

# **BYLAWS OF FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH TRENTON A STATE NONPROFIT RELIGIOUS CORPORATION**

## **PREAMBLE TO THE BYLAWS**

First Baptist Church Trenton endeavors to be a church of the Lord Jesus Christ as described, established, and mandated by the New Testament. The purpose of these Bylaws is to help us accomplish the task of this Church in a "decent and orderly" manner through the use of effective and efficient means of good stewardship of the body's time, gifts and resources. Our ultimate desire is to bring glory to God through the Church.

These Bylaws are to provide general guidance on organization, governance and operation, based upon biblical principles and practices. However, the ultimate authority for First Baptist Church Trenton's organization, governance and operation is the Bible. When a conflict or ambiguity exists with regard to these Bylaws, deference is to be given to the biblical reference to resolve the conflict or ambiguity.

## **ARTICLE I NAME AND PRINCIPAL OFFICE**

The name of the Corporation is First Baptist Church of Trenton, Ohio. This Corporation will be further referred to in the Bylaws as the "First Baptist Church Trenton" or the "Church." The Church maintains its principal office at 305 Cypress Ave, Trenton, Ohio 45067.

## **ARTICLE II MEMBERSHIP**

### **Section 1: General**

The New Testament presents a picture of definable groups of people who, once committed to the Lord, identified themselves with and committed themselves to a particular local geographical body (Rom. 16:1; 1 Cor. 1:2; 2 Cor. 8:1; Phil. 1:1; Acts 11:26).

In order to implement the principles of accountability and commitment to the local body of Christ, as defined in the New Testament and practiced in the early churches, First Baptist Church Trenton recognizes the need for formal membership. Membership in this Church shall consist of all persons who have met the qualifications for membership and are listed on the membership role.

## **Section 2: Candidacy and Membership**

Any person sixteen (16) years of age and older who has personally received Christ as their Savior and Lord, who has received baptism by immersion as a testimony of their salvation, and who desires to be committed to First Baptist Church Trenton as a local body of believers may become a member of First Baptist Church Trenton through all the following procedures:

1. Approach the Senior Pastor, staff member, deacon or other ministry leader, or come forward during one of the worship service altar calls and share his or her desire to join First Baptist Church Trenton.
2. Attend a new member class.
3. Sign the Statement of Membership Covenant (Article 2: Section 4).
4. Be presented to the congregation.

Upon completing the above a person will be added to the membership of First Baptist Church Trenton membership roll.

## **Section 3: Designations of Membership**

In an effort to properly reflect the membership of the Church, four rolls shall be maintained. These rolls shall be updated at least once a quarter by the church secretary.

1. Members in Good Standing (See Article II, Section 4)

All members who reside within the Church's ministry area and are currently active in the Church. Also to include homebound, nursing home residents, active duty military, students away for school and persons with circumstances beyond the control of the member as deemed by the Senior Pastor or in the absence of a Senior Pastor the Leadership Council.

2. Nonresident Members

Members who have become inactive as a result of moving out of the Church's ministry area and have not joined another church or the Church is unable to locate. Nonresident records will be kept up to two years at which time they will be removed by a majority vote of the Church during any worship service or business meeting.

### 3. Members Not in Good Standing

Members who are able to attend worship services at First Baptist but choose not to attend for three consecutive months.

- a) The Leadership Council, after initial restoration attempts have failed, may move a person to the corrective status of a “Member Not in Good Standing.”
- b) A Member Not in Good Standing may be restored to the status of Member in Good Standing by personal repentance and by requesting to be restored. A Member Not in Good Standing is moved to the status of a Member in Good Standing by the Leadership Council.

### 4. Watchcare

First Baptist Church Trenton encourages children to accept Christ as their Savior. Children, just like adults, are sinful, and in need of Jesus’ saving work (Ps. 51:5; Rom. 5:12-21). Christ invites children to come to him (1 Sam. 1-3; Ps. 22:9-10; 1 Kings 18:12; 2 Kings 22; 2 Chron. 34-35; Jer. 1:5-8; Luke 1:15; 18:16), and he uses children as examples of the humility necessary for those who wish to enter Jesus’ kingdom (Matt. 11:25; 18:2-4; 19:13-14; Mark 10:15-16; Luke 10:21; 18:14-16).

The Bible does not state the age at which a child is capable of making a salvation decision and following through in believer’s baptism. First Baptist Church Trenton considers each decision on a case by case basis in consultation with the parent or guardian.

Because full church membership requires a mature decision based on attending a membership class and signing the Church Covenant, First Baptist Church Trenton only accepts persons sixteen (16) years of age and older into full membership. Children under sixteen (16) years of age who accept Christ as their Savior and are baptized will be placed under Watchcare. Those under Watchcare enjoy the privileges of receiving the Lord’s Supper, participating in the ministries of the Church and pastoral care. Those under Watchcare are not eligible to vote, teach, or hold elected positions in the Church.

When the child turns sixteen (16) years of age, they may request to become Members in Good Standing by going through the membership process as outlined in Article II, Section 2.

## **Section 4: Membership Covenant**

Following is the Membership Covenant which generally outlines the responsibilities of membership at First Baptist Church Trenton.

*Having received Christ as my Lord and Savior and having been baptized, and being in agreement with First Baptist Church Trenton statements, strategy, and structure, I feel led by*

*the Holy Spirit to unite with the First Baptist Church Trenton family. In doing so, I commit myself to God and to the other members to do the following:*

- 1. I will protect the unity of my church*
  - a) By acting in love toward other members*
  - b) By refusing to gossip*
  - c) By following the leaders*
- 2. I will share the responsibility of my church*
  - a) By praying for its growth*
  - b) By inviting the unchurched to attend*
  - c) By warmly welcoming those who visit*
- 3. I will serve in the ministry of my church*
  - a) By discovering my gifts and talents*
  - b) By being equipped by the staff to serve*
  - c) By developing a servant's heart*
- 4. I will support the testimony of my church*
  - a) By attending faithfully (10 weeks) minimum 1 service per week, per quarter.*
  - b) By living a godly life*
  - c) By tithing regularly*

*\*Tithing is giving 10% of your gross income, before taxes to First Baptist Church of Trenton.*

All persons joining First Baptist Church Trenton are required to be in agreement with the doctrine of the Church (See Constitution Article III) and sign the above Membership Covenant

## **Section 5: Voting Rights of Membership**

Every Member in Good Standing 16 years and older (except those members who are under the process of church discipline, see Article II, Section 8 or are a Member Not in Good Standing or Nonresident members, see Article II, Section 3) shall have the right to vote on the following matters:

- ☐ Adoption of the annual General Operating Budget of the Church
- ☐ Election of Leadership Council members, Deacons, Bookkeeper, Church Clerk and any other officers stipulated by these Bylaws
- ☐ Acquisition of real property
- ☐ Disposition of all or substantially all of the assets of the Church
- ☐ Merger or dissolution of the Church
- ☐ Obtaining of any indebtedness
- ☐ Amendments to the Articles of Incorporation and Bylaws of the Church
- ☐ Calling or removing the Senior Pastor
- ☐ Other matters in which the Senior Pastor, Leadership Council, or any team feels led to seek the Church's advice and counsel.

Each Member in Good Standing 16 years and older is entitled to one vote. Voting by proxy is prohibited.

## **Section 6: Termination of Membership**

Members shall be removed from the Church roll for the following reasons:

1. Death
2. Transfer of membership to another church
3. By personal request of the member
4. Dismissal by the Leadership Council according to a member's life and conduct which is not in accordance with the Church Membership Covenant and is in such a way that the member hinders the ministry influence of the Church in the community. Procedures for the dismissal of a member shall be in accordance with Article II, Section 7.

## **Section 7: Discipline of Members**

**Purpose:** The purpose of church discipline is to glorify God by maintaining (1) purity in the Church (1 Cor. 5:6), (2) protecting believers by deterring sin (1 Tim. 5:20) and (3) promoting the spiritual welfare of the offending believer by calling him or her to return to biblical standards of doctrine and conduct (Gal. 6:1). Furthermore, upon joining this Church, all members are in agreement with Article VIII of these Bylaws.

