

# **Constitution and Bylaws**

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**First Baptist Church Friendswood**  
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# Church Handbook

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# **Our Vision**

To become a community of faith, changing our world  
by enlisting and equipping followers of Christ.

## **Our Mission**

We are accountable to God and one another for:

- Developing Godly relationships with one another.
- Worshiping together as a community of faith.
- Growing spiritually, both personally and corporately.
- Training, equipping and commissioning members for ministry.
- Reaching our world with the practical, life-changing message of Jesus Christ.

## **Our Passion**

Believe- Belong- Become

## **A Statement of Core Values**

### **First Baptist Church Friendswood**

The Lord God has gathered us together as First Baptist Church Friendswood; and as a fellowship of believers in the Messiahship of Jesus the Christ and all that entails, we set forth this statement of core values.

We are a people who accept God's absolute authority in our lives as demonstrated to us through His inerrant Word, the Holy Bible. We desire to be a people that are the obvious followers of the Son of God, our Lord Jesus Christ. He was born of a virgin, lived among men as a man, paid the price of our individual sins by dying on the cross in our place, was resurrected, was taken to heaven by God the Father, and will return again in His time. We desire to be a people faithful to our God through all worldly situations and centered in prayer as an act of worship, obedience, communion, and joy as we are led by His Spirit to reflect His love to those around us.

*II Timothy 3:16-17 (NIV) "All scripture is God-breathed...so that the man of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work."*

*Colossians 1: 16-20 (NIV) "For by Him all things were created: things in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or powers or rulers or authorities; all things were created by Him and for Him. He is before all things and in Him all things hold together. And He is head of the body, the church; He is the beginning and the firstborn from among the dead, so that in everything He might have the supremacy. For God was pleased to have all His fullness dwell in Him and through Him to reconcile to Himself all things, whether things on earth or in heaven, by making peace through His blood shed on the cross."*

*I Peter 2:9 (NIV) "But you are a chosen people, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people belonging to God..."*

*Isaiah 56:7 and Mark 11:17 (NIV) "My house will be called a house of prayer for all the nations."*

*Habakkuk 3:17-18 (KJV) "Though the fig tree shall not blossom, neither shall fruit be in the vines; the labour of the olive shall fail, and the flocks shall be cut off from the fold, and there shall be no herd in the stalls; yet I will rejoice in the Lord, I will joy in the God of my salvation."*

As His people and the body of His church, we desire to be characterized by the following values:

### **WORSHIP**

Because Jesus Christ is the cornerstone of our church, our worship will be Christ-centered and Spirit-led. The Bible will be our source of truth and wisdom as we engage in intimate personal and corporate worship, praise, and thanksgiving. We will be aware of and responsive to the Holy Spirit as we worship the Lord God with reverence and humility, with joy and enthusiasm.

Our worship will reflect a balance of the key elements of our church- praise and adoration, fellowship, evangelism, discipleship, and service to others. Excellence and effectiveness will be expected in each aspect of worship.

Luke 4:8 (NIV) "It is written: 'Worship the Lord your God and serve Him only.' "

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

*Matthew 18:20 (KJV) "For where two or three come together in my name, there am I in the midst of them."*

*John 4: 23b-24 (NIV) "...true worshippers will worship the Father in Spirit and truth, for they are the kind of worshipers the Father seeks. God is a Spirit and His worshipers must worship Him in spirit and in truth."*

## **RELATIONSHIPS**

First Baptist Church Friendswood is not a building or a place- it is a body of believers in fellowship with Christ and each other. It is a body of believers whose members know and care about one another and who understand that our church extends to the shared lives of her people. We seek to allow the Holy Spirit to guide the lives of our people knowing this will grant the fruit of the Spirit in our lives- love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control.

We are a gathering of like-minded individuals who want our purposes to be the purposes of Christ. In spite of our humanity and the differences that will surely arise, our unity of purpose and confidence in each other, supported by the will of Christ, will allow the work of the Spirit to progress.

With Christ as our example, we will purpose as individuals to be a friend to others and to include these friends in the life of this church. Our friendship with Christian brothers and sisters will serve as an encouragement and support, and our friendship with those who do not know Christ will draw them toward an understanding of His redemptive plan for their lives. These relationships will be real and authentic, having as common ground the love and grace of Christ We desire to be a people by whom forgiveness is swiftly granted as a reflection of God's forgiveness of each of us.

*Micah 6-8 (KJV) "He hath shewed thee, O man, what is good; and what doth the Lord require of thee, but to do justly, to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God."*

*Matthew 12: 49-50 (NIV) "Pointing to his disciples, he said, "Here are my mother and my brothers. For whoever does the will of my Father in heaven is my brother and sister and mother."*

*Luke 6:31 (KJV) "And as ye would that men should do to you, do ye also to them likewise."*

*Psalms 133:1 (NIV) "How good it is when brothers live together in unity."*

*Philippians 4:4b (NIV) "...let your gentleness be evident to all..."*

*Romans 14:19 (KJV) "Let us therefore follow after the things which make for peace, and things which therewith one may edify the other."*

## FAMILY

God has ordained marriage as a union of a man and a woman. Children are His great gift to parents. This church is committed to strengthening and supporting families and will structure our worship and ministries toward that end.

We recognize that the training of our children and our youth in our homes and in this church will be the most important schooling of their lives; and we know that by training them as a child to seek God's guidance in their lives, they will continue in that way and impact the lives of those around them for the generations to come.

*Mark 10:6-8 (NIV) "But at the beginning of creation God made them male and female ' For this reason a man will leave his father and mother and be united to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh.' So they are no longer two, but one."*

*Joshua 24:15 (KJV) "...But as for me and my household, we will serve the Lord."*

*Proverbs 22:6 (KJV) "Train up a child in the way he should go: and when he is old he will not depart from it."*

## SERVICE

The Great Commission of Christ demands every Christian be involved in evangelism and discipleship. The grace and forgiveness of Christ given to each of us compels us to proclaim His plan of salvation with a sense of loving urgency.

Through the use of our individual spiritual gifts, we seek to be aware of and attentive to the needs of others. Our ministries will be designed such that the actions of our people promote the spread of the gospel and meet the spiritual and physical needs of those to whom God allows us to minister.

We desire to become more Christ-like through a clearer and deeper understanding of God's will in our lives by means of continued prayer and study, and toward that goal we will continue our work of personal discipleship and spiritual growth. As a church, we will seek to provide a place of service where one can find spiritual growth and fulfillment in response to a call from our Father.

*Isaiah 6:8 (NIV) "Then I heard the voice of the Lord saying, "Whom shall I send? And who will go for us?" And I said, "Here am I. Send me."*

*John 15:16 (NIV) (Christ speaking to the disciples)... "You did not choose me, but I chose you and appointed you to go and bear fruit- fruit that will last."*

*Matthew 28: 19-20 (KJV) "Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world. Amen."*

*Acts 22:15 (NIV) "You will be His witness to all men of what you have seen and heard."*

*John 4:35b (KJV) "...Lift up your eyes and look at the fields: for they are white already to harvest."*

*Matthew 20: 27-28 (KJV) "And whosoever will be chief among you, let him be your servant: even as the Son of Man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister..."*

*I Timothy 1:12 (NIV) "I thank Christ Jesus our Lord, who has given me strength, that He considered me faithful, appointing me to His service."*

## ACCOUNTABILITY

We are a church whose leaders and members strive to be people of truth, integrity, morality, character, and courage; who accept responsibility; who are accountable first to Christ and then to each other; whose motives are Spirit-inspired; and whose ministries, procedures, and processes are transparent and open.

We shall seek to allow the goodness of our God to be shown through our lives; never fearing to confront the hurts and evil present in this world, yet confronting always in the gentle and holy name of Christ and with His guidance and to His glory.

*1 Peter 2:12 (NIV) "Live such good lives among the unbelievers that, though they accuse you of doing wrong, they may see your good deeds and glorify God..."*

*Proverbs 22:1 (KJV) "A good name is better to be chosen than great riches..."*

*Acts 24:16 (KJV) "...to have always a conscience void of offence toward God, and toward men."*

*Galatians 6:5 "Each one should test his own actions."*

*1 Peter 3:15 (NIV) "...Always be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks you to give the reason for the hope that you have. But do this with gentleness and respect..."*

**CONSTITUTION**  
**First Baptist Church Friendswood**  
**Friendswood, Texas**

**PREAMBLE**

In order to preserve and secure the principles of our faith, so that this body may be governed in an orderly manner, and for preserving the liberties of each individual member of this church and the freedom of this body to act, with respect to its relation to other churches of the same faith, we declare and establish this constitution:

**CONSTITUTION**

**Article 1 Name:** This body shall be known as the First Baptist Church Friendswood and is currently located solely in Friendswood, Galveston County, Texas. This church shall exist until lawfully dissolved.

