names and addresses of the members.
- 7.1.4** Contribution statements and contributors.
- 7.1.5** The annual review of the church's financial records for the close of each fiscal year.
- 7.1.6** A copy of the church's Constitution and Bylaws.

## **7.2 Policies and Procedures Manuals**

With input and assistance from the Senior Pastor and other church staff, the Board of Stewards shall see that Policies and Procedures Manuals are developed and maintained for the day-to-day administrative functions of the church not covered by the Constitution and Bylaws. Areas covered shall include Personnel, Finance, Ministry Teams, Church Property, and any other areas deemed appropriate. Any Policies and Procedures Manuals in use at the time of the adoption of these Bylaws shall be approved by the Board of Stewards. All Policies and Procedures Manuals shall be available in the office of the Business Administrator for review.

### **7.2.1 Revisions**

Any suggested changes shall be recommended to and approved by the Board of Stewards.

## **7.3 Corporate Actions**

Any action involving a change in the structure or nature of the corporation, such as mergers, acquisitions of other corporations and/or dissolutions, shall be the responsibility of the Board of Stewards. The Board of Stewards shall make a recommendation for such action to the Congregation at a business meeting.

## **7.4 Distribution of Assets upon Dissolution**

In the event of the dissolution of the First Baptist Church of Harvester, Inc. due to any cause, the assets shall be distributed as follows:

- 7.4.1** All debts shall be paid in full.
- 7.4.2** Real and personal property owned by the church shall be sold or donated upon the recommendation by the Board of Stewards and approval by the Congregation.
- 7.4.3** If sufficient funds remain, the church employees shall be considered for a severance package. This recommendation shall come from the Board of Stewards and shall be approved by the Congregation.
- 7.4.4** The remaining funds will be distributed, upon the recommendation of the Board of Stewards and approval by the Congregation, to one or more organizations which qualify as an exempt organization as described in the current Internal Revenue Code, or the corresponding provision of any prior or future law concerning not-for-profit charities.

# Section 8.0: Adoption and Amendment of Bylaws

*In those days when the number of disciples was increasing, the Grecian Jews among them complained against the Hebraic Jews because their widows were being overlooked in the daily distribution of food. <sup>2</sup> So the Twelve gathered all the disciples together and said, "It would not be right for us to neglect the ministry of the word of God in order to wait on tables. <sup>3</sup> Brothers, choose seven men from among you who are known to be full of the Spirit and wisdom. We will turn this responsibility over to them <sup>4</sup> and will give our attention to prayer and the ministry of the word."*

*<sup>5</sup> This proposal pleased the whole group. They chose Stephen, a man full of faith and of the Holy Spirit; also Philip, Procorus, Nicanor, Timon, Parmenas, and Nicolas from Antioch, a convert to Judaism. <sup>6</sup> They presented these men to the apostles, who prayed and laid their hands on them.*

*<sup>7</sup> So the word of God spread. The number of disciples in Jerusalem increased rapidly, and a large number of priests became obedient to the faith.*

– Acts 6:1-7 –

## 8.1 Amendment

This Constitution and Bylaws may be amended according to the following guidelines:

- 8.1.1** Proposed revisions or amendments may be brought to the Congregation for consideration only at a semi-annual business meeting; i.e., not at a special business meeting.
- 8.1.2** Any proposed revisions or amendments shall be referred to the Board of Stewards for approval prior to its presentation to the Congregation.
- 8.1.3** Any proposed revisions or amendments shall be submitted to the Board of Stewards for its consideration at least sixty (60) days prior to the semi-annual business meeting.
- 8.1.4** The text of any proposed revisions or amendments that the Board of Stewards will be recommending to the Congregation at the semi-annual business meeting shall be distributed to the Congregation for their consideration at least thirty (30) days prior to that business meeting.
- 8.1.5** Written notification by U.S. Mail to the Congregation of the upcoming business meeting must include notice that a vote to amend the Bylaws will be taken.
- 8.1.6** These Bylaws may be amended by two-thirds (2/3) vote of the members present and voting at any properly called business meeting.

## 8.2 Effectivity

Any change to the Constitution and/or By-Laws approved in the manner described above shall become part of the Constitution and/or By-Laws after the close of the meeting at which it is adopted. The revised section shall be distributed to all active members as soon as possible. Additional copies will be made available at the church office upon request.

## 8.3 Conflicts

Unless proper amendment procedures outlined above are followed, no individual, group, or Congregational action may change, supersede, void or otherwise alter the authority of this Constitution and By-Laws, or any of its parts including the authority delegated to individuals elected under the provisions described elsewhere in this Constitution and By-Laws. Should conflicts arise over the interpretation of the Constitution or By-Laws, the Board of Stewards shall assemble a Conflict Resolution Committee of at least the following people: Chairman of Deacons, Senior Pastor or his designee, one member of the Board of Stewards, and two (2) at-large members. A majority decision by that committee shall stand.