**Process:** Members and all other professing Christians who regularly attend or fellowship at First Baptist Church Trenton who err in biblical doctrine or public conduct shall be subject to discipline according to Matthew 18:15-18. (Such person hereafter will be referred to as an “Erring Person”.) Before such discipline reaches its final conclusion:

1. It shall be the duty of any church member who has knowledge of the Erring Person’s un-biblical beliefs or serious public misconduct to warn and to correct such Erring Person in private, seeking his or her repentance and restoration. If the Erring Person does not heed this warning; then,
2. The warning member shall again go to the Erring Person accompanied by one or two witnesses to warn and correct such Erring Person, seeking his or her repentance and restoration. If the Erring Person still refuses to heed this warning; then,
3. It shall be brought to the attention of the Senior Pastor and the Leadership Council (It is understood that this process will continue to conclusion, whether the Erring Person leaves First Baptist Church Trenton or otherwise seeks to withdraw from membership to avoid the discipline process.) The Senior Pastor and the Leadership Council will appropriately investigate any allegation brought by one church member against another. If these allegations are warranted, the Senior Pastor and two or more of the Leadership Council will contact the Erring Person and seek his or her repentance and restoration. If the Erring Person refuses to be restored, the matter will be presented to the entire Leadership

Council, who will act to protect the Church by removing the Erring Person's membership and notifying the Church in accordance with Matthew 18. However, even at this point, First Baptist Church Trenton will continue to pray for the restoration of the Erring Person.

All claims or disputes, which cannot be resolved in accordance with Matthew 18 principles, shall be settled by biblically based and legally binding arbitration as set forth in Article VIII of these Bylaws.

**Reinstatement:** If such dismissed member heeds the warning, demonstrates repentance, and requests reinstatement, he or she shall be publicly restored to membership through the affirmation of the Leadership Council and notification of First Baptist Church Trenton membership.

## **ARTICLE III MEMBERSHIP MEETINGS**

### **Section 1: Place**

Meetings of the members shall be held at a building on the Church property or at such other place or places within or outside the incorporated State as may be designated from time to time by the Leadership Council.

### **Section 2: Annual Membership Meeting**

An annual general meeting of the members shall be held the second Sunday of November of each year unless circumstances require the Moderator to set a different date. This general meeting shall be the annual membership meeting. The primary purpose of this meeting shall be to adopt an annual General Operating Budget and elect officers as required by these Bylaws. Subject to Section 4 of this Article, any other proper business may be conducted at this meeting.

### **Section 3: Special Meetings**

Special meetings may be called at any time by the Leadership Council for any purpose by giving notice to the Members in Good Standing in accordance with Section 4 of this Article.

### **Section 4: Notice Requirements for Membership Meetings**

**General Requirements:** Whenever Members in Good Standing are required or permitted to take any action at a meeting, notice shall be given to Members in Good Standing no less than two (2) weeks prior to a meeting. Notification of membership meetings shall be given in any of the following manners, which shall be deemed to be a reasonable method of calling a membership meeting:

1. Distribution of written material or oral announcement to the congregation in attendance at a regular weekend worship service

2. Announcement of the meeting in the Church newsletter
3. Delivery by United States mail to each member identified household on the resident membership roll.

**Notice of Certain Agenda Items:** Any matters of business to be brought to the Church for a vote must be included on an agenda published and made available at least one (1) week prior to the business meeting through the use of the Church's various tools of information dissemination, such as the Church web site, sanctuary projection screens, bulletins, etc. (hereinafter, "publication").

Items not included on the agenda for a business meeting may be brought up during the meeting for the purpose of discussion only, and may not be acted upon (voted on) at that meeting except as follows: Upon the affirmative vote of three-fourths (3/4) of the Members in Good Standing present and voting on a motion to add an item which was not included on the agenda for the meeting, such item will be added to the current agenda and may be acted upon (voted on) at that meeting.

Action by the Members in Good Standing on any of the following proposals, other than by unanimous approval by those Members in Good Standing present and entitled to vote, is valid only if the notice or waiver of notice specifies the general nature of the proposal:

1. Selection, rebuke, or dismissal of the Senior Pastor
2. Amending the Articles of Incorporation
3. Adopting, amending or repealing the Bylaws
4. Disposing of all or substantially all of the Church's assets
5. Approving the acquisition of real property and related indebtedness
6. Approving the election to dissolve the Church.

## **Section 5: Quorum**

Those Members in Good Standing present and voting at a meeting duly noticed and called shall constitute a quorum of the membership for the transaction of business.

## **Section 6: Voting**

Church action shall be by concurrence of a majority of Members in Good Standing present and voting, except for the calling or removal of the Senior Pastor, the election of Deacons, and the election of Leadership Council members which shall require an affirmative vote of three-fourths

(3/4) of those present and voting, and the amending of the Articles of Incorporation and Bylaws which shall require by affirmative vote of two-thirds (2/3) of those present and voting. All voting shall be by those physically present at the Church meeting at which a vote is taken and no proxy votes shall be allowed.

The Moderator may call for a vote by secret ballot. In addition any Member in Good Standing present may request a vote by secret ballot.

## **Section 7: Rules of Order**

Except where these Bylaws state otherwise, *Robert's Rules of Order* shall be the accepted pattern for the transaction of all church business. The Moderator shall retain the right to appoint a parliamentarian to help in all church meetings.

The Moderator for all church meetings shall be appointed by the Leadership Council on an annual basis. In the absence of appointed Moderator, the Leadership Council will appoint a replacement Moderator. The Senior Pastor will always be allowed to speak in church meetings if he so chooses.

The Church Clerk will be responsible for recording the minutes of the meeting. The minutes shall include who presided over the meeting; quorum of members, summary of actions taken at the meeting but in sufficient detail to clearly describe what was discussed and agreed upon to avoid any subsequent disputes.

Church meetings are open to any church Member in Good Standing desiring to attend. Members not in Good Standing, visitors and nonmembers will be dismissed before meetings commence except under special circumstances.

# **ARTICLE IV THE LEADERSHIP COUNCIL**

## **Section 1: General Scope**

First Baptist Church Trenton seeks to be a New Testament Church committed to the teachings of the Bible. No other authority or tradition is to guide the means, faith, or structure of the Lord Jesus Christ's Church. The ministerial and administrative structure for a New Testament Church is to utilize a plurality form of leadership. First Baptist Church Trenton will follow this scriptural example.

To achieve this New Testament model, First Baptist Church Trenton requires qualified men to serve on the Leadership Council. These men must meet specific moral and spiritual qualifications before they can serve. Selection will be based on biblical directives such as: character (1 Tim. 3:1-10), giftedness (1 Cor. 12:12-31), function (Romans 12:3-8) and results (Eph. 4:11-16).



The government of this Church, under the leadership of the Holy Spirit, shall be vested in the Leadership Council (except in matters reserved to the members, as defined in these Bylaws).

## **Section 2:     Qualifications**

Before election to the Leadership Council, a prospective Leadership Council member shall have met the same biblical criteria for the Senior Pastor set forth in 1 Timothy 3:1-7 and Titus 1:5-9 and defined in Article VI, Section 2. In addition, the prospective Leadership Council member must be at least twenty-five (25) years of age and shall also have been a Member in Good Standing for a period of at least two (2) years by September 30<sup>th</sup> at the time of his nomination.

The Senior Pastor shall be a permanent voting member of the Leadership Council. He will represent the interests of the ministerial and support staff of the Church. All other ministerial staff personnel cannot be members of the Council, even though they meet the qualifications.

No employee of the Church or family member of an employee may serve on the Leadership Council. In addition any person having a direct or indirect business or financial relationship with the Church during the current fiscal year or the prior fiscal year that could interfere with the exercise of independent judgment as a member of the Council may serve on the Leadership Council.

## **Section 3:     Board of Directors**

The Leadership Council serves as the board of directors of the Church for purposes of Ohio law, and in accordance with applicable Ohio law shall oversee the business of the Church under the leadership of its Chairman. The Chairman selected by the Leadership Council pursuant to Article V, Section 2 shall have such specific duties and limitations on authority as may be set forth in church policies in addition to those set forth in the Bylaws. In addition to the statutory obligations granted the Leadership Council as the board of directors of the Church under Ohio law, the Leadership Council may govern itself and the Church in accordance with and pursuant to the policies of First Baptist Church Trenton.

## **Section 4:     Duties**

The following are primary duties of the Leadership Council:

### **1. Praying**

The Leadership Council's most important responsibility is prayer. Fervent prayer is to be offered for God's power, God's wisdom, God's people and for God's Kingdom to come (John 15:4-5; Matt. 6:10; Eph. 1:16-23; 3:14-19; 6:10-20; Phil. 1:3-4; Jas. 5:14-15).