**Article 2 Faith:** The doctrinal statement of the church is “The Baptist Faith and Message” as adopted by the Southern Baptist Convention in May 1963. A copy of this document is attached and can be amended by this autonomous local church in a normal business meeting.

**Article 3 Character of the Church:**

Section I: Polity: The government of the church is vested in the body of believers in Christ who compose it. It is not subject to the control of any other ecclesiastical body, but it recognizes the benefits of mutual counsel and cooperation included but not limited to the Southern Baptist Convention, the Baptist General Convention of Texas and the Galveston Baptist Association. As a Baptist church, it is the church’s intent to own, purchase or sell property, to incur debt and to transact business as necessary to carry out the church’s stated purposes.

Section II: Doctrine: This church recognizes the Scriptures of the Holy Bible as its authority in matters of faith and practice.

Section III: Purpose: This church, believing in the Bible as the inspired Word of God and the sole authority for faith and practice, acknowledging its adherence to all the teaching of Jesus Christ and declares its purpose to be:

- 1.) to earnestly proclaim the Gospel message and urge its personal acceptance;
- 2.) to maintain regular worship experiences, both in devotional prayer individually and corporate worship;
- 3.) to make disciples through dedicated Bible study and training for Christian service, and to encourage daily personal spiritual growth;
- 4.) to join our individual spiritual gifts to minister as the Body of Christ to one another, the local community and to the world; and to practically apply the principles of the Christian faith to the needs of the world.

**Article 4 Dissolution:** In the event of the dissolution of this church, all of its remaining assets, after payment of liabilities, shall be distributed to one or more Southern Baptist charitable organizations or churches by the majority vote of the church members present in a normal business meeting.



# **Article 1: Doctrine**

## **Faith of our Relationship**

We accept the 1963 *Baptist Faith and Message* as being generally what we believe, with additions for purposes of clarity and specialization. These additions are indicated in the following text by italics. Detailed scripture references are also included. The 1963 Baptist Faith and Message contains detailed scripture references for the original text.

### **I. The Scriptures**

The Holy Bible was written by men divinely inspired and is the record of God's revelation of Himself to man. It is a perfect treasure of divine instruction. It has God for its author, salvation for its end, and truth without any mixture of error, for its matter. It reveals the principles by which God judges us; and therefore is, and will remain to the end of the world, the true center of Christian union, and the supreme standard by which all human conduct, creeds, and religious opinions should be tried. The criterion by which the Bible is to be interpreted is Jesus Christ.

### **II. God**

There is one and only one living and true God. He is an intelligent, spiritual, and personal Being, the Creator, Redeemer, Preserver, and Ruler of the universe. God is infinite in holiness and all other perfections. To Him we owe the highest love, reverence, and obedience. The eternal God reveals Himself to us as Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, with distinct personal attributes, but without division of nature, essence, or being.

#### **A. God the Father**

God as the Father reigns with providential care over His universe, His creatures, and the flow of the stream of human history according to the purposes of His grace. He is all powerful, all loving, and all wise. God is Father in truth to those who become children of God through faith in Jesus Christ. He is fatherly in His attitude toward all men.

#### **B. God the Son**

Christ is the eternal Son of God. In His incarnation as Jesus Christ he was conceived of the Holy Spirit and born of the virgin Mary. Jesus perfectly revealed and did the will of God, taking upon Himself the demands and necessities of human nature and identifying Himself completely with mankind, yet without sin. He honored the divine law by His personal obedience, and in His death on the cross He made provision for the redemption of men from sin. He was raised from the dead with a glorified body and appeared to His disciples as the person who was with them before His crucifixion. He ascended into heaven and is now exalted at the right hand of God, where He is the One Mediator partaking of the nature of God and of man; and in whose Person is effected the reconciliation between God and man. He will return in power and glory to judge the world and to consummate His redemptive mission. He now dwells in all believers as the living and ever present Lord.

### C. God the Holy Spirit

The Holy Spirit is the Spirit of God. He inspired holy men of old to write the Scriptures. Through illumination He enables men to understand truth. He exalts Christ. He convicts of sin, of righteousness, and of judgment. He calls men to the Savior, and effects regeneration. He cultivates Christian character, comforts believers, and bestows the spiritual gifts by which they serve God through His church. He seals the believer unto the day of final redemption. His presence in the Christian is the assurance of God to bring the believer into the fullness of the stature of Christ. He enlightens and empowers the believer and the church in worship, evangelism, and service.

## III. Man

Man was created by the special act of God, in His own image, and is the crowning work of His creation. In the beginning man was innocent of sin and was endowed by his Creator with freedom of choice. By his free choice man sinned against God and brought sin into the human race. Through the temptation of Satan man transgressed the command of God, and fell from his original innocence; whereby his posterity inherit a nature and an environment inclined toward sin, and as soon as they are capable of moral action become transgressors and are under condemnation. Only the grace of God can bring man into His holy fellowship and enable man to fulfill the creative purpose of God. The sacredness of human personality is evident in that God created man in His own image, and in that Christ died for man; therefore every man possesses dignity and is worthy of respect and Christian love.

## IV. Salvation

Salvation involves the redemption of the whole man, and is offered freely to all who accept Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior, who by His own blood obtained eternal redemption for the believer. In its broadest sense salvation includes regeneration, sanctification, and glorification.

- A. Regeneration, or the new birth, is a work of God's grace whereby believers become new creatures in Christ Jesus. It is a change of heart wrought by the Holy Spirit through conviction of sin, to which the sinner responds in repentance toward God and faith in the Lord Jesus Christ.

Repentance and faith are inseparable experiences of grace. Repentance is a genuine turning from sin toward God. Faith is the acceptance of Jesus Christ and commitment of the entire personality to Him as Lord and Savior. Justification is God's gracious and full acquittal upon principles of His righteousness of all sinners who repent and believe in Christ. Justification brings the believer into a relationship of peace and favor with God.

- B. Sanctification is the experience, beginning in regeneration, by which the believer is set apart to God's purposes, and is enabled to progress toward moral and spiritual perfection through the presence and power of the Holy Spirit dwelling in him. Growth in grace should continue throughout the regenerate person's life.
- C. Glorification is the culmination of salvation and is the final blessed and abiding state of the redeemed.

## **V. God's Purpose of Grace**

Election is the gracious purpose of God, according to which He regenerates, sanctifies, and glorifies sinners. It is consistent with the free agency of man and comprehends all the means in connection with the end. It is a glorious display of God's sovereign goodness and is infinitely wise, holy, and unchangeable. It excludes boasting and promotes humility.

All true believers endure to the end. Those whom God has accepted in Christ, and sanctified by His Spirit, will never fall away from the state of grace, but shall persevere to the end. Believers may fall into sin through neglect and temptation, whereby they grieve the Spirit, impair their graces and comforts, bring reproach on the cause of Christ, and temporal judgments on themselves; yet they shall be kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation.

## **VI. The Church**

A New Testament church of the Lord Jesus Christ is a local body of baptized believers who: are associated by covenant in the faith and fellowship of the gospel, observing the two ordinances of Christ, committed to His teachings, exercising the gifts, rights, and privileges invested in them by His Word, and seeking to extend the gospel to the ends of the earth.

This church is an autonomous body, operating through democratic processes under the lordship of Jesus Christ. In such a congregation members are equally responsible. Its scriptural officers are pastors and deacons.

The New Testament speaks also of the church as the body of Christ, which includes all of the redeemed of all the ages.

## **VI. Baptism and the Lord's Supper**

Christian baptism is the 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; the believer's death to sin, the burial of the old life, and the resurrection to walk in newness of life in Christ Jesus. It is a testimony to his faith in the final resurrection of the dead. Being a church ordinance, it is prerequisite to the privileges of church membership and to the Lord's Supper.

The Lord's Supper is a symbolic act of obedience *open to all believers regardless of membership* through partaking of the bread and the fruit of the vine, memorialize the death of the Redeemer and anticipate His second coming.

