

FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH OF SALEM
BYLAWS

Article A	Membership	1
Article B	Church Officers	4
Article C	Senior Pastor, Duties and Responsibilities	5
Article D	The Senior Pastor and The Church Staff	6
Article E	Board of Elders	7
Article F	Deacons and Deaconesses	9
Article G	Standing Committees	10
Article H	Special Committees	13
Article I	Meetings	16
Article J	Licensing and Ordaining	18
Article K	Amendments	19
Exhibit 1	Elders, Deacons and Deaconesses' Roles and Duties	20
Exhibit 2	Declaration of Faith	22
Exhibit 3	Membership Covenant	24

PREAMBLE

These Bylaws, which are effective April 13, 2025, are adopted and established for our government and plan of worship and service. No bylaw that conflicts with the Constitution and Articles of Incorporation of the First Baptist Church of Salem shall be effective.

Central to the purpose and mission of First Baptist Church of Salem is the belief that the Bible is given to us by God as our authority for the formation of our faith, instruction on our Biblical community, as well as general polity and related policies. For that reason, all policies are created, and all affairs are conducted in accordance with the Bible, the Mission of First Baptist Church of Salem, its Declaration of Faith and its Membership Covenant.

ARTICLE A – MEMBERSHIP

Section 1. Admission of Members

- a. Every candidate for membership in this church must qualify by a satisfactory confession of faith in Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior and acceptance of the Declaration of Faith and Membership Covenant of this church that shall be made before the Board of Elders or its duly authorized representatives and baptism by immersion.
- b. The Board of Elders may accept for membership persons bringing a letter of transfer from another church based on their Christian experience including baptism by immersion and persons being restored to fellowship provided that such candidates accept the Declaration of Faith and the Membership Covenant of this church.
- c. Candidates may be received into membership by favorable vote of the Board of Elders no sooner than two (2) weeks after public posting or publication of the candidates' names. In its decision, the Board of Elders must consider any input from congregational members.
- d. The Board of Elders shall not accept for membership in this church any person known to be living his or her life in a manner inconsistent with the Declaration of Faith and Membership Covenant of this church.

Section 2. Termination of Membership

- a. Any person may be removed from membership by action of the Board of Elders for the following reasons:
 - 1) Request for and granting of a letter of transfer to another church.
 - 2) Termination of membership for continued gross misconduct or failure to maintain Membership Covenant obligations. This termination shall not take place before the provisions of Article A Section 5b and Article A Section 2c have been followed.
 - 3) Inactivity as a church member for more than one (1) year. Inactivity includes no church attendance plus no tithing for the previous year.
- b. Any member may terminate membership by written request to the Board of Elders.

- c. Upon learning that any member is engaging in gross misconduct or has been living his or her life in a manner inconsistent with the Declaration of Faith and Membership Covenant of this church, the Executive Committee of the Board of Elders shall commence church discipline pursuant to Article A, Section 5 below. In the event that the member refuses to participate in or follow the mandates of said discipline, the Board of Elders may:
 - 1) Request the resignation of such person from membership in the church to be effective upon receipt.
 - 2) If the requested resignation is not received within fifteen (15) days of the date requested, the Board of Elders, at a regular or special business meeting (see Article I, Section 3), shall recommend to the church membership that such member be dismissed from the membership of the Church. Such member may attend the meeting and be heard prior to the vote.

Section 3. Membership Rights

- a. All members, fifteen (15) years of age and older, may vote on any matter requiring a decision at any regular or special business meeting.
- b. A member may attend and observe any regular or special meeting of any church board, or committee, unless that group is meeting in executive session.
- c. A member may request to review the minutes of the Board of Elders, Standing Committees, and the financial records of the church, which shall be made available in the church office. The records of individual contributions, personnel actions, executive sessions, and the Special Committees shall not be open for review.
- d. A member has the right to make designated OVER-AND-ABOVE-THE-BUDGET contributions. Such gifts, if they are to be claimed as charitable contributions for tax purposes, are given with the understanding that the church has the right to use the gift for any purpose it deems best regardless of the donor's designation.
- e. Any twenty-five (25) active members fifteen (15) years of age and older may call a special business meeting of the church if notice of such a meeting has been posted or published not less than seven (7) days before that special business meeting. Initiators must be members for 1 year or more.
- f. Within fifteen (15) days of any action by the Board of Elders any twenty-five (25) active members fifteen (15) years of age and older may request in writing, with reasons given, that the action be reconsidered. If the matter cannot be resolved with the petitioners, it shall be taken to the membership for a decision. Initiators must be members for 1 year or more.
- g. Any member desiring a change in the Constitution, Bylaws or the policies or procedures of the church or of any board or committee must present their recommended changes to the Board of Elders in writing.