### **2. Teaching.**

The Leadership Council is to see that the flock is fed through insightful and accurate biblical instruction and admonition that is in accordance with the doctrine of First Baptist

Church Trenton as stated in Scripture. Teaching will be centered on equipping the members of the body to perform works of ministry (Acts 20:17-27; Eph. 4:11-16; 1 Tim. 3:2; Titus 1:9-16; John 21:17).

### 3. Protecting

The Leadership Council is to protect the Church from persons, teachings and any other things that threaten the Church's mission, doctrinal integrity or unity and her members (Acts 20:28-31; Titus 3:10-11;). This includes but is not limited to:

- a. Confronting those who are teaching what they should not teach so that the truth of Christ will remain credible to both the congregation and the community (1 Tim. 6:3-5; 2 Tim. 4:1-4; 2 Cor. 3:1-5; Rev. 3-4).
- b. Removing persons from church membership in accordance with Scripture (Matt. 18:15-20; 1 Cor. 5:1-12) and as set forth in the Bylaws.
- c. Restoring and restating persons who heed the warnings, demonstrates repentance, and requests reinstatement in accordance with the Bylaws (2 Cor. 2:5-11).
- d. Guarding the body against those who would stir up strife and dissension (Phil. 2:1-11; Titus 3:10-11; Jas. 4:1-3).

### 4. Caring

The Leadership Council is to make sure that members of the body are loved and cared for in a manner that honors Christ (John 20:15-17; Acts 20:28; 1 Peter 5:2-3).

### 5. Leading

The Leadership Council is to provide godly and loving servant leadership to the body (Matt. 20:25-28; Mark 10:45; John 15:12; 1 Peter 5:3). This includes but is not limited to:

- a. Providing a scriptural role model and setting a pattern before the flock of a rightly ordered life - with a single purpose, to glorify God (Phil. 1:27; 3:15-21; 1 Tim. 3:6-7; Titus 2:7).
- b. Determining and articulating God's vision as well as intermediate and long-range goals for the Church in cooperation with the Senior Pastor (Prov. 29:18; Jer. 29:11-13; Col. 1:9-12).

### 6. Overseeing

The Leadership Council conducts, manages, oversees and controls the business affairs of the Church (Exod. 18:17-26; Acts 20:28; 1 Cor. 14:33, 40; 1 Tim. 3:4-5; Titus 1:5). This includes but is not limited to the following:

- a. Authorizing or ratifying budgets and spending decisions of the Church in accordance with any standards or procedures set forth in the policies of the Church, subject to the authority of the General Members under Article III, Section 6.
- b. Appointing and dissolving standing and special teams of the Leadership Council as needed.
- c. Hiring, selecting, dismissing, and setting salaries for all ministerial staff positions by a majority vote of its members present and voting at a meeting in which a quorum is present. The congregation has the sole authority to hire, select and dismiss the Senior Minister. All other support staff positions shall be hired, selected, dismissed, and have their salaries set by recommendation from the Senior Pastor to the Leadership Council.
- d. Conducting an annual review of the Senior Pastor.
- e. Determining the compensation and benefits of the Senior Pastor.
- f. Recommending amendments to the Articles of Incorporation and Constitution and Bylaws by two-thirds (2/3) vote of the total number of the Council Members at a meeting of the Leadership Council called for such purpose, in each case prior to submitting each such amendment to the General Members for approval pursuant to Article III, Section 6. The Senior Pastor must be present at the vote of the Leadership Council.
- g. Adopting and amending policies to provide for the governance of the Church.
- h. Borrowing money, incurring indebtedness and signing in the Church's name promissory notes, bonds, debentures, deeds of trust, mortgages, pledges or other evidences of debt and securities, subject to the approval of the General Members as required under Article III, Section 6.
- i. Delegating to the Senior Pastor and staff the day-to day ministry details, the development and implementation of strategies determined by the Council.

Leadership Council members have no individual authority but must act together as a Council to represent the best interest of the Church. All Leadership Council actions are authorized by the Council passing a "resolution."

The Leadership Council shall have any other duties and responsibilities that are described in these Bylaws.

## **Section 5: Rotation**

The term of office of Council members shall expire on December 31 of their third (3rd) year of service. After serving as a Leadership Council member, no man shall be eligible to serve another term until the lapse of at least one (1) year unless there are not enough qualified men to serve, with a term limit of one (1) year. Any man serving consecutive terms must still be voted on by the congregation.

## **Section 6: Number/Election**

The Leadership Council shall consist of at least three (3) **qualified** (see Article IV, Section 2) members (including the Senior Pastor) not to exceed (9) nine. The Leadership Council shall

determine the desired number of Council members based on the need of the Church and the leadership of the Holy Spirit.

The election of Leadership Council members shall be on a staggered basis.

Beginning May first (1<sup>st</sup>) of each year, the Leadership Council shall prayerfully seek qualified men to be nominated for service on the Leadership Council. Nominations will close on May thirty-first (31<sup>st</sup>) of the same year.

1. The existing Council members shall appoint a Leadership Nominating Team consisting of at least three members. The Nominating Team shall be made up of the Senior Pastor, one Leadership Council member selected by the Leadership Council and member(s)-at-large selected by the Leadership Council. The member(s)-at-large shall not currently serve on the Leadership Council or currently aspire to serve on the Leadership Council and shall meet deacon qualifications.
2. The Leadership Nominating Team will meet with the Leadership Council to review the qualifications for Council members and determine questions that shall be posed to the candidates.
3. The Leadership Nominating Team shall inform qualified men that they have been nominated and urge them to engage in self-appraisal and personal evaluation in light of the scriptural qualifications through the questionnaire provided by the Leadership Nominating team. Any person may withdraw his name at that point, if he does not aspire to the position of Leadership Council member or if he does not believe he adequately meets the qualifications or has time to serve.
4. The Leadership Nominating Team shall conduct interviews with each nominee, who agrees to serve. Consideration will be given as to the present Leadership Council's spiritual gift mix and talents. It is the desire of the Leadership Council to lead the Church with men who have diverse spiritual gifts and talents.
5. After prayerfully considering each nominee, the Leadership Nominating Team shall make final recommendations to the whole Leadership Council.
6. The Leadership Council shall review the nominees and make a final selection.
7. Those nominees who have not been selected by the Leadership Council shall be informed by the Leadership Nominating Team as to the reason for their not being recommended, with reference to whatever qualifications, if any, might not have been fulfilled.
8. The names of the prospective Leadership Council Members shall be brought before the members of the Church, who will be given 30 days to show cause why any of the prospective Council Members would not be qualified to serve.

9. The prospective Leadership Council Members will be presented to the members of the Church for affirmation by three quarters (3/4) of the votes of the members present at the Annual Membership Meeting.

The process of selection shall begin no later than May of each year and be completed by the Annual Meeting of the Membership. (See Article III, Section 6)

The Senior Pastor shall be the only ministerial or support staff to serve on the Leadership Council. However, other staff's presence can be requested for Council meetings. Furthermore, not more than one member of a family of the Church shall serve on the Leadership Council at any given time.

Council members elected shall take office on January 1 following their election.

#### **Section 7: Removal/Resignation**

A Council Member may resign by submitting a written letter of resignation to the Senior Pastor stating the effective date of the resignation. If no effective date is specified, the resignation shall be deemed effective immediately. Each Council Member shall be subject to the dispute resolutions, resignation and other provisions applicable to all members under these Bylaws and the Policies.

It is the Leadership Council's responsibility to discipline or remove any Council member who no longer fulfills the qualification of Council member, who fails to fulfill his responsibilities, or who violates the intent of these Bylaws. Discipline or removal shall be by a three-fourths (3/4) vote of all Leadership Council members (except the Council member being disciplined or removed).

#### **Section 8: Meetings and Quorum**

The Leadership Council will hold monthly meetings or as needed at a time and place decided by the Council. The Annual Meeting of the Council will correspond with the Church Annual meeting. A quorum for Leadership Council meetings shall consist of two-thirds (2/3) of the voting members. For approval of any matters before the Council, a majority vote of those members of the Council who are present, at which a quorum is present, shall be necessary unless specified elsewhere in these Bylaws.

#### **Section 9: Vacancies**

If a vacancy occurs on the Leadership Council, the vacancy may be filled by a three-fourths (3/4) vote of the members of the Leadership Council. The man selected to fill the vacancy shall serve until the next regularly scheduled election of Council members by the congregation. Council members can take leaves of absence and be reinstated to active service as described in the Bylaws.