## **VIII. The Lord's Day**

The first day of the week is the Lord's Day. It is a Christian institution for regular observance. It commemorates the resurrection of Christ from the dead and should be employed in exercises of worship and spiritual devotion, both public and private, and by refraining from worldly amusements and resting from secular employment, work of necessity and mercy only being excepted.

## **IX. The Kingdom**

The Kingdom of God includes both His general sovereignty over the universe and His particular kingship over men who willfully acknowledge Him as King. Particularly the Kingdom is the realm of salvation into which men enter by trustful, childlike commitment to Jesus Christ. Christians ought to pray and to labor that the Kingdom may come and God's will be done on earth. The full consummation of the Kingdom awaits the return of Jesus Christ and the end of this age.

## **X. Last Things**

God, in His own time and in His own way, will bring the world to its appropriate end. According to His promise, Jesus Christ will return personally and visibly in glory to the earth; the dead will be raised; and Christ will judge all men in righteousness. The unrighteous will be consigned to Hell, the place of everlasting punishment. The righteous in their resurrected and glorified bodies will receive their reward and will dwell forever in Heaven with the Lord.

### **A. Angels / Demons**

- *We acknowledge the existence of supernatural beings / spirits both heavenly and satanic. We believe that there are supernatural powers that surround us and may and do affect our lives*
- ***Matthew 8:16.***
- ***Luke 10:17***
- ***Hebrews 1:14***
- ***1 Chronicles 21:15***
- ***Revelations 5:11***

### **B. Heaven**

*We believe this is the dwelling place of God ( the Trinity) and the Christians eternal home*

- ***Matthew 5: 12***

### **C. Hell**

- *We believe this is the eternal absence of God and is a real place of torment for all who have rejected Christ*
- ***Rev 20:10***
- ***Rev 21:8***
- ***John 14:6***

## **XI. Evangelism and Missions**

It is the duty and privilege of every follower of Christ and of every church of the Lord Jesus Christ to endeavor to make disciples of all nations. The new birth of man's spirit by God's Holy Spirit means the birth of love for others. Missionary effort on the part of all rests thus upon a spiritual necessity of the regenerate life, and is expressly and repeatedly commanded in the teachings of Christ. It is the duty of every child of God to seek constantly to win the lost to Christ by personal effort and by all other methods in harmony with the gospel of Christ.

## **XII. Education**

The cause of education in the Kingdom of Christ is coordinate with the causes of missions and general benevolence, and should receive along with these the liberal support of the churches. An adequate system of Christian schools is necessary to a complete spiritual program for Christ's people.

In Christian education there should be a proper balance between academic freedom and academic responsibility. Freedom in any orderly relationship of human life is always limited and never absolute. The freedom of a teacher in a Christian school, college, or seminary is limited by the pre-eminence of Jesus Christ, by the authoritative nature of the Scriptures, and by the distinct purpose of which the school exists.

## **XIII. Stewardship**

God is the source of all blessings, temporal and spiritual; all that we have and are we owe to Him. Christians have a spiritual debtorship to the whole world, a holy trusteeship in the gospel, and a binding stewardship in their possessions. They are therefore under obligation to serve Him with their time, talents, and material possessions; and should recognize all these as entrusted to them to use for the glory of God and for helping others. According to the Scriptures, Christians should contribute of their means cheerfully, regularly, systematically, proportionately, and liberally for the advancement of the Redeemer's cause on earth.

## **XIV. Cooperation**

Christ's people should as occasion requires, organize such associations and conventions as may best secure cooperation for the great objective of the Kingdom of God. Such organizations have no authority over one another or over the churches. They are voluntary and advisory bodies designed to elicit, combine, and direct the energies of our people in the most effective manner. Members of New Testament churches should cooperate with one another in carrying forward the missionary, educational, and benevolent ministries for the extension of Christ's Kingdom. Christian unity in the New Testament sense is spiritual harmony and voluntary cooperation for common ends by various groups of Christ's people. Cooperation is desirable between the various Christian denominations when the end to be attained is itself justified, and when such cooperation involves no violation of conscience or compromise of loyalty to Christ and His Word as revealed in the New Testament.

## **XV. The Christian and the Social Order**

Every Christian is under obligation to seek to make the will of Christ supreme in his own life and in human society. Means and methods used for the improvement of society and the establishment of righteousness among men can be truly and permanently helpful only when they are rooted in the regeneration of the individual by the saving grace of God in Christ Jesus. The Christian should oppose in the spirit of Christ every form of greed, selfishness, and vice. He should work to provide for the orphaned, the needy, the aged, the helpless, and the sick. Every Christian should seek to bring industry, government, and society as a whole under the sway of the principles of righteousness, truth, and brotherly love. In order to promote these ends Christians should be ready to work with all men of good will in any good cause, always being careful to act in the spirit of love without compromising their loyalty to Christ and His truth.

## **XVI. Peace and War**

It is the duty of Christians to seek peace with all men on principles of righteousness. In accordance with the spirit and teachings of Christ they should do all in their power to put an end to war.

The true remedy for the war spirit is the gospel of our Lord. The supreme need of the world is the acceptance of His teachings in all the affairs of men and nations, and the practical application of His law of love.

## **XVII. Religious Liberty**

God alone is Lord of the conscience, and He has left it free from the doctrines and commandments of men which are contrary to His Word or not contained in it. Church and state should be separate. The state owes to every church protection and full freedom in the pursuit of its spiritual ends. In providing for such freedom, no ecclesiastical group or denomination should be favored by the state more than others. Civil government being ordained of God, it is the duty of Christians to render loyal obedience thereto in all things not contrary to the revealed will of God. The church should not resort to the civil power to carry on its work. The gospel of Christ contemplates spiritual means alone for the pursuit of its ends. The state has no right to impose penalties for religious opinions of any kind. The state has no right to impose taxes for the support of any form of religion. A free church in a free state is the Christian ideal, and this implies the right of free and unhindered access to God on the part of all men, and the right to form and propagate opinions in the sphere of religion without interference by the civil power.

## **XVIII. Family**

### **A. *Marriage: Is between a man and a woman.***

- *Genesis 2:23*
- *Matthew 19: 4*

**B.        *Homosexuality: Is outside God's intention***

– *Leviticus 18:22*

– *1 Corinthians 6:9*

– *Romans 1:27*

**C.        *Sexual Morality: Sexual relations are intended within the covenant of Marriage***

– *1 Corinthians 6:13*

– *Romans 1:24*

– *Matthew 15:19*

**D.        *When life begins: At Conception***

– *Psalms 139:15*

– *Jeremiah 1:5*

## Article 2: Membership

<sup>46</sup>They worshiped together at the Temple each day, met in homes for the Lord's Supper, and shared their meals with great joy and generosity-- <sup>47</sup>all the while praising God and enjoying the goodwill of all the people. And each day the Lord added to their group those who were being saved. Acts 2: 46-47 (NIV)

### Section 1 – Candidacy for Membership

Any person may become a candidate for membership in the church. Any individual may be presented as a candidate for membership in one of the following ways:

1. By profession of faith and for Baptism, by immersion;
2. By promise of a letter of recommendation from another Baptist church; or
3. By statement of prior profession of faith and believer's baptism (by immersion), trusting in the grace of God alone through Christ for salvation,.
4. By restoration upon a statement of prior profession of faith and believer's baptism (by immersion) when membership has lapsed, been terminated or lost.

Adult persons presenting themselves for membership in any of the above categories will be counseled by the pastor and/or those delegated by the Membership Team. Youth or children presenting themselves for membership will be counseled by the Youth/Children's Ministry Staff. Those candidates who have not participated in believer's baptism will do so after consultation with the pastor. All candidates, whether adult or youth/children, requesting membership will attend an orientation class designed by the church staff for their age group to provide orientation on Baptist beliefs and practices, FBCF ministries and opportunities for new members to participate in the FBCF church life. Duties of church members and other matters as appropriate will also be discussed. Upon completion of this course, upon recommendation of the counselors and upon the fulfillment of candidacy requirements the candidates will be presented to the church for membership.

Note: Should there be any question as to a candidate's qualifications, such questions should be referred to the pastor and Membership Team for investigation for resolution during the orientation period.

Note: A list of candidates will be posted and published weekly by the means decided upon by the Membership Team.