Section 4. Duties of Members

- a. Observe and fulfill the obligations set forth in the Declaration of Faith and Membership

Covenant regarding faithfulness to Christ and to the local church.

- b. Honor and esteem the Elders, Senior Pastor and other members of the staff serving under the Senior Pastor's direction and all other church leaders and members.
- c. Confer with the Senior Pastor or the Board of Elders regarding any doctrinal disagreement or other dissatisfaction arising in church relationships, remembering the Scriptural injunction regarding mutual harmony and edification (Romans 14:19).
- d. Seek spiritual growth and maturity by identifying and using spiritual gifts through active involvement in the church and its mission.

Section 5. Good Standing and Discipline of Members

- a. Every person received into the church shall be deemed a member in good standing. Continuance as a member in good standing shall be contingent upon living a life that honors the faith and purpose of the church as set forth in its Declaration of Faith and Membership Covenant.
- b. The Board of Elders shall be responsible for maintaining the membership roster of the church. Every member shall be deemed to be in good standing unless and until the Board of Elders makes a formal finding to the contrary. Every finding of "not in good standing" shall carry with it a statement of conditions for restoration of the member to good standing or notice of intent to initiate action for disciplinary dismissal of the member involved. Pursuant to Galatians 6:1-4, 2 Corinthians 2:5-11 and Matthew 18:15-20, the primary purpose of church discipline shall be restoration, rather than dismissal.

Section 6. Qualifications for Service

Every person serving the church, whether elected or appointed must be worthy of respect, sincere, temperate, self-controlled, gentle and not quarrelsome or greedy. Elected individuals must have been members in good standing of this church for at least one (1) year immediately prior to his or her election and must be givers of record.

Likewise, it is the policy of First Baptist Church of Salem that all leadership and teaching positions, whether elected, appointed or volunteer, paid or unpaid may only be filled by church members who are committed disciples of Jesus Christ. Consequently, each one is expected to review and affirm his or her agreement with such standards as a condition for continued involvement in the ministry of First Baptist Church of Salem, both in terms of doctrinal belief and practical application. For example, all serving church members are expected to reflect Christian values in their interaction with persons we serve, fellow ministry volunteers, and others. In addition, paid staff and ministry volunteers are required to refrain from behavior that is contrary to Biblical standards. Violation of these requirements shall constitute cause for discipline up to and including termination from ministry involvement.

Section 7. Term of Service for Elected Positions

- a. Elders (excluding the Senior Pastor), Deacons and Deaconesses shall be elected to a term of three (3) years and may serve no more than two (2) consecutive terms before taking a mandatory one (1) year sabbatical. Service of half or more of a three (3) year term shall constitute a full term with respect to the required sabbatical. No person shall serve for more than six (6) consecutive years in an elected or combination of elected positions without taking the required sabbatical.
 - 1) No person may hold more than one (1) elected position in the church simultaneously.
 - 2) The spouse of a pastor, minister, director, administrator or comparable church staff position may not be a candidate for an elected church position.

Section 8. Termination of Service for Elected Positions

- a. Elders, Deacons and Deaconesses may discontinue service voluntarily by submitting a written notice of resignation to the Board of Elders. The written resignation shall be accepted and effective upon receipt.
- b. The Executive Committee of the Board of Elders may initiate action concerning the involuntary termination of the service of any Elder, Deacon or Deaconess. If by majority vote, the Board of Elders accepts the Executive Committee's finding that service of such an elected person should be terminated, a recommendation to that effect shall be taken to the church membership for action if the person involved will not resign.
- c. The Board of Elders shall present its termination recommendation to the church membership at a special business meeting at which time the elected member in question may choose to be heard. A majority of eligible church members present and voting shall be decisive.

ARTICLE B – CHURCH OFFICERS

Section 1. Scriptural Officers

- a. The Scriptural officers of this church as distinct from officers of the Corporation (First Baptist Church of Salem) are Elder, Deacon and Deaconess.
- b. Elders have a Biblical responsibility for pastoring and overseeing the church (refer to Article E).
- c. Deacons and Deaconesses are called to assist the Elders in serving the church (refer to Article F).

Section 2. Corporate Officers

- a. The Chairman of the Board of Elders shall be President of the Corporation.
- b. The Vice-Chairman of the Board of Elders shall be the Vice-Chairman of the Corporation and in the absence of the Chairman shall act as the President.

- c. The Secretary of the Board of Elders shall be the Secretary of the Corporation.