## **Section 10: Compensation**

No Council Member shall be compensated for serving on the Leadership Council, but Council Members may be reimbursed by the Church for reasonable expenses incurred in the conduct of their office.

# **ARTICLE V OFFICERS**

## **Section 1: Officers**

The officers of the Church, for the purposes of Ohio corporate law, shall consist of the following, each of whom must be a Leadership Council Member in good standing for at least one (1) year prior to election (but the one (1) year requirement shall be waived as to any newly appointed Senior Pastor serving as President, and in the case of officers appointed in the first year after adoption of these Bylaws the one (1) year requirement also shall be waived): (1) a Chairman; (2) a President; (3) a Secretary; (4) a Treasurer; and (5) such additional officers as the Leadership Council may from time to time appoint. No person shall serve in more than one office simultaneously, except that the same person may simultaneously serve as Secretary and Treasurer.

## **Section 2: Function**

The duties of each of the officers shall be as follows:

**Chairman:** The Leadership Chairman shall serve as the Chairman of the Corporation and preside at all meetings of the Leadership Council.

**President:** The President (the Senior Pastor) shall serve as the chief executive officer of the Corporation and shall have all powers and perform all duties assigned to the president of an Ohio corporation under Chapter 1702, Ohio Revised Code.

**Secretary:** The Secretary shall keep (or cause to be kept) minutes of all meetings of the Leadership Council and all committees thereof. The Secretary shall see that minutes of all meetings of the General Members, current records of the names and addresses of all General Members are kept.

In the absence of the Secretary at any meeting, the Leadership Council shall appoint an acting Secretary to keep minutes of such meeting. The Secretary and the Church Clerk are not one and the same.

**Treasurer:** The Treasurer shall be the chief accounting and financial officer of the Church. The Treasurer shall keep (or cause to be kept) timely, complete and accurate books of account. The Treasurer shall have charge and custody of all funds, investments and assets of the Church. The Treasurer shall make such written and/or oral reports at meetings as may be required by the Chairman, the President or the Leadership Council. The Treasurer of the Corporation and the Bookkeeper are not one and the same.

## ARTICLE VI CHURCH LEADERSHIP

### Section 1: Headship of Christ

Christ is the head of First Baptist Church of Trenton (Matt. 16:18; Eph. 1:22; 4:15; 5:23; Col. 1:18; 2:19). The government of the Church shall be focused on seeking and maintaining the Lordship and direction of Jesus Christ over His Body (Matt. 6:10, 33; Acts 13:2). All those in authority shall continually seek His mind and will, through His Spirit and the Word of God in all actions and decisions.

### Section 2: Senior Pastor

The biblical titles of pastor, elder, and overseer are three titles that refer to precisely the same office (I Peter 5:1-2; Acts 20:17, 28). It shall be the duty of the men who hold this office to shepherd the flock, oversee the spiritual lives of the membership, and serve as elders in the proclamation and governance of the Church as detailed by the job descriptions adopted by the congregation for each pastoral office.

#### Qualifications of Senior Pastor

1 Timothy 3:2–7 (ESV)

<sup>2</sup> Therefore an overseer must be above reproach, the husband of one wife, sober-minded, self-controlled, respectable, hospitable, able to teach, <sup>3</sup> not a drunkard, not violent but gentle, not quarrelsome, not a lover of money. <sup>4</sup> He must manage his own household well, with all dignity keeping his children submissive, <sup>5</sup> for if someone does not know how to manage his own household, how will he care for God's church? <sup>6</sup> He must not be a recent convert, or he may become puffed up with conceit and fall into the condemnation of the devil. <sup>7</sup> Moreover, he must be well thought of by outsiders, so that he may not fall into disgrace, into a snare of the devil.

Titus 1:6–9 (ESV)

<sup>6</sup> if anyone is above reproach, the husband of one wife, and his children are believers and not open to the charge of debauchery or insubordination. <sup>7</sup> For an overseer, as God's steward, must be above reproach. He must not be arrogant or quick-tempered or a drunkard or violent or greedy for gain, <sup>8</sup> but hospitable, a lover of good, self-controlled, upright, holy, and disciplined. <sup>9</sup> He must hold firm to the trustworthy word as taught, so that he may be able to give instruction in sound doctrine and also to rebuke those who contradict it.

*Above Reproach*

Pastors/Elders/Overseers must be blameless, presenting no pattern of scriptural disobedience or grounds for accusation.

<i>Husband of One Wife</i>	Pastors/Elders/Overseers, if married, must be devoted spouses.
<i>Sober-minded</i>	Pastors/Elders/Overseers must be self-controlled, enslaved to nothing, free from excesses.
<i>Self-controlled</i>	Pastors/Elders/Overseers must be sober, sensible, wise, balanced in judgment, not given to quick, superficial decisions based on immature thinking.
<i>Respectable</i>	Pastors/Elders/Overseers must demonstrate a well-ordered life and good behavior.
<i>Hospitable</i>	Pastors/Elders/Overseers must be unselfish with their personal resources. They must be willing to share blessings with others.
<i>Able to Teach</i>	Pastors/Elders/Overseers must be able to communicate the truth of God and exhort sound doctrine in a non-argumentative way (II Tim. 4:2 & 2:24).
<i>Not a drunkard</i>	Pastors/Elders/Overseers must be free from addictions of all kinds, and must be willing to limit their liberty for the sake of others.
<i>Not violent</i>	Pastors/Elders/Overseers must react to difficult situations calmly and coolly - not having a quick temper, contentious or reacting violently.
<i>Gentle</i>	Pastors/Elders/Overseers must be forbearing, gracious and considerate- not retaliating or seeking revenge.



<i>Free From the Love of Money</i>	Pastors/Elders/Overseers must not be stingy, greedy or out for sordid gain. They should not be preoccupied with amassing material things, but rather should be a model of giving.
<i>Manage Own Household</i>	Pastors/Elders/Overseers must have a well-ordered household, a healthy family life, and well-behaved children. (Pertains to those children still under the authority of the parents).
<i>Not a Recent Convert</i>	Pastors/Elders/Overseers must not be new believers. They must have been Christians for long enough to demonstrate the reality of their conversion and the depth of their spirituality.
<i>Well Thought of by Outsiders</i>	Pastors/Elders/Overseers must be well respected by unbelievers, and must be free from hypocrisy.
<i>Not Arrogant</i>	Pastors/Elders/Overseers must not be arrogant, assertive of his will with utter disregard for others, stubborn, insensitive or prone to force opinions on others. They must be more interested in service than self-pleasure.
<i>Not Quick Tempered</i>	Pastors/Elders/Overseers must be able to exercise self-control and patience in difficult situations.
<i>Lover of Good</i>	Pastors/Elders/Overseers must desire the will of God in every decision.
<i>Upright</i>	Pastors/Elders/Overseers must be fair and impartial. Their judgments must be based on scriptural principles.

*Holy*

Pastors/Elders/Overseers must be reverent, continually desiring to be separated from sin. They must be devoted to prayer, the study of Scripture and the guarding of their own spiritual walk. (Acts 20:28)

*Hold Firm to the Trustworthy Word*

Pastors/Elders/Overseers must be stable in the faith, obedient to the word of God, continually seeking to be controlled by the Holy Spirit.

The Church shall restrict the office of pastor/elder to males who meet the qualifications and undertake the duties given in 1 Timothy 2:12-15; 3:1-7; 4:6-16; 5:17, 22; 2 Timothy 4:1-5; Titus 1:5-9; 1 Peter 5:1-4; 1 Corinthians 14: 34-36.

**Duties of the Senior Pastor:**

1. The Senior Pastor's main responsibility is to spend time with God through prayer, reading the Bible and maintaining daily communion with Him.
2. Under the leadership of the Holy Spirit, the Senior Pastor shall have the spiritual authority to oversee and direct the spiritual growth of all persons (members and non-members alike) attending church functions, and to give spiritual leadership and general oversight to the Church and all paid and volunteer staff.
3. The Senior Pastor will serve on the Leadership Council as the only staff member, being accountable for and a representative of all staff positions.
4. The Senior Pastor is responsible as a member of the Leadership Council to lead the Church to function as a New Testament Church and ultimately achieve its mission, statement of purpose and ministry objectives and goals.
5. The Senior Pastor shall be an ex-officio member of all committees and ministry teams, and his leadership shall be recognized in all of them. He may assign a Ministerial Staff Member or other church personnel to serve as a staff liaison to standing teams.
6. The Senior Pastor shall be the President of the Corporation, its chief executive officer. Subject to the general direction of the Leadership Council, the Senior Pastor shall generally oversee (or cause to be overseen) the business of the Church, the Ministry Staff, the Church's administrative and other employees, the Deacons, the Church's ministry leaders, the Church's volunteer staff and the General Members.
7. The Senior Pastor is solely responsible for the Church Staff who assume his delegated responsibilities. Each Church Staff member serves at the will of the Sr. Pastor. The Sr.