## **Section 2 – Rights of Members**

1. Every active member of the Church is entitled to vote at all elections and on all questions submitted to the Church in conference provided that the member is present.
2. Every active member of the Church is eligible for elective offices and ministry positions in the Church, as long as qualifications for the position(s) are met.

## **Section 3 – Duties of Members**

1. All members should seek opportunities to serve, mentor and be mentored by other members of the Church body. (Gal 5:13, 1 Cor 10:24, Gal 6:10)
2. All members should use their spiritual gifts, time, talents and finances in service to the Lord as part of this Body of believers. (1 Cor 12:4-7, 2 Cor 8:3)
3. All members should seek to promote harmony within the church. (1 Cor 1:10, Eph 4:3, Col 2:2)
4. Members should desire to be an active part of the church through faithful attendance. Any member noted to not have attended within a six (6) month period will be contacted by the Membership Ministry Team or designee (Sunday School teachers or outreach leaders) to encourage attendance or determine what issues exist that prevent attendance. The Membership Ministry Team should determine if future contact or follow-up should occur after the six (6) month contact has been made. (Acts 2: 46-47, Rom 12:5)
5. All members should strive to experience spiritual growth. (2 Tim 3:16-17, 1 Pet 2:2-3)
6. All members should be active in evangelistic endeavors within the community and surrounding area. (Rom 15:2, Luke 14:23)

## **Section 4 – Annual Membership Review and Renewal**

Once per year, on a date decided/set by the pastor or Membership Team, members will self-evaluate their performance of the duties of members and renew their commitment to continued membership. This is to promote personal spiritual growth and accountability and to encourage members to fulfill the purposes set out in the church bylaws.

## **Section 5 – Active and Inactive Memberships and Watchcare Status**

1. Active. Active members shall be defined as those upholding the duties of a member outlined in Section 3

2. Inactive. A membership status may be deemed “inactive” when the duties of a member are not carried out. A member’s status is deemed inactive if a member chooses not to participate in the annual membership review and commitment or fails to attend any service for a period of one year unless physically hindered (this absence should be confirmed by the member). As such, all voting rights in church business and all church offices held will be relinquished. An inactive member may be reinstated by signing the annual membership review and commitment.
3. Watchcare. People under watchcare shall be those individuals who wish to enter into the love and fellowship of FBCF and will support the objectives of the church but choose not to qualify for membership. These individuals are to be encompassed in all the life and love of the church, but will be excluded from voting and holding offices or positions of doctrinal and/or policy making responsibilities. However, people under watchcare are encouraged to minister as led by the Holy Spirit to allow for enablement of individuals to use their spiritual gifts while supporting the Body of Christ.

## **Section 6 – Termination of Membership**

Membership may be terminated in the following ways:

1. Death of the member;
2. Transfer in response to a letter of request to another Baptist church;
3. Upon receipt of a written request and/or upon becoming affiliated with another church, a member’s letter will be mailed to them and the individual’s name will be removed from the church roll. The member’s affiliation with another body of believers will be confirmed before any action is taken.
4. If a member has relocated to another area with no plans to return in the future, contact will be made with the member (if possible) and the member’s letter will be mailed to them. This is to promote to this member the importance of fellowship in a local body of believers. If contact is not possible, the member will retain an inactive membership status until such contact can be made.
5. Exclusion by action of this church. Should some serious issue exist which would cause a member to become a liability to the welfare of the church, every reasonable measure should be taken by the Pastor and the Advisory Committee to resolve the issue. All such proceedings shall be handled in a spirit of Christian kindness and forbearance as in Matthew 18. Should it be determined, by the Pastor and the Advisory Committee, that the welfare of the church will be best served by the exclusion of a member, the Advisory Committee may bring a recommendation before the congregation. Any person whose membership has been terminated by exclusion may request to have their membership restored upon evidence of that person’s

repentance and reformation and by a recommendation by the Pastor and the Advisory Committee.

# **Article 3: Church Offices**

## **Section 1. Senior Pastor**

### **1.1 - Duties**

It is the duty of the Senior Pastor to “equip the saints for the work of the ministry” (Ephesians 4:11) by preaching and teaching the Word of God, overseeing the church’s functioning, and providing pastoral care to the church’s membership. The Senior Pastor will have charge of the services of public worship, and will oversee the administration of the ordinances (the Lord’s Supper and baptism). The Senior Pastor will work with the church, the deacons, the Church Council, church officers, committees and ministry teams to fulfill the church’s mission. The Senior Pastor will work with the church on visitation of the lost (unsaved) and the members of the congregation, giving attention to those with specific needs, and perform other duties as usually related to that office. The Senior Pastor is an ex-officio member of all church committees, teams, councils and organizations. The Senior Pastor shall be an active member of the church.

### **1.2 - Election of a Senior Pastor (see section 2.2)**

### **1.3 - Term**

The Senior Pastor serves until the relationship is terminated either at the pastor’s request or at the church’s request. The Senior Pastor shall give at least Two (2) weeks notice at the time of resignation before terminating responsibilities as pastor. The pastor can be terminated by the church by the vote of two-thirds of those active members present and voting at a special business meeting called for that purpose. The Senior Pastor will be given at least two (2) weeks notice upon termination.

## **Section 2. Ministerial Staff Positions**

### **2.1 - Positions**

The church may elect staff to assist in the various ministries of the church. For a new ministerial staff position, a majority vote of those active members present and voting at a Business Meeting or Special Called Business Meeting shall be required to establish the position. Duties and description of ministerial staff positions are in the Personnel Manual. Ministerial staff positions are held by active members of the church.

### **2.2 - Election of Ministerial Staff Position**

Upon notification that a ministerial staff position will be vacated, a Search Team will be formed. The decision to form the team will be made as an approved motion to proceed at a Regular Business Meeting or a Special Called Business Meeting. The team will be charged with the responsibility of searching out the one God has designated to fill the ministerial staff position. The Search Team will represent a cross section of ages and have both male and female members. The team makeup will consist of seven (7) members plus two (2) alternates in case of a vacancy on the team as indicted in the table below.

The make-up of the team follows:

<b>Position</b>	<b>Age Group</b>	<b>Gender</b>	<b>Comments</b>
1	35 and under	Male	
2	35 and under	Female	
3	36-55	Male	
4	36-55	Female	
5	56 and up	Male	
6	56 and up	Female	
7	Any	Either	The next individual receiving the highest number of votes
8 and 9 (Alternates)	Any	Either	The next two individuals receiving the highest number of votes

Note: Members are those individuals in good standing, have been a church member for at least one year, and excludes inactive church members, candidates for church membership, and those under watch care.

Note: No two members of the team can be from the same immediate family (married, parents/children, or siblings).

- In the event that two (2) or more members of an immediate family are nominated, the family members will be contacted and must decide whose name will be on the final ballot.

Once the decision is made, the following process will begin.

1. On the second Sunday following the decision to proceed, all members of the church (see note above) may nominate up to 10 candidates for the team.
2. The Pastor's Advisory Committee will count the nominations and prepare a list of nominees in order of the number of nominations received. The number of nominations for each candidate will be kept confidential.
3. Once this list is prepared, the Pastor's Advisory Committee will start at the top of the list and determine the first 18 individuals (three (3) in each age/gender category) nominated who are willing to serve on the search team, if they are elected by the church. Candidates from both genders and the designated age groups must be represented in the final listing. This process should be completed within seven (7) days.
4. Once the final list of nominees willing to serve if elected is prepared and meeting criteria that will ensure the proper make-up of the team, the church members will assemble the following Sunday morning to elect the Search Team.
5. At this assembly, a ballot containing the 18 names of the nominated individuals (three in each category) willing to serve, and meeting the team make-up requirements, will be presented to those church members attending the assembly. Each church member will be permitted to select six (6) from the list, one from each category. The Pastor's Advisory Committee will tally the ballots. At least three Pastor's Advisory Committee members must be present to tally the votes. Any member of the Pastor's Advisory Committee whose name appears on the ballot must recuse themselves from

the tallying process. If less than three (3) members of the Pastor's Advisory Committee are available to tally the votes, the Chairman of the Deacons will appoint a church member to augment the Pastor's Advisory Committee in order to acquire three members to tally the votes.