ARTICLE C – SENIOR PASTOR, DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Section 1. Duties and Responsibilities

- a. This church shall have only one man whose official designation is "Senior Pastor".
- b. The Senior Pastor shall be a qualified minister who accepts unreservedly the Declaration of Faith and Membership Covenant of the church, satisfies the requirements of 1 Timothy 3:1-7 and Titus 1, and will promptly become a member of this church.
- c. The Senior Pastor, who serves as the Chief Undershepherd of the church, is a member of the Board of Elders, accountable to the Board of Elders and, ultimately, to the membership of the church.
- d. The Senior Pastor and the Board of Elders are responsible for the spiritual growth and wellbeing of the congregation including making disciples, teaching them to obey all that Jesus commanded.
- e. The Senior Pastor is in charge of the worship meetings of the church. Pursuant to Acts 6, prayer and the teaching and preaching of the Word of God shall be his primary responsibilities.
- f. Unless otherwise stated in these bylaws, the Senior Pastor is an ex officio member of all groups organized for ministry or service in the church.
- g. The Senior Pastor shall have authority to call a special meeting of the Board of Elders or any other group organized for ministry or service to the church.
- h. The Senior Pastor shall administer the ordinances of the church: The Lord's Supper and Believer's Baptism. He may designate other qualified persons to administer the Lord's Supper and Believer's Baptism.
- i. The Senior Pastor shall regularly make monthly ministry status reports to the Board of Elders.

Section 2. Calling of the Senior Pastor

- a. The Senior Pastor shall be called by formal written invitation following the favorable vote of three-fourths (3/4) of the eligible members of the church present and voting at a special business meeting called for that purpose.
- b. The call is to be for an indefinite tenure.
- c. The recommendation for the call shall be made to the church membership by the Board of Elders upon its acceptance of the unanimous recommendation of the Senior Pastor Search Committee that the individual being voted upon be called to be Senior Pastor of First Baptist Church of Salem.

Section 3. Procedure for Termination of Senior Pastor Service

- a. The Senior Pastor may conclude his service with the church by a voluntary resignation in writing that provides reasonable advance notice of the effective date of his resignation. The voluntary resignation of the Senior Pastor shall be regarded as an act prompted by the Lord's leading of His servant. The Board of Elders, therefore, acting on behalf of the church membership shall accept such voluntary resignation.
- b. The Board of Elders, or its duly authorized committee, shall initiate all church actions concerning involuntary termination of the service of the Senior Pastor. If by a seventy-five (75) percent vote, the Board of Elders determines that the Senior Pastor's service with the church should be ended, the Senior Pastor will be informed of the vote and asked to submit his resignation. If the Senior Pastor declines to resign, the Board of Elders shall recommend to the church membership, at a special business meeting called for that purpose, that the Senior Pastor's service with the church be terminated. The Senior Pastor may choose to attend such meeting and be heard prior to the vote. Unless 75% of the eligible members present and voting at the meeting vote to retain the Senior Pastor, the Senior Pastor's service with the church shall be terminated. Absentee ballots will not be permitted for this vote. The Board of Elders may set severance compensation in such cases.

ARTICLE D – THE SENIOR PASTOR AND THE CHURCH STAFF

Section 1. The Senior Pastor and the Church Staff

- a. The Senior Pastor shall be the designated representative of the Board of Elders for the hiring or dismissing of all staff of the church, whether paid or unpaid.
- b. The Senior Pastor shall be responsible for providing leadership and direction to the church staff, whether paid or unpaid, including the assignment of responsibilities.
- c. The Senior Pastor shall establish the duties of the entire church staff, whether paid or unpaid, and hold all church staff members accountable for their performance of the duties and responsibilities assigned.
- d. All church ministry staff members must unreservedly accept the Declaration of Faith and Membership Covenant, be of exemplary Christian character and exhibit the characteristics of consecration, dependability, helpfulness and compassion, possess skills and aptitude in their assigned area of responsibility and are or will become members of this church unless extenuating circumstances are presented to and approved by the Board of Elders
- e. The leaders of associated ministries of the church (i.e. school, daycare, business as ministry) must sign and adhere to our Declaration of Faith, shall be a member of this church unless extenuating circumstances are presented to and approved by the Board of Elders. Though desirable, it is not a requirement that the staff of the school or daycare be members of this church; however, each staff member must sign and adhere to our Declaration of Faith.
- f. The title designation of each staff member shall be based on the breadth of responsibility given, position in the chain of accountability, training and experience.

- g. All paid staff members shall be hired by the Senior Pastor, upon consultation with the Board of Elders and/or its authorized representatives if funding for the position is included in the current church budget or provision for payments is made by the Board of Elders within the total current church budget.
- h. The Senior Pastor may dismiss any staff member, whether paid or unpaid, after consultation with the Board of Elders and/or its authorized representatives.