Pastor may remove, replace, or realign existing Church Staff positions, as he deems necessary and appropriate in consultation with the Leadership Council.

A Position Description for the Senior Pastor, which outlines more specific responsibilities and duties will be prepared by Leadership Council.

**Election of Senior Pastor:** The Senior Pastor shall be chosen and called by the Church whenever a vacancy occurs. His election shall take place at a church meeting called specifically for that purpose.

**Senior Pastor Search Team:** When a vacancy in the Senior Pastor position exists, a Pastor Search Team shall be established with church membership approval.

The Pastor Search Team will be comprised of seven (7) Members in Good Standing. The team may be less than seven (7) if there are not enough qualified or willing candidates. One (1) deacon who is duly elected by the deacon body, one (1) member of the Leadership Council, and five (5) Members in Good Standing elected at large by the Church in a special called church meeting. Other deacons and Leadership Council members elected by the congregation may serve along with the required deacon and Leadership Council member. Two (2) alternates will also be chosen to serve in the event a vacancy occurs.

Members of the Senior Pastor Search team shall:

- ☐ Be Members in Good Standing who faithfully attend and support the Church.
- ☐ Demonstrate spiritual maturity.
- ☐ Be committed to seeking and following God's will for the Church.
- ☐ Be trusted and respected within the congregation.
- ☐ Have healthy inter-personal relationship skills.
- ☐ Be competent in expressing their own thoughts and ideas and receiving and processing the ideas and thoughts of others, even when they differ.
- ☐ Be able to maintain confidentiality.
- ☐ Understand the diversity and dynamics of the Church and community.
- ☐ Be free and able to attend Search Team meetings.
- ☐ Have no agenda based on either self-interest or a sub-group's interest.

No more than one member of a household may serve on the team. No spouse of paid pastoral, ministerial or support staff may serve on the Pastor Search Team.

The At-large members shall be elected by the following means:

1. The Leadership Council shall call for a Special Called business meeting to be held at the conclusion of a morning worship service (see Article III, Section 3) for the purpose of nominating members for a Pastor Search Team.
2. Each Member in Good Standing present at the special called business meeting will receive a blank ballot. Members in Good Standing may nominate up to twice the number of at-large candidates needed.

3. The deacons will be responsible for the collection of the ballots from Members in Good Standing present at the Special Called Business Meeting.
4. The Leadership Council will count the ballots.
5. After counting the ballots the Leadership Council will make sure all nominees are qualified to serve on the Pastor Search Team.
6. The qualified persons based on the order of votes shall fill the at-large positions. The next two (2) persons will serve as the alternates.
7. The Leadership Council shall announce the names of the persons serving on the Pastor Search Team at the next regularly scheduled worship service.

The Search Team will be responsible for screening all resumes, interviewing applicants, and confirming the qualifications and experience of top candidates. By unanimous vote of the entire Team, the Senior Pastor Search Team shall determine a candidate to present to the Church membership for consideration. The Senior Pastor Search Team shall bring only one (1) candidate at a time for consideration by the congregation.

Once the Pastor Search Team has selected a candidate, they shall present a candidate for the office of senior pastor to the congregation for consideration and approval at a special business meeting called for that purpose. The recommendation of the Pastor Search Team will constitute a nomination. An affirmative ballot vote of at least three-fourths (75%) of all Members in Good Standing present and voting shall be necessary to extend a call to a pastor. The Pastor Search Team shall provide the precise numeric breakdown of the vote at the request of the candidate.

Upon his acceptance of an extended call, the candidate shall be considered elected as Senior Pastor of the congregation.

The Senior Pastor's call will detail the annual evaluation process. It will also identify specific ministry objectives for the Church and detail information related to compensation, fringe benefits, authority and responsibility.

**Tenure of Office of Senior Pastor:** The tenure of the office of Senior Pastor may be terminated at any time by the Senior Pastor or the Church. If the Senior Pastor relinquishes the office, he may do so by giving at least four (4) weeks' notice at the time of resignation. The length of the notice may be reduced by agreement with the Leadership Council if there are extenuating circumstances.

**Removal of Senior Pastor:** The Church may declare the office of Senior Pastor to be vacant if circumstances dictate. Such action shall take place at a meeting called for that purpose, with at least a two (2) weeks written notice given to all Members in Good Standing. The meeting may be called only upon the recommendation of two-thirds (2/3) of the Leadership Council and three-fourths (3/4) of the Deacon Fellowship or by written petition signed by not less than one-third (1/3) of Members in Good Standing. The recommendation shall state the specific reasons that

warrant removal. The moderator of this meeting shall be the Chairman of the Leadership Council or, in his absence, an appointed moderator from the Leadership Council. The Senior Pastor shall be given the opportunity to respond orally and (if desired) in writing to the recommendations for removal. The vote to declare the office of Senior Pastor vacant shall be by written ballot with three-fourths (3/4) affirmative vote of those Members in Good Standing present.

### **Section 3: Other Ministerial Staff**

The Church shall have such paid or voluntary ministerial staff members as may be deemed necessary to carry out the diverse ministries of the Church. Paid ministerial or voluntary staff shall be called upon recommendation of the Senior Pastor in consultation with the Leadership Council. New ministerial staff positions will be formally introduced to the membership of the Church.

Position Descriptions shall be written when the need for a staff member is determined. All pastoral staff members will be required to meet the spiritual qualifications of a deacon (see Article VI, Section 5), regardless of their specific area of ministry. All paid or voluntary ministerial staff shall become members of the Church upon assuming his or her duties.

Each ministerial staff member serves at the will of the Senior Pastor. The Senior Pastor may remove, replace, or realign existing pastoral staff positions, as he deems necessary and appropriate in consultation with the Leadership Council.

All paid or voluntary ministerial staff shall be evaluated annually by the Senior Pastor.

### **Section 4: Support Staff**

All other support staff shall have a written job description and shall be employed and terminated by the Senior Pastor in consultation with the Leadership Council. The authority to employ and/or terminate church personnel may be delegated by the Senior Pastor to any direct or indirect supervisor of the individual who is being hired and/or whose employment is being terminated, as applicable.

The written job descriptions for all support staff shall be contained in a Staff Job Description Manual to be maintained by the Senior Pastor or his designee, a copy of which shall be placed in the Church Office for review by any church member.

The oversight of support staff members will be performed by the Senior Pastor. Guidelines for the hiring and termination of support staff positions are documented in the First Baptist Personnel Manual.

### **Section 5: Deacon Fellowship**

**General Scope:** Deacons are the servant-ministers of the Church. No specific, on-going deacon roles are mentioned in Scripture but are implied in Acts 6:1-7.

1. Care for the needs of the body.

Their purpose is to assist the Leadership Council and pastors in the multitude of practical duties of caring for the flock. Deacons have the honor of modeling, for the local church and the lost world, God's compassion, kindness, mercy, and love. As the Church compassionately cares for people's needs, the world sees a visible display of Christ's love, which will draw some people to the Savior. Examples of specific service would be: the distributors of assistance, and agents of mercy. They help the poor, the jobless, the sick, the widowed, the elderly, the homeless, the shut-in, and the disabled. They comfort, protect, and encourage people, and help to meet their needs. Although they do in many ways meet spiritual needs of those whom they serve, their primary service is related to physical needs.

2. Protect the unity of the Church.
3. Guard the priorities of the Senior Pastor which are prayer and preaching.
4. Actively witness for Christ.

### **Biblical Qualifications:**

Acts 6:3 (ESV)

<sup>3</sup> *Therefore, brothers, pick out from among you seven men of good repute, full of the Spirit and of wisdom, whom we will appoint to this duty.*

1 Timothy 3:8–13 (ESV)

<sup>8</sup> *Deacons likewise must be dignified, not double-tongued, not addicted to much wine, not greedy for dishonest gain. <sup>9</sup> They must hold the mystery of the faith with a clear conscience. <sup>10</sup> And let them also be tested first; then let them serve as deacons if they prove themselves blameless. <sup>11</sup> Their wives likewise must be dignified, not slanderers, but sober-minded, faithful in all things. <sup>12</sup> Let deacons each be the husband of one wife, managing their children and their own households well. <sup>13</sup> For those who serve well as deacons gain a good standing for themselves and also great confidence in the faith that is in Christ Jesus.*

#### *Good Repute*

Deacons must have a good reputation among those in and outside the Church. A deacon must not be guilty of a life of hypocrisy.