- a. The nominee receiving the most votes in each category and meeting the criteria for the team will be elected as a member of the Search Team. This will constitute six (6) members of the team. In the event of a tie in any of the six categories, the member receiving the greatest number of nominations will be chosen.
  - b. The seventh member of the team will be the individual receiving the most number of votes, but not elected in the category where their name appears. In the event of a tie, the seventh (7th) position will be chosen as the member receiving the greatest number of nominations.
  - c. The eighth and ninth individuals will be the next two individuals receiving the next highest number of votes and will be the alternates.
6. The announcement of the team members will be made immediately after the ballots are tallied.

The Search Team will then begin the process of seeking out the one that God has prepared for service to fill the ministerial staff position. They will select an individual to serve as their chairperson.

Once the team has been led to the one they believe God has prepared for this position, they will present the candidate to the church for consideration of calling this person to the ministerial staff position.

The Search Team will be terminated upon successful completion of the assigned responsibilities and criteria indicated below.

- a. A person is recommended for the ministerial staff position to the church at a Special Called Business Meeting.
- b. The church votes at this meeting to extend a call to this person to the ministerial staff position.
- c. The person called accepts the call and a time is established when they will begin their service in this position.

See Addendum 1 Search Team Nomination; Addendum 2 Search Team Ballot

Once the team has reached a consensus, the team will present the candidate to the church for consideration of being called to this position.

### **2.3 - Term**

Ministerial church staff members serve until the relationship is terminated either at the staff member's request or at the church's request. The staff member shall give at least two (2) weeks notice at the time of resignation before terminating responsibilities. A staff member can be terminated by the church by a vote of two-thirds of those active members present and voting at a Special Called Business meeting called for that purpose. The staff member will be given at least 30 days notice upon termination.

## **Section 3. Support Staff**

### **3.1 - General**

For non-ministerial staff positions, a majority vote of those members present and voting shall be required to establish a new position. A job description shall be written by the Personnel Committee when the need for a staff member is determined. The job description shall be made available to the church at a regular or special business meeting

### **3.2 - Employment of Support Staff**

Once a position has been approved by the church, support staff shall be employed by the appropriate supervising ministerial staff and/or team in cooperation with the Personnel Committee. Support staff may be terminated by the appropriate supervising ministerial staff member and/or team in cooperation with the Personnel Committee.

### **3.3 - Staff Organization**

The pastor shall serve as the staff supervisor. Consultation with the Personnel Committee will be sought. The pastor may organize the staff as appropriate for effective ministry, and may designate other staff as supervisors of organizational units.

### **3.4 - Staff Evaluations**

See Personnel Manual for details.

## **Section 4. Moderator**

A moderator and assistant moderator will be recommended by the Members in Ministry Committee and shall be elected to serve a two-year term. A person may be reelected, but cannot serve more than two (2) consecutive terms. The moderator shall not be the leader of any church committee or existing ministry team. He/She shall preside at all business meetings, and in consultation with the pastor, shall be responsible for the preparation of the agenda for all church business meetings. In the absence of the moderator, the assistant moderator shall preside. In the absence of both, the church clerk shall call the church to order and a moderator pro-tem shall be elected. The Moderator must be an active member of the church.

## **Section 5. Clerk**

A Church Clerk will be recommended by the Members in Ministry Committee and shall be elected to serve a two-year term. A person may be reelected, but cannot serve more than three (3) consecutive terms. It shall be the duty of the clerk to

- Record the minutes of all Regular and Special Called Business Meetings of the church
- Provide complete meeting minutes and summaries of those minutes to the church office at least two weeks prior to the next business meeting for posting
- Provide membership reports to the church at Regular Business Meetings
- Present to the church and process all applications for membership, requests for transfer of church letter or transfer of membership
- Supervises the preparation of the annual associational letter and table of statistics concerning the work of the church.

- Keep an accurate and current register of names of members by category, with dates of admission, transferal of church membership, death, or erasure, together with a record of baptisms.

- Work with the administrative/secretarial staff in the fulfillment of the assigned areas of responsibility.

All church reports are church property. The Church Clerk in coordination with the church body may delegate some of the clerical responsibilities to a church secretary. The Church Clerk must be an active member of the church.

### **Section 6. Treasurer**

A Church Treasurer will be recommended by the Members in Ministry Committee and shall be elected to serve a two-year term. A person elected as church treasurer may be reelected, but may not serve more than three (3) consecutive terms. The Church Treasurer shall oversee the proper use of procedures and policies and coordinate and validate financial requests and bank statements. Under the direction of the Finance Committee, he/she shall supervise the receiving, recording, safeguarding and disbursing of all church funds and provide the church with a written report on the overall financial condition of the church at each regular business meeting. The church's financial records shall be reviewed by the Finance Committee annually. An annual financial accountability will be conducted to verify financial records and spending practices. The Church Financial Secretary shall be bonded, the church paying for the bond. All books, records and accounts kept by the Church Financial Secretary shall be the property of the church. The Church Treasurer shall serve as a member of the Finance Committee. The Treasurer must be an active member of the church.

### **Section 7. Trustees**

Three Trustees will be nominated by the Members in Ministry Committee and elected by the church. They will hold in trust the church property. They shall have no power to buy, sell, mortgage, lease or transfer any property without specific vote of the church authorizing such action. It shall be the responsibility of the trustees to affix their signatures to legal documents involving sale, mortgages, or rental of property, or other legal documents requiring their signatures, upon the authorization of the church. Trustees shall serve for a term of five years and are eligible for re-election. Trustees must be active members of the church.

### **Section 8. Deacons - See Article 4 of the Bylaws.**

### **Section 9. Church Organizations**

#### **9.1 - General**

In addition to committees (see section 9.4) we have three different types of teams. The first type is the Ministry Team is formed by someone has a passion for a certain area of ministry (i.e. women, men, missions, etc.). (See addendum 3 on How To Start Ministry Teams.) The person who forms the ministry team is the leader of that team and must be an active member of this church. They may enlist others who have the same passion for that ministry area. The members of this team do not have to be active members of this church. The second type of team is the



Search Team. This team is formed only when there has been a ministerial staff position vacated. This team is nominated and elected by the church to search for the person God has to fill that vacant position. The members of this team must be active members of this church. The third type of team is the Pastor's Advisory Committee (see section 9.4.4). The members of this team must be active members of this church.

### **9.2 - Sunday School**

Sunday School is the primary approach to accomplish the goal of winning the lost to Jesus, equipping the saved and ministering to one another in Christian love. It is an important instrument used for educating, discipling, ministering, and bringing the lost into the saving knowledge of Jesus Christ. The Sunday School will be under the direction of the Minister of Education and/or the appropriate ministry area.

### **9.3 - Church Council**

The purpose of the Church Council shall be to facilitate communication and coordination between ministerial staff, committees, and ministry teams relating to programs and activities of the Church. The Church Council shall be comprised of ministerial staff, the chairperson of committees and the leader of major ministry teams, and the Chairman of the Deacons. If a vacancy occurs in the Council, the staff, committee, or team which that person represents shall appoint a replacement. The council shall meet at least quarterly, in October, January, April, and July to prepare and update the Church Calendar, and at other times deemed necessary by the ministerial staff. The Church Council shall have as its responsibilities:

- a. The establishment of the proposed annual Church calendar
- b. Presenting the annual calendar at the November Regular Business Meeting.

### **9.4 - Committees**

#### **9.4.1. - Members in Ministry Committee**

The Members in Ministry Committee will be made up of a five (5) active members elected by the church. The chairman will be recommended by the Members in Ministry Committee. This committee assists members in finding their "SHAPE" (Spiritual Gifts, Heart, Abilities, Personalities, and Experiences) and getting involved in ministry teams. They also coordinate the staffing of all volunteer church leadership positions and recommend members for such positions to be elected by the church. Members of this committee shall be nominated by the sitting Members in Ministry Committee and elected at the November business meeting for a three year term. The new members will assume office on January 1. There shall be a minimum of five members, and the Leader of this committee shall be determined by the committee members. They shall work with the Membership Ministry Team to fulfill their duties.