## 8.4 Transition Issues

To ensure an orderly transition from the organizational structure required by the church's present Bylaws to that required by these Bylaws, a transition period of not more than sixty (60) day shall be granted, beginning on the date of the business meeting at which these Bylaws are adopted, and ending on the date of the business meeting at which all positions for the Board of Stewards are filled by vote of the Congregation.

- 8.4.1** During this time, the present Board of Trustees, Finance Committee, and Personnel Committees, as well as the legal officers of the corporation, shall remain in place and functioning as in the past.
- 8.4.2** The present Nominating Committee shall remain in place, both during and after the transition period. Its members shall rotate off according to the schedule of their terms already in effect. As they rotate off, their positions shall be filled according to Section 2.5.4 ("*Selection*").
- 8.4.3** At a duly called special business meeting to be scheduled within this transition period, the Nominating Committee shall nominate to the Congregation a slate of names to serve on the Board of Stewards. This process shall take place per the guidelines of Section 2.3.4 ("*Selection*"):
- 8.4.3.1** The Nominating Committee shall receive from the Senior Pastor a list of names -- at least two (2) names for each position -- of potential Board of Stewards members.
  - 8.4.3.2** From that list, the Nominating Committee may choose one name for each vacant position. If for any reason the Nominating Committee is unable to fill the slate from the names submitted, or disapproves of the slate of names submitted by the Senior Pastor, then he shall submit additional names to the Nominating Committee until they are able to fill all vacancies.
  - 8.4.3.3** The Nominating Committee shall then submit to the congregation, in a legitimately convened business meeting, their slate of candidates to fill the vacant position(s) on the Board. Only one name per vacant position shall be presented. Substitution of individual names on this slate via nominations from the floor is not permitted. The Nominating Committee's slate shall be voted upon by ballot. Each individual nominee must be approved by the Congregation by a 2/3 affirmative vote.
  - 8.4.3.4** In the event that any nominee is not acceptable to the Congregation, the Nominating Committee, after careful prayer and consultation, shall select a new (slate of) nominee(s) per the process outlined above: receiving names from the Senior Pastor, etc. The Nominating Committee will then present this new slate to the Congregation at a subsequent, legitimately convened business meeting. The same procedural guidelines shall be followed as stated above, and each individual nominee must be approved by the Congregation by a 2/3 affirmative vote. This process shall continue until a full slate is affirmed by the Congregation.
  - 8.4.3.5** It shall be the responsibility of the Nominating Committee to choose who shall serve as the Board's Chair, Vice-Chair, and Treasurer. Any nominee who will also be serving as one of these officers shall be so identified by the Nominating Committee when the slate of Steward nominees is presented to the congregation for approval.
  - 8.4.3.6** Additionally, it shall be the responsibility of the Nominating Committee to stagger the terms of those going onto the Board of Stewards in order to ensure stability and continuity of leadership as members rotate off. For the sake of this transition, the partial year between the initial election date of these Stewards and September 30 shall not count as a year's service when considering tenure. The following guidelines shall be observed:

<b>Position on Board of Stewards</b>	<b>Maximum Time Can Serve</b> (Assumes re-election if allowed)	<b>Specifics of Terms Allowed</b>
• Chair	3 years Rotate off Sept. 30, 2010	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Serve a 1 year term.</li> <li>• Eligible for re-election to a 2 year term.</li> </ul>
• Vice-Chair	2 years Rotate off Sept. 30, 2009	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Serve a 2 year term.</li> <li>• Not eligible for re-election.</li> </ul>
• Treasurer	4 years Rotate off Sept. 30, 2011	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Serve a 2 year term.</li> <li>• Eligible for re-election to a 2 year term.</li> </ul>
• At Large #1	4 years Rotate off Sept. 30, 2011	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Serve a 2 year term.</li> <li>• Eligible for re-election to a 2 year term.</li> </ul>
• At Large #2	3 years Rotate off Sept. 30, 2010	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Serve a 1 year term.</li> <li>• Eligible for re-election to a 2 year term.</li> </ul>
• At Large #3	2 years Rotate off Sept. 30, 2009	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Serve a 2 year term</li> <li>• Not eligible for re-election.</li> </ul>
• At Large #4	1 year Rotate off Sept. 30, 2008	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Serve a 1 year term</li> <li>• Not eligible for re-election.</li> </ul>

**8.4.4** At the adjournment of the business meeting at which all positions for the Board of Stewards have been filled by vote of the Congregation, the Board of Stewards will be considered constituted and will begin functioning according to the guidelines of these Bylaws. Additionally, those elected as legal officers of the corporation will begin functioning in their respective roles at the time of the business meeting's adjournment.

**8.4.5** One year from the date of adoption, this section (8.4 – “*Transition Issues*”) shall be stricken from the Bylaws.