#### *Full of the Spirit*

A deacon must be fully yielded to the Holy Spirit's control in every area of his life.

<i>Full of Wisdom</i>	A deacon must be wise in the Scripture and know how to apply biblical truth to everyday life. A deacon must seek to understand life from God's perspective.
<i>Dignified</i>	A deacon is to be a serious minded person whose character merits respect. He is serious about his walk with Christ and the things of Christ.
<i>Not Double-Tongued</i>	A deacon's speech must not be hypocritical rather his speech should be characterized by integrity, consistency and honesty. He must hold confidences and refuse to engage in gossip.
<i>Not Addicted to much Wine</i>	A deacon must be free from addictions of all kinds, and must be willing to limit his liberty for the sake of others.
<i>Not Greedy for Dishonest Gain</i>	A deacon must not be stingy, greedy or out for sordid gain. He should not be preoccupied with amassing material things, but rather should be a model of giving.
<i>Hold the Mystery of the Faith</i>	A deacon must be stable in the faith, obedient to the word of God, continually seeking to be controlled by the Holy Spirit.
<i>Tested</i>	A deacon must have proven over time that he is qualified to serve as a deacon in his conduct, character and competency. He should not be a new convert.
<i>Blameless</i>	A deacon must be blameless, presenting no pattern of scriptural disobedience or grounds for accusation in his life.

*Husband of One Wife*

A deacon, if married, must be devoted to his spouse.

*Manage their Children and Household*

A deacon, if married, and/or has children at home must have a well-ordered household, a healthy family life, and well-behaved children. (Pertains to those children still under the authority of the parents.)

**Church Qualifications:** Any man who is a member of the Church over twenty-five (25) years of age and meets the qualifications of Scripture shall be eligible for the office of Deacon, provided he is willing and able to serve. He shall also have been a Member in Good Standing for a period of at least two (2) years at the time of his nomination.

**Duties:** His duties are church-wide, covering areas of need, ministry, soul winning, etc. It is his duty to be a positive encouragement in all matters concerning the welfare of the Church, but it is understood that he does not have authority over the Church, except when that authority has been delegated by the Leadership Council. The Deacon Fellowship will be the primary pool of spiritually qualified individuals who the Leadership Council, Senior Pastor and staff will use to assist in meeting ministry and administrative needs of the Church as they arise. Each deacon must be supportive of the Leadership Council, Senior Pastor, staff, and ministry philosophy of First Baptist Church Trenton.

**Rotation:** The term of office of Deacons shall expire on December 31 of their third (3rd) year of service. After serving as a Deacon, no man shall be eligible to serve another term until the lapse of at least one (1) year unless there are not enough qualified men to serve as directed by the Leadership Council, with a term limit of one (1) year. Any man serving consecutive terms must still be voted on by the congregation.

**Number, Election, Terms of Office:** In May of each year, the size of the Deacon Fellowship shall be determined by the Deacon Fellowship in consultation with the Senior Pastor. Deacons shall be elected by the Church. The Deacons so elected shall take office on January 1 following their election. There is no obligation to constitute as an active Deacon a person who comes to the Church from another congregation where he served as an active Deacon.

1. The congregation shall be provided with teaching regarding the biblical qualifications for serving as a Deacon and their scriptural role.
2. Beginning May first (1<sup>st</sup>) of each year the Deacon Fellowship and Leadership Council shall prayerfully seek men to be nominated for the office of Deacon. Nominations will close May thirty-first (31<sup>st</sup>) of the same year.
3. Upon being nominated, the prospective candidate will be notified by letter of his nomination. The candidate has 7 days to respond whether to accept or decline the nomination.



4. Upon accepting the nomination, the candidate will be interviewed by the Deacon Fellowship and Leadership Council.
5. After affirming all qualifications as outlined by the By-Laws as followed.
  - A) Article II Membership Covenant
  - B) Article VI Church Leadership section 5 Deacon Fellowship.
  - C) Church qualifications of section 5 Deacon fellowship.

Only then will he be accepted as an eligible candidate to be presented to the congregation to be voted on as a Deacon.

6. Each Deacon nominee will be presented to the congregation one (1) month before the Annual Business Meeting.
7. The qualified prospective Deacons needed will be presented to the members of the Church for affirmation by three quarters (3/4) of the votes of the members present at the Annual Membership Meeting.

#### **Section 6: Church Clerk**

The Church shall elect annually a clerk as its clerical officer. The clerk shall be responsible for keeping a suitable record of all official actions of the Church, except as otherwise herein provided. The clerk shall be responsible for keeping a register of names of members with dates of admission, dismissal, death, or erasure, together with a record of baptism. The clerk shall issue letters of dismissal voted by the Church, preserve on file all communications and written official reports, and give required notice of all meetings, where notice is necessary, as indicated in these by-laws. The clerk shall be responsible for preparing the annual letter of the Church to the Association.

The Church Clerk shall be nominated by the Leadership Council and elected by the congregation to serve a one-year term (January 1- December 31). He or she may be nominated by the Leadership Council and elected by the congregation for consecutive years.

The Church Clerk will be required to meet the spiritual qualifications of a deacon. A Church Clerk who no longer meets the qualifications for the office or who fails to achieve and maintain acceptable levels of performance in each case as determined by the Leadership Council may be removed from the position. The Leadership Council may appoint a new Church Clerk to finish the unexpired term without a church vote.

#### **Section 7: Bookkeeper**

It shall be the duty of the Bookkeeper to ensure that the Church is being operated in accordance with accepted accounting practices and the Church's approved annual budget. The Bookkeeper shall submit and present to the Leadership Council a financial report for the period ending with the most recent month for which the books of the Church have been closed for accounting purposes. The Bookkeeper shall also provide in writing to the congregation a financial report for each quarter for the period ending with the most recent month for which the books of the Church

have been closed for accounting purposes. In addition, the Bookkeeper shall present a year-end report through the most recent month as well as report on the activities and financial condition of the Church at the Annual Membership Meeting. The Bookkeeper shall respond to any congregational questions and/or comments concerning any such reports. All accounting and financial records of the Church are and shall remain the property of the Church.

The Bookkeeper shall be nominated by the Leadership Council and elected by the congregation to serve a one-year term (January 1 – December 31). He or she may be nominated by the Leadership Council and elected by the congregation for consecutive years.

The Bookkeeper will be required to meet the spiritual qualifications of a deacon. A Bookkeeper who no longer meets the qualifications for the office or who fails to achieve and maintain acceptable levels of performance in each case as determined by the Leadership Council may be removed from the position by the Leadership Council. If the position of the Bookkeeper is vacated before his or her term expires, an internal audit shall be conducted. The Leadership Council may appoint a new Bookkeeper to finish the unexpired term without a church vote.

## **Section 8: Administrative Teams**

Administrative Teams exist to assist the Leadership Council, Senior Pastor and staff in doing the administrative works of ministry in a "decent and orderly" manner.

Administrative Teams can be established by the Leadership Council. These teams will possess certain authority and responsibility levels of the corporate church as delegated by the Leadership Council. Each approved team will function under a Position Description which will outline their purpose and what duties and responsibilities have been delegated to them. Administrative Teams' functions will be primarily administrative in nature versus Ministry Teams whose primary functions are ministry in nature.

Individuals serving on these teams will be selected by the Leadership Council based on spiritual giftedness and shall meet at minimum the spiritual qualifications for a deacon. The terms of service shall be set by the Leadership Council.

The Leadership Council shall give overall supervision to Administrative Teams and oversee the selection of the team leaders. The Leadership Council may delegate supervision to another person or group as it deems necessary.

Any person serving on an administrative team as a supervisor or team leader may not be serving as a supervisor or leader of any other administrative or ministry team.

## **Section 9: Ministry Teams**

Ministry Teams exist to assist the Leadership Council, Senior Pastor and staff in performing specific roles of ministry.

Unlike Administrative Teams, their primary role is not to exercise administrative responsibilities or set policy. Ministry Teams possess no authority or responsibility level of the corporate church and are not subject to any service rotation system. Rather, they are the “hands and feet” of the body of Christ.

Ministry Teams may be established by the Leadership Council, the Senior Pastor or staff. Each Ministry Team will function under a Position Description, which will outline their primary ministry purpose and briefly describe anticipated duties and responsibilities.