#### **9.4.2. - Personnel Committee**

The Personnel Committee will be made up of five (5) active members elected by the church. The chairman will be determined by the committee members. This committee assists the church in matters pertaining to employed personnel and working with related teams. Its work includes writing and maintaining a Personnel Policy Manual which would include recommending staff needs to the church, writing job descriptions, recommending employment, salaries, benefits, and personnel services, except as stated in these bylaws. Its work also includes the annual church

staff evaluations. It is directly responsible to the Pastor's Advisory Committee and then to the church body. Members will be elected for a three year term. Approximately one-third of the members will rotate off each year

#### **9.4.3 - Finance Committee**

The Finance Committee will be made up of five (5) active members elected by the church. The chairman will be recommended by the Members in Ministry Committee. This Committee assists the church in matters pertaining to the finances of the church. The committee will prepare and present the annual budget to the church in August each year. The committee will oversee the financial contractor's work and ensure that an annual financial accountability of all church financial records is conducted each year by a Certified Public Accountant. The committee will report the results of the report to the church at a Regular Business Meeting. The Finance Committee will be responsible for the Financial Procedures and Policy Manual. The members will serve for a three year term with approximately one third rotating every year. Committee members may be re-elected.

#### **9.4.4 - Pastor's Advisory Committee**

The Advisory Committee will be made up of a five (5) active members elected by the church plus the Senior Pastor. The five members of the committee will be recommended by the Members in Ministry Committee with the Senior Pastor. They will meet no less than once each month. They will serve for three years with approximately one-third rotating each year. Individuals cannot serve two consecutive terms. The team is accountable to the church.

#### **9.5 Ministry Teams**

Ministry isn't just for the Ministerial Staff. Every believer should be involved in ministry - serving and caring for others. All believers should use and share the gifts God has given them. The Members in Ministry Committee will assist in getting members involved in ministry. The leader of this team must be an active member of this church. Members of this team do not have to be active members of this church. *See Addendum 3 How to Start Ministry Teams*

# Article 4: Deacons

## A. QUALIFICATIONS

Deacons are men, having been an active member of FBCF for at least one year, 21 years of age or older, that the body has recognized as meeting the qualifications for a deacon as set forth in the Word. The qualifications for the office of deacon are found in Acts 6:1-6, 1 Timothy 3:1-13, and Titus 1:6-9.

The statement that a deacon must be the “husband of one wife” shall be interpreted to mean that he must be a “one-woman” man. That is, if he is married, he must be committed to the covenant of marriage. It shall not be interpreted to mean that a single man may not serve as a deacon, nor to mean that a divorced man should be excluded from service.

Each deacon should be:

### I. Spiritually:

1. Filled with the Spirit;
2. Filled with wisdom (James 3:17);
3. Filled with faith;
4. Must have a personal spiritual life of vitality and consistency that is evidenced by a daily quiet time of prayer and devotion (Mark 1:35); and,
5. Must be involved in being a witness for Christ to the lost (Acts 1:8).

### II. Morally:

1. Worthy of respect, not frivolous and foolish;
2. Reliable and dependable, not two-faced;
3. Honest and sincere, not a hypocrite;
4. Sober;
5. One who tithes and is supportive of the church stewardship programs; and,
6. Must be a faithful manager of their time, their spiritual and financial gifts.
  - a. II Cor, 9:6-7
  - b. I John 3:17
  - c. Eph. 4:11-12

The Qualifications of the deacon wife (1 Timothy 3:11):

1. Worthy of respect;
2. Not a malicious gossip;
3. Temperate; and,
4. Faithful in all things.

In addition, a deacon should ascribe to the basic beliefs as laid out in these guidelines.

## **B. DEACON OFFICERS**

The deacon officers will be elected annually by the active deacon membership. The deacon offices include Chairman, Vice-Chairman, and Secretary. At the October regular meeting, the deacons will submit nominations for deacon officers. Nominees will be notified and those accepting consideration will be presented to the deacon body for election at the regular November meeting. Deacons present will then vote (proxy voting will not be allowed). The nominees receiving the majority vote for each office will serve in the respective office for a twelve (12) month period beginning in January of the following year. Officers will not serve more than two (2) consecutive terms.

Duties of the officers include the following:

### ***I.* Chairman**

- Assist the deacons in developing effective ministries
- Plans, conducts and evaluates the work of the deacons
- Plans, conducts and evaluates deacon meetings
- Facilitates adequate training and resources for doing their work
- Guides deacons in developing ministry plans
- Serves as a member of the Church Council
- Reports regularly to the church on the work of the deacons
- Provides assistance and support to the pastoral ministries
- Is the primary spokesperson for the deacon body to the church body

### ***II.* Vice-Chairman**

- Fulfills duties in the absence of the chairman
- Assist the chairman in fulfilling responsibilities as assigned
- Coordinates the preparation of the Lord's Supper elements and the Lord's Supper Team

### ***III.* Secretary**

- Keeps accurate minutes of deacon meetings and records of the deacon ministries
- Maintains deacon membership records and deacon ministry reports
- Orders and maintains deacon ministry materials
- Prepares official correspondence for the deacon body

Should an officer not be able to complete his term, a special election will be held at the next regularly scheduled Deacons meeting to fill the vacated position, if deemed necessary.

## C. DEACON STATUS

**Active deacon:** The New Testament gives no definite length of service for an active deacon. A deacon shall be deemed to be active until his resignation or removal by the church body. In order to retain active status the deacon must remain an active member of FBCF.

**Inactive deacon:** A deacon may elect inactive status if he does not feel he can fulfill the duties of an active deacon. In order to retain inactive status the deacon must remain an active member of FBCF. If an inactive deacon that was elected by First Baptist Church Friendswood feels called to return to active service as a deacon, he should approach one of the deacon officers with this request. The deacon officers and the pastor will interview the inactive deacon and prayerfully evaluate the request. If the deacon officers and the pastor agree to move forward to reactivate the inactive deacon, the request will be brought back to the deacon body for approval.

**Resignation:** When a deacon becomes ineligible to serve the church as a deacon, he should resign his position.

**Deacon Emeritus:** This designation is intended to provide recognition for those "who have served well", and have gained "an excellent standing and great assurance in their faith in Christ Jesus" (Timothy 3:13), These are men who have been ordained as a deacon for at least 20 years and have faithfully served this church any length of time as an active deacon and are no longer able to actively serve. The Deacon Emeritus retains his status as a deacon, but without assignment of active duties.

## D. RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE ACTIVE DEACON

### SERVING

According to the New Testament, deacons are servants, first of the Lord, and then the body of Christ (the church).

- Deacons are set apart to serve with the pastor and staff:
  - In performing the pastoral ministry tasks of leading the church in the achievement of its mission;
  - Proclaiming the gospel to believers and unbelievers; and,
  - Caring for church members and other persons in the community.
- Each deacon should prayerfully discern and discover his spiritual gifts and endeavor to use them in ministry opportunities within the church and community (Ephesians 4:11-13).
- Deacons should faithfully support and attend the areas of ministry in which they feel called to participate.
- Deacons must be protectors of the unity of the church remembering that our love and unity are a demonstration to the world that the gospel is true (John 13:35, John 17:23).
- They shall assist with the administering of the ordinances of baptism and the Lord's Supper.

## **MEETINGS**

Deacons meet together on a regular monthly basis for the purpose of encouragement, fellowship, equipping for ministry and for coordinating ministry plans and activities.

- Deacons should faithfully and prayerfully attend the meetings.
- All deacons are expected to attend deacon meetings unless providentially hindered.
- A deacon who misses three meetings in a row, without notifying an officer of the deacon body, will be contacted to determine the cause for the absences and if he desires to remain an active deacon.

## **ACCOUNTABILITY**

Deacons serve and are accountable to the Lord and His church.

- Each deacon should live an exemplary Christian life and seek to maintain a positive witness for Christ.
- Accordingly, they should avoid any activity in their personal or business lives:
  - Which would have the appearance of impropriety;
  - Cause dissension within the church; or,
  - Otherwise bring discredit upon the name of our Lord, the church, or the deacon body.
- Any activity by a deacon that is inconsistent with the scriptural guidelines for a deacon, as interpreted by the church, will be handled in accordance with the procedures set forth in Matthew 18:15-17, with the ultimate purpose to minister to the deacon and restore their ministry and witness.

## **E. DEACON NOMINATION / ELECTION**

The need for a deacon election will be evaluated by the deacon body every year. The goal of FBCF will be to have one deacon for every 12 to 15 families and to fulfill the duties and ministries of the deacon body. The number of deacons shall correspond to the number of men needed to fulfill the duties and ministries of the deacon body. There is no designated maximum, but our goal is to maintain a minimum number of 16 active deacons. If the deacon body needs additional deacons the need will be brought to the church in the form of a motion at a scheduled business meeting.