ARTICLE E – BOARD OF ELDERS

Section 1. Board of Elders

- a. All candidates for the office of Elder shall be men of exemplary Christian character having the characteristics of consecration, dependability, initiative and leadership who satisfy the qualifications of 1 Timothy 3:1-7 and 5:17, James 5:14, Ephesians 4:11-13, Titus 1:5-9 and Acts 20:17-28.
- b. The Board of Elders shall consist of the Senior Pastor and at least nine (9) men elected from the membership of the church.
- c. The Board of Elders may appoint up to two (2) staff members that meet Article E, Section 1, Subsection a above to serve as members of the Elder Board. Terms of service are to be renewed annually.
- d. The Board of Elders may appoint other people that meet Article E, Section 1, Subsection a above to serve on the Board of Elders in a non-voting ex-officio capacity. Terms of service are to be renewed annually.
- e. Individual Elders shall:
 - 1) Be responsible to carry out the Biblical duties of Elders.
 - 2) Counsel people responding to the altar call during any worship service.
 - 3) Carry out such other duties as may be assigned from time to time by the Board of Elders.
- f. Board of Elders Executive Committee
 - 1) Within 30 days after the Annual meeting, the Board of Elders shall meet, and from among its members elect the following as its Executive Committee for a one (1) year term:
 - a) Chairman of the Board of Elders from among those Elders who were on the Board during the fiscal year just ending.
 - b) Vice-Chairman of the Board of Elders.
 - c) Secretary of the Board of Elders.
 - 2) The Senior Pastor shall be a member of the Executive Committee.

- 3) The Chairman of the Board of Elders:
 - a) Shall Chair all regular and special business meetings and congregational forums of the church in accordance with the Church Constitution and these Bylaws.
 - b) In the absence of the Chairman, these meetings shall be chaired by the Vice-Chairman of the Board of Elders.
 - c) May appoint at least one (1) Elder to be a member of each Standing Committee of the Board of Elders.
 - d) Shall appoint the Chairperson of each of the Standing Committees from among the Elders appointed to each Committee or its elected members.
- 4) The Executive Committee shall lead and guide the Board of Elders (1 Timothy 5:17), shepherd the church body and admonish the church body and individual members of the congregation as appropriate (1 Peter 5:2). All matters regarding restoration or discipline of a church member shall be presented to the Executive Committee before it goes to the Board of Elders and shall be presented to the Board of Elders by the Executive Committee, if warranted.
- 5) The Executive Committee (excluding the Senior Pastor) shall evaluate the ministry performance of the Senior Pastor and shall review that evaluation with the Senior Pastor.
- g. At least two-thirds (2/3) of the voting members of the Board of Elders must be present for a quorum and all decisions must be approved by not less than 51% of the total number of voting members of the Board. No member of the Board of Elders shall vote on any matter which may be personally beneficial or disadvantageous to him.
- h. The Board of Elders shall:
 - 1) Establish the vision and strategic direction of the church, establish and periodically evaluate goals and policies of the church, shepherd the church, protect the church body from false doctrines, provide comfort, care and encouragement to the church body pursuant to 1 Thess. 5:14 and shall provide instruction to the church body pursuant to Ephesians 4:11 and Titus 1:9.
 - 2) Identify and encourage the training, development and preparation of members of the church exhibiting an interest in and potential for ministry leadership.
 - 3) Have the authority to commission qualified individuals for their work in ministry.
 - 4) Act as, and in every respect be, the Board of Directors of this Corporation, First Baptist Church of Salem.
 - 5) Review the monthly reports of the Standing Committees of the Board and the Special Committees, when submitted or called for, and accept, reject or modify actions taken by the committees.

- 6) Set ministry and budget priorities and review all proposed budgets.
 - 7) Hold regular monthly meetings, the time and place of which shall be made known through regular posting or publication.
 - 8) Take to the church membership for action, recommendations regarding but not limited to adoption of the annual church budget, changes in the church's Articles of Incorporation, Constitution, or Bylaws, proposed building programs, sale or purchase of real property and/or encumbrance of church property.
 - 9) Recommend to the church membership, by unanimous vote, any affiliation with other organizations.
 - 10) Establish and monitor a Benevolence Fellowship Fund whose primary purpose is to provide financial assistance to members and regular attendees of this church. The fund shall be administered by a designated staff person in accordance with policies developed and approved by the Board of Elders.
 - 11) Direct the Secretary of the Elder Board to perform or delegate the following duties:
 - a) Prepare and publish the Annual Report of the