Teams may exist for a very short term to perform a specific ministry or may be ongoing in nature. Ministry Teams may vary in size depending upon their specific purpose and upon those available to serve in that capacity. Individuals serving on these teams shall be selected by the person or group establishing the team based on spiritual giftedness and shall meet at minimum the spiritual qualifications for a deacon.

Any person serving on a ministry team as a supervisor or team leader may not be serving as a supervisor or leader of another ministry or administrative team.

## **Section 10: Stewardship Team**

### ***MISSION STATEMENT***

To prayerfully seek God’s leading of the financial needs of the church and its mission, that God would be praised and glorified.

### ***Stewardship Team Members***

1. Stewardship Team is made up of three (3) members from the congregation at large and the church Bookkeeper who is ex-officio member with no voting rights.
2. Each member serves a three (3) year term, which expires on December 31<sup>st</sup> of their third year of service.
3. After serving as Stewardship member, no person shall be eligible to serve another term until the lapse of at least one (1) year, unless there is not a qualified person(s) to serve. Any person(s) serving consecutive terms must be voted on by the congregation.
4. If elected to a consecutive term, the term will be for only one (1) year, ending December 31<sup>st</sup> of that year.

### ***Nominating Process***

Stewardship Team nominations will be made by the Leadership Council and Stewardship Team members.

- A. All nominees must meet membership covenant qualifications Article II, section 4.
- B. The prospective Stewardship Team nominee must be at least twenty-five (25) years of age and shall have been a member in good standing for a period of at least two (2) years by September 30<sup>th</sup> of the time of their nomination. Each Stewardship Team nominee will be presented to the congregation one (1) month before the Annual Business Meeting.
- C. All nominees will be interviewed by the Leadership Council and Stewardship Team.
- D. Leadership Council and Stewardship Team will determine whether a nominee or nominees qualify for the Stewardship Team.
- E. Leadership Council will decide which nominee or nominees to present for election to Stewardship Team at the Annual Business Meeting.

## **ARTICLE VII**

### **INDEMNIFICATION OF PASTORS/ELDERS, COUNCIL MEMBERS, OFFICERS, EMPLOYEES AND OTHER AGENTS**

#### **Section 1: Definitions**

For the purpose of this Article,

**Agent:** “Agent” means any person who is or was an pastor/elder, council member, director, officer, trustee, employee or other agent of the Church, or is or was serving at the request of the Church as an pastor/elder, council member, director, officer, trustee, employee or agent of another foreign or domestic corporation, partnership, joint venture, trust or other enterprise, or was an pastor/elder, director, officer, employee or agent of a foreign or domestic corporation that was a predecessor corporation of the Church or of another enterprise at the request of such predecessor corporation.

**Proceeding:** “Proceeding” means any threatened, pending or completed action or proceeding, whether civil, criminal, administrative or investigative.

**Expenses:** “Expenses” include, without limitation, all attorneys’ fees and any other expenses incurred in the defense of any claims or proceedings against an agent by reason of his position or relationship as agent and all attorneys’ fees, costs, and other expenses incurred in establishing a right to indemnification under this Article.

#### **Section 2: Successful Defense by Agent**

To the extent that an agent of the Church has been successful on the merits in the defense of any proceeding referred to in this Article, or in the defense of any claim, issue, or matter therein, the agent shall be indemnified against expenses actually and reasonably incurred by the agent in connection with the claim. If an agent either settles any such claim or sustains a judgment rendered against him, then the provisions of Sections 3 through 5 of this Article shall determine whether the agent is entitled to indemnification.

### **Section 3: Actions Brought by Persons Other than the Church**

Subject to the required findings to be made pursuant to Section 5 below, the Church shall indemnify any person who was or is a party, or is threatened to be made a party, to any proceeding other than action brought by, or in the right of, the Church, to procure judgment in its favor, an action brought under State or Federal law, by reason of the fact that such person is or was an agent of the Church for all expenses, judgments, fines, settlements, and other amounts actually and reasonably incurred in connection with the proceeding.

### **Section 4: Action Brought by or on Behalf of the Church**

**Claims Settled Out of Court** If any agent settles or otherwise disposes of a threatened or pending action brought by or on behalf of the Church, without court approval, the agent shall receive no indemnification for either amounts paid pursuant to the terms of the settlement or other disposition or for any expenses incurred in defending against the proceeding.

**Threatened Pending or Completed Actions Against Agent** The Church shall indemnify any person who was or is a party or is threatened to be made a party to any threatened, pending or completed action brought by or in the right of the Church, or brought under State or Federal law, to procure a judgment in its favor, by reason of the fact that the person is or was an agent of the Church, for all expenses actually and reasonably incurred in connection with the defense or settlement of that action, provided that both the following are met:

1. The determination of good faith conduct required by Section 5 below, must be made in the manner provided for in that section; and
2. Where the agent has actually been adjudged liable to the Church in the performance of such person's duty to the Church, unless, and only to the extent that the court in which such proceeding is or was pending, shall, upon application, determine that, in view of all of the circumstances of the case, the agent is fairly and reasonably entitled to indemnity for the expenses incurred. If the agent is found to be so entitled, the court shall determine the appropriate amount of expenses to be reimbursed.

### **Section 5: Determination of Agent's Good Faith Conduct**

The indemnification granted to an agent in Sections 3 and 4 of the Article is conditioned on the following:

**Required Standard of Conduct** The agent seeking reimbursement must be found, in the manner provided below, that he acted in good faith, in a manner he believed to be in the best interest of the Church, and with such care, including reasonable inquiry as an ordinarily prudent person in a like position would use in similar circumstances. The termination of any proceeding by judgment, order, settlement, conviction, or on a plea of nolo contendere or its equivalent, shall not, of itself, create a presumption that the person did not act in good faith or in a manner which he reasonably believed to be in the best interest of the Church or that he had reasonable cause to

believe that his conduct was unlawful. In the case of a criminal proceeding, the person must have had no reasonable cause to believe that his conduct was unlawful.

**Manner of Determination of Good Faith Conduct:** The determination that the agent did act in a manner complying with Section 5 above shall be made by:

1. The Leadership Council by a majority vote of a quorum consisting of the Leadership Council who are not parties to the proceeding; or
2. Approval of the Church membership, with the persons to be indemnified not being entitled to vote thereon; or
3. The court in which the proceeding is or was pending. Such determination may be made on application brought by the Church or the agent or the attorney or other person rendering a defense to the agent whether or not the application by the agent, attorney or other person is opposed by the Church.

#### **Section 6:     Limitations**

No indemnification or advance shall be made under this Article, except as provided in Sections 2 or 5, in any circumstances when it appears:

1. That the indemnification or advance would be inconsistent with a provision of the Articles of Incorporation, the Bylaws, a resolution of the Leadership Council, or Church membership, or an agreement in effect at the time of the accrual of the alleged cause of action asserted in the proceeding in which the expenses were incurred or other amounts were paid, which prohibits or otherwise limits indemnification; or
2. That the indemnification would be inconsistent with any condition expressly imposed by a court in approving a settlement.

#### **Section 7:     Advance of Expenses**

Expenses incurred in defending any proceeding may be advanced by the Church before the final disposition of the proceeding on receipt of an undertaking by or on behalf of the agent to repay the amount of the advance unless it is ultimately determined that the agent is entitled to be indemnified as authorized in this Article.

#### **Section 8:     Insurance**

The Leadership Council may adopt a resolution authorizing the purchase and maintenance of insurance on behalf of any agent of the Church against any liability asserted against or incurred by the agent in such capacity or arising out of the agent's status as such, whether or not the Church would have the power to indemnify the agent; provided, however, that the Church shall have no power to purchase and maintain such insurance to indemnify any agent of the Church for violation of State or Federal laws.

## **ARTICLE VIII BINDING ARBITRATION**

Members of First Baptist Church Trenton believe that Scripture teaches in Matthew 18:15-20 and 1 Corinthians 6:1-8 that every effort must be made to live at peace and to resolve disputes or conflicts with each other in private or within the Church. Therefore, the members of First Baptist Church Trenton agree that any claim or dispute arising from or related to being a member of First Baptist Church Trenton, which claim or dispute is not resolved between the parties through the use of principles set forth in Matthew 18, shall be settled by biblically based and legally binding arbitration in accordance with the *Rules of Procedure for Christian Conciliation* of the Institute for Christian Conciliation. Judgment upon an arbitration award may be entered in any court having jurisdiction. Members understand that these methods shall be the sole remedy for any controversy or claim arising out of their church membership and expressly waive their right to file any suit or claim against one another for such claims or disputes, except to enforce an arbitration decision or the provisions of this article.