## **DEACON SELECTION TEAM**

When the need for additional deacons is deemed necessary a Deacon Selection Team will be created. The Deacon Chairman will recruit potential members of this team and recommend them to the church body for confirmation. The Deacon Selection Team will consist of seven (7) church members and no more than three (3) shall be deacons or deacon's wives. The Deacon Selection Team exists to participate in all phases of deacon elections. This team shall serve until the election process is complete.

## **NOMINATIONS**

Members of the church will have the opportunity to nominate men they want the Deacon Selection Team to consider for active deacon duty. The nomination process will require that

church members complete a deacon nomination form, which will be provided by the Deacon Selection Team. Any deacons previously ordained by another Baptist church are eligible to become deacons at FBCF upon successful completion of the nomination and election process. *See Addendum 4 Deacon Nomination Form*

### **REVIEW OF QUALIFICATIONS**

The Deacon Selection Team and pastor will review each nomination form and prayerfully consider the qualifications of each nominee. After the team has qualified the nominee, the nominee will be contacted to determine if he is willing to serve.

### **INTERVIEW**

The nominee and his wife, if married, will be interviewed by the Deacon Selection Team and Pastor. The Deacon Selection Team and pastor will prayerfully establish a standard interview format. All information gained during this process will be confidential.

After interviews have been completed by the Deacon Selection Team, the names of those found to be initially qualified for service as an active deacon at First Baptist Church Friendswood will be announced to the church as entering into the training program as defined below. Following the one year of training those candidates successfully completing the training program will be presented to the congregation for approval at the next business meeting. Ballots will be prepared for election to active deacon service. Members of FBCF congregation will be able to vote “yes” or “no” on each individual candidate and the voting will be by paper ballot. Those candidates receiving a majority of “yes” votes are to be placed on the list for ordination. Previously ordained deacons will be recognized at the completion of their training period and agreement by the Deacon body.

### **Training**

The purpose of training is to give a general overview of the total concept of the deacon ministry as it relates to First Baptist Friendswood. It includes but is not limited to: A Deacon orientation, a study of the biblical nature and role of a deacon, the qualifications of a deacon, hospital visitation, bereavement, prayer, and an overview of Article 4 of the FBCF church constitution. The Pastor and/or the Deacon Officers will lead this training.

### **Ordination**

After completion of a year training program, and upon a mutual agreement between the Deacon body and each candidate, each candidate will be brought to the church for election and those receiving a majority of “yes” votes will be selected. Those candidates who have not been previously shall be ordained before the church and presented with a certificate of ordination as a deacon signed by the pastor and the chairman of deacons. Newly elected Deacons who have been previously ordained will also be recognized. Individuals present at the ordination may lay hands on and pray for the new FBCF deacons.

# Article 5: Meetings

## A. Worship Services

The church shall meet for regular public worship as designated by the church. These services shall be under the direction of the pastor or his designee.

Any other additional services (Revivals, Bible Conferences, seminars, etc.) may be held as needed.

(Hebrews 10:23-25)

## B. Regular Business Meetings

Regular Business Meetings will be held and shall meet to receive reports from the Church Clerk, Treasurer, Ministry Teams, Committees, Ministerial Staff, and Deacons and to consider unfinished business and new business. At least one week before the meeting, minutes of meetings held since the last Regular Business Meeting and an Agenda for the upcoming meeting will be available. Requests for items to be placed on the Agenda must be submitted in writing to the church office at least two weeks before the meeting.

1. Frequency - Regular Business Meetings will be held once per quarter on Sunday evening in the months of February, May, August, and November, determined by the staff to best accommodate the church calendar and activities.

2. Parliamentary Rules - Robert's Rules of Order, latest version shall be the authority for parliamentary rules of procedure unless specifically determined otherwise by the church.

3. Quorum - quorum consists of those active members of FBCF who attend the business meeting, provided it is a regular business meeting or a special business meeting that has been properly called.

4. Voting

a. Only active members will be entitled to vote.

b. Voting is only required for the following:

Personnel (Selection, dismissal, and job descriptions)

Budget (Adoption and amendment)

Facilities (Development)

All committee members and team members specifically called out in Article 3 – Church Officers and Offices.

Any item specifically designated by the church in a business meeting

c. Manner of Voting

A vote can be taken in any manner prescribed by the moderator.

A secret ballot may be used when specified in the Bylaws or when previously established.

In order to vote, the active member must be present at the time the voting takes place.



### **C. Special Called Business Meetings**

A Special Called Business Meeting may be called at any time by one of the following.

- The Pastor
- A Ministerial Staff member
- The Chairman of the Deacons
- A written request stating the subject and signed by 25 active members submitted to the

Church Moderator.

Notice of the meeting must be announced on two (2) consecutive Sundays preceding the meeting. In addition, an insert will be placed in the bulletin on these two (2) Sundays and the announcement will be placed in the regular official church publication at least once.

1. Parliamentary Rules - Same as for Regular Business Meetings
2. Quorum - Same as for Regular Business Meetings
3. Voting - Same as for Regular Business Meetings

Note: Special Called Business Meetings are not required for situations that arise that require immediate action. The appropriate committee or ministry team may take the action necessary to address the situation within their charter and budget. If church action is required (personnel, budget, or facilities), then the situation must be brought to the church as soon as possible using the above guidelines.

## **Article 6: Amendments**

This set of Bylaws may be amended, changed, altered or replaced by the following procedure.

1. The proposed amendment, change, alteration or replacement must be presented in writing to the FBCF church office by an active member one month prior to being considered at a Regular Business Meeting.
2. Copies of the proposal shall be made available in the church office, the vestibule of the church, and posted on the official church publication at least three (3) consecutive weeks prior to the meeting
3. The proposal consideration shall be announced publicly from the pulpit at least two (2) consecutive Sundays prior to the meeting.
4. The proposal shall be discussed on at least two (2) meetings, no less than seven calendar days apart with the last meeting being no sooner than seven days from the date of the business meeting for members to review the proposed changes, prior to the consideration at a Regular Business Meeting. The date and time of these discussions will be included in all postings and announcements.
5. The proposed amendment, change, alteration or replacement must be voted on at a Regular Business meeting of First Baptist Church Friendswood. A majority of the active members present and voting must approve the proposal in order for it to be accepted and implemented.

Implementation of the proposal will occur within 30 days after approval by the church.

# **Article 4 Amendments**

**February 2009**

## **ELECTIONS**

After interviews have been completed by the Deacon Selection Team, the names of those found to be qualified for service as an active deacon at First Baptist Church Friendswood will be presented to the congregation for approval at the next business meeting. Ballots will be prepared for election to active deacon service. Members of FBCF congregation will be able to vote "yes" or "no" on each individual candidate and the voting will be by paper ballot. Those candidates receiving a majority of "yes" votes are to be placed on the list for ordination, unless previously ordained.

## **ORDINATION**

Each newly elected deacon will be ordained before the church and presented with a certificate of ordination as a deacon signed by the pastor and the chairman of the deacons. Newly elected deacons who have been previously ordained will also be recognized. Individuals present at the ordination may lay hands on and pray for the new FBCF deacons.

## **REVISION Approved by church body February 2009**

After interviews have been completed by the Deacon Selection Team, the names of those found to be initially qualified for service as an active deacon at First Baptist Church Friendswood will be announced to the church as entering into the training program as defined below. Following the one year of training those candidates successfully completing the training program will be presented to the congregation for approval at the next business meeting. Ballots will be prepared for election to active deacon service. Members of FBCF congregation will be able to vote "yes" or "no" on each individual candidate and the voting will be by paper ballot. Those candidates receiving a majority of "yes" votes are to be placed on the list for ordination. Previously ordained deacons will be recognized at the completion of their training period and agreement by the Deacon body.

### **Training**

The purpose of training is to give a general overview of the total concept of the deacon ministry as it relates to First Baptist Friendswood. It includes but is not limited to: A Deacon orientation, a study of the biblical nature and role of a deacon, the qualifications of a deacon, hospital visitation, bereavement, prayer, and an overview of Article 4 of the FBCF church constitution. The Pastor and/or the Deacon Officers will lead this training.

### **Ordination**

After completion of a year training program, and upon a mutual agreement between the Deacon body and each candidate, each candidate will be brought to the church for election and those receiving a majority of "yes" votes will be selected. Those candidates who have not been

previously shall be ordained before the church and presented with a certificate of ordination as a deacon signed by the pastor and the chairman of deacons. Newly elected Deacons who have been previously ordained will also be recognized. Individuals present at the ordination may lay hands on and pray for the new FBCF deacons.