## **ARTICLE IX ORDAINING, LICENSING AND COMMISSIONING**

### **Section 1:     Ordaining and Licensing Ministers**

Any man who is a Member in Good Standing of this church, or former member now serving in ministry at another location, who by his piety, zeal, and aptness to preach and teach gives evidence that he is called of God to the work of the ministry may request to be ordained or licensed. The candidate, after examination by the Senior Pastor and the Leadership Council as to his Christian experience and calling may be ordained or licensed by the Church to the Christian ministry, by a vote of a majority of the Members in Good Standing present at any regular church meeting.

In the case of ordination, the Senior Pastor shall assemble an ordination council of ordained men of like faith and order who shall perform the ceremony of ordaining this member to the Gospel ministry in the name of, and in the presence of the Church.

When the Leadership Council are of the opinion that a man previously licensed or ordained for ministry by the Church is no longer scripturally qualified for licensing or ordination, that person's license or ordination may be revoked by the Leadership Council. The person whose license or ordination has been revoked shall be notified personally and in writing if possible. In addition the Church shall be notified by public announcement.

### **Section 2:     Ordaining Deacons**

If the Church, at a regular church meeting, shall elect a man or men to the scriptural office of deacon who has not been ordained, it shall authorize and direct the Senior Pastor to assemble an ordination council which may be composed of ordained men of like faith and order of this

Church, and of visiting pastors/elders and deacons of like faith and order who shall perform the ceremony of ordaining him or them to the office of deacon, in the name of, and in the presence of, this Church.

When the Leadership Council or the Deacon Fellowship are of the opinion that a man previously ordained by the Church as a deacon is no longer scripturally qualified for ordination, that person's ordination may be revoked by the Leadership Council. The person whose ordination has been revoked shall be notified personally and in writing if possible. In addition the Church shall be notified by public announcement.

### **Section 3: Commissioning Missionaries**

Any present Member in Good Standing of this Church, or former member now serving in ministry at another location, who by his or her leading and convictions feel called of God to the work of missions may, by a vote of a majority of the members present at any regular church meeting, and after examination by the Senior Pastor and the Leadership Council as to his or her Christian experience, be commissioned by the Church to missionary related service.

When the Leadership Council are of the opinion that a person previously commissioned by the Church is no longer scripturally qualified, that person's commission may be revoked by the Leadership Council. The person shall be notified personally and in writing if possible. In addition, the Church shall be notified by public announcement.

## **ARTICLE X AFFILIATION**

First Baptist Church Trenton is autonomous and maintains the right to govern its own affairs, independent of any denominational control. However, the Bible teaches that local churches should seek voluntary fellowship with other doctrinally sound churches. This association is to provide help and encouragement while working together as the Lord directs. This is a voluntary association that in no way involves the surrender of the individual church's freedom or dependence upon God.

First Baptist Church Trenton has chosen to affiliate itself with the Southern Baptist Convention, the State Convention of Baptists in Ohio and a local Baptist Association. We continue this association, believing that it is God's will to do so. Fundamental to this affiliation is the understanding that the Southern Baptist Convention is a fellowship of autonomous, biblically sound churches that choose to work together to further God's Kingdom. Voluntary contributions to local, state, national and foreign mission projects maintain this affiliation. Support may also be provided by sending messengers to the annual convention for voting on doctrinal, ethical, and procedural positions. Members of First Baptist Church Trenton may desire to become personally involved in Southern Baptist evangelism, education, and mission work.



Through the years, First Baptist Church Trenton has also associated with other Christian ministries. All of our affiliations are to be with churches and organizations that are biblically sound in doctrine and practice.

## **ARTICLE XI FISCAL YEAR**

The fiscal year of the Church shall begin on January 1 and end on December 31 of each year.

## **ARTICLE XII INTEGRATED AUXILIARY MINISTRIES**

Every ministry organization or society within this Church will be an integral part of the Church and not an entity in itself. They shall, therefore, have as their aims and objectives that of assisting the Church in discharging the obligations and responsibilities, which it has imposed upon itself, rather than having separate aims and objectives, which usually act as divisive forces. The Leadership Council will preside over all such integrated auxiliary ministries, and may develop additional ministries as the need arises.

## **ARTICLE XIII FISCAL RESPONSIBILITIES**

### **Section 1: Accounts, Books and Records**

First Baptist Church Trenton shall maintain, at the minimum but not limited to, adequate and accurate books and records of accounts (financial records); written minutes of the proceedings of its membership; records of the membership of the Church, setting forth the members' names and addresses; and contribution records of contributors. All such records shall be kept at its principal place of business.

### **Section 2: Organizational and Policies and Procedures Manuals**

As noted in the Preamble to the Bylaws, these Bylaws provide “general” guidance on organization, governance and operation, based upon biblical principles and practices. Additional guidance regarding organizational and operational matters will be provided in the official Organizational and Policies and Procedures Manuals of First Baptist Church Trenton.

These manuals have been prepared as a guide to support all who serve in a leadership position at First Baptist Church Trenton. Their purpose is to aid in the effective and efficient functioning of individuals and groups and to optimize the fulfilling of the purpose of First Baptist Church Trenton. They provide guidelines and summary information about the Church's organizational

structure and ministry operations. They will also support and complement each of the Articles found in these Bylaws.

Policy statements will be recommended and prepared by the Leadership Council and/or Administrative Team responsible for the various church operations. Procedures will be prepared primarily by staff and ministry teams who are charged with carrying out such ministry operations in accordance with the policies. Policy statements must never become "canonized" and dictate but rather they must guide and protect.

The Leadership Council may modify, supplement, rescind, or revise unless otherwise so stipulated, any of the manuals' information from time to time, with or without notice, as they feel necessary and appropriate as so led by the Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, who is the Head of this body of believers.

### **Section 3: Inspection of Records, Reports and Documentation**

Every Member in Good Standing shall have the absolute right, at any reasonable time, to inspect all records, reports and documentation of every kind (with the exception of personnel salaries, contribution records and confidential counseling sessions) and the physical properties of First Baptist Church Trenton. The Leadership Council, if necessary, to maintain good order, may restrict and limit the number of inspections or establish an orderly manner for such to be conducted. But in no event shall a reasonable inspection of the books and records be denied to a Member in Good Standing.

A copy of the Organizational Manual and Policies and Procedures Manual shall be maintained in the Church Office for inspection by Members in Good Standing.

### **Section 4: Audit of Financial Records**

The Church's financial statements and other financial records shall be audited annually. The primary purpose of the audit is to provide: assurance that the Church is operating its activities in an effective, efficient and safe manner which demonstrates the wise stewardship of time and material resources; assurance that key risk areas of the Church are being managed by the use of adequate internal controls in its operational systems; assurance that the financial disclosures made by the staff, Leadership Council and Bookkeeper of the Church reasonably portray the ministry's financial condition, results of operations, cash flow needs, and long-term commitments; and assurance that the Church is in reasonable compliance with pertinent laws and regulations, is conducting its affairs ethically, and is maintaining effective controls against leadership and employee conflicts-of-interest.

An Internal Auditing Team shall be appointed by the Leadership Council in accordance with Article VI, Section 8.

An external audit by an independent certified public accountant selected by the Internal Auditing Team shall be conducted every three years beginning the first full calendar year after the

adoption of these By-Laws. During the other two years, an internal audit shall be conducted by an Internal Auditing Committee.

Upon rendering the audit report at the end of the fiscal year, and its acceptance and approval by the Leadership Council and the Internal Auditing Team, a written summary shall be made available to the Members in Good Standing. In addition they shall insure the Church Business Office maintains and preserves the audit report, the audited financial statements, and any other documents issued by the auditors such as management letters, etc., as a part of the permanent records of the Church.

## **ARTICLE XIV AMENDMENTS TO THE BYLAWS**

Amendments to the Church's Bylaws may be made at the Annual Membership Meeting or properly called special business meeting of the membership provided each amendment shall have been presented in writing to the membership at least fourteen (14) days prior to the business meeting in which the amendment shall be considered. Notice of this meeting shall be given during regular worship services at least two (2) weeks prior to the business meeting. Amendments shall be by two-thirds (2/3) vote of members present and voting. Any member whose ballot indicates abstention shall be deemed to have not voted.