# **Article 5 Amendments**

**August 2012**

## **B. Regular Business Meetings**

Regular Business Meetings will be held and shall meet to receive reports from the Church Clerk, Treasurer, Ministry Teams, Committees, Ministerial Staff, and Deacons and to consider unfinished business and new business. At least one week before the meeting, minutes of meetings held since the last Regular Business Meeting and an Agenda for the upcoming meeting will be available. Requests for items to be placed on the Agenda must be submitted in writing to the church office at least two weeks before the meeting.

1. Frequency - Regular Business Meetings will be held once per quarter on the first Sunday evening in the months of February, May, August, and November.

## **REVISION Approved by church body February 2012**

1. Frequency - Regular Business Meetings will be held once per quarter on Sunday evening in the months of February, May, August, and November, determined by the staff to best accommodate the church calendar and activities.

# **Article 3 Amendments**

**August 2012**

## **9.4.4 - Accountability Team**

The Accountability Team will be made up of a five (5) active members elected by the church plus the Senior Pastor. The five members of the team will be recommended by the Members in Ministry Committee with the Senior Pastor. They will meet no less than once each month. They will serve for three years with approximately one-third rotating each year. Individuals cannot serve two consecutive terms. The team is accountable to the church. The Finance and Personnel Committees are accountable to the Accountability team and the Accountability team will provide feedback and input to the Senior Pastor.

## **REVISION Approved by church body February 2012**

## **9.4.4 - Pastor's Advisory Committee**

The Advisory Committee will be made up of a five (5) active members elected by the church plus the Senior Pastor. The five members of the committee will be recommended by the Members in Ministry Committee with the Senior Pastor. They will meet no less than once each month. They will serve for three years with approximately one-third rotating each year. Individuals cannot serve two consecutive terms. The team is accountable to the church.

## **Article 6: Amendments**

**August 2012**

4. The proposal shall be discussed on at least two (2) Wednesday evenings prior to the consideration at a Regular Business Meeting. The date and time of these discussions will be included in all postings and announcements.

### **REVISION Approved by church body February 2012**

4. The proposal shall be discussed on at least two (2) meetings, no less than seven calendar days apart with the last meeting being no sooner than seven days from the date of the business meeting for members to review the proposed changes, prior to the consideration at a Regular Business Meeting. The date and time of these discussions will be included in all postings and announcements.

# **Article 3 Amendments**

**November 2012**

## **9.4.3 - Finance Committee**

The Finance Committee will be made up of five (5) active members elected by the church. The chairman will be recommended by the Members in Ministry Committee. This Committee assists the church in matters pertaining to the finances of the church. The committee will prepare and present the annual budget to the church in November each year. The committee will oversee the financial contractor's work and ensure that an annual financial accountability of all church financial records is conducted each year by a Certified Public Accountant. The committee will report the results of the report to the church at a Regular Business Meeting. The Finance Committee will be responsible for the Financial Procedures and Policy Manual. The members will serve for a three year term with approximately one third rotating every year. Committee members may be re-elected.

## **REVISION Approved by church body February 2012**

## **9.4.3 - Finance Committee**

The Finance Committee will be made up of five (5) active members elected by the church. The chairman will be recommended by the Members in Ministry Committee. This Committee assists the church in matters pertaining to the finances of the church. The committee will prepare and present the annual budget to the church in August each year. The committee will oversee the financial contractor's work and ensure that an annual financial accountability of all church financial records is conducted each year by a Certified Public Accountant. The committee will report the results of the report to the church at a Regular Business Meeting. The Finance Committee will be responsible for the Financial Procedures and Policy Manual. The members will serve for a three year term with approximately one third rotating every year. Committee members may be re-elected.



## **Addendum 1: Ministerial Search Team Nomination Form**

The Ministerial Search Team shall be made of seven (7) active members representing designated age groups (35 and under, 36-55, and 56-up), both genders in each age group, and one other at large member. No two members of the team can be related (married, parents/children, or siblings) to one another.

Note: The total number of nominations for each individual will be kept confidential.

I nominate the following individuals to serve on the Ministerial Search Team

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_
4. \_\_\_\_\_
5. \_\_\_\_\_
6. \_\_\_\_\_
7. \_\_\_\_\_
8. \_\_\_\_\_
9. \_\_\_\_\_
10. \_\_\_\_\_

Church Member's Printed Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Church Member's Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

**Note: Unsigned ballots will not be counted.**

## Addendum 2: Ministerial Search Team Ballot Form

Vote for one man and one woman in each age group. The names in each group are alphabetical and do not reflect the number of nominations received.

Age 35 and under Male Nominees - Vote for one (1)

[ ] \_\_\_\_\_  
[ ] \_\_\_\_\_  
[ ] \_\_\_\_\_

Age Group 35 and under Female Nominees - Vote for one (1)

[ ] \_\_\_\_\_  
[ ] \_\_\_\_\_  
[ ] \_\_\_\_\_

Age Group 36-55 Male Nominees - Vote for one (1)

[ ] \_\_\_\_\_  
[ ] \_\_\_\_\_  
[ ] \_\_\_\_\_

Age Group 36-55 Female Nominees - Vote for one (1)

[ ] \_\_\_\_\_  
[ ] \_\_\_\_\_  
[ ] \_\_\_\_\_

Age Group 56 and up Male Nominees - Vote for one (1)

[ ] \_\_\_\_\_  
[ ] \_\_\_\_\_  
[ ] \_\_\_\_\_

Age Group 56 and up Female Nominees - Vote for one (1)

[ ] \_\_\_\_\_  
[ ] \_\_\_\_\_  
[ ] \_\_\_\_\_

Church Member's Printed Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Church Member's Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

**Note: Unsigned ballots will not be counted.**

## **Addendum 3: How to Start Ministry Teams**

New ministry teams may be established as the Lord leads. The member with a passion for a new ministry will use the following steps to prepare a presentation to a ministerial staff person or to a member of the Members in Ministry Committee.

1. Briefly and clearly state the purpose of the ministry and what need the ministry priority addresses.
2. Who is the target group?
3. To which staff member will the ministry team be accountable?
4. How will success be measured?
5. What strategy will be used?
6. When will the ministry start and how long will it run?
7. Other than yourself, who has expressed interest in this area of ministry?
8. What training will be necessary?
9. What calendar dates are needed and which budget line item will this ministry be funded through?
10. How much support will be required of the office staff?

A list of the currently established ministry teams is available in the church office.

## **Addendum 4: Deacon Nomination Form**

**(For men who have never served as Deacon at First Baptist Church Friendswood)**

### **INSTRUCTIONS TO INDIVIDUAL MAKING NOMINATION:**

- **Please do not inform your nominee of this recommendation.**  
**The Deacon Selection Team will contact him if and when it is appropriate.**
- Please refer to Acts 6:3, I Timothy 3:1-13, and Titus 1:6-9 for the Scriptural qualifications for Deacons.
- The church has adopted the following qualifications for a Deacon:
  1. Currently meets scriptural requirements of a Deacon set forth in 1 Timothy 3:1-13 and is of good report in the church and community.
  2. Currently serves in some ministry at FBCF.
  3. Currently and regularly attends FBCF for worship and Sunday School.
  4. Currently financially supports FBCF with his Tithes and Offerings.
  5. Currently has a spirit of unity and harmony in support of FBCF and its leadership.
- Complete the form in its entirety from **your personal knowledge** of the nominee.
- Please attach another sheet of paper to this form if additional space is necessary for your answer
- One Nominee per form

**Thank you for your prayerful support of this Church and its ministries.**

#### 1. NOMINEE

Nominee's name \_\_\_\_\_

Phone No. \_\_\_\_\_

#### 2. ACTIVITIES

List any church activities in which you know the nominee is involved.

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

#### 3. CHARACTER

Describe the nominee and character qualities that qualify him to be nominated for the office of Deacon.

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

#### 4. PERSON MAKING NOMINATION

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Home Phone No. \_\_\_\_\_

**Return this completed form in person or by mail to the Church Office in a sealed envelope addressed to the Deacon Selection Team, First Baptist Church Friendswood, 111 East Heritage, Friendswood, TX 77546 no later than \_\_\_\_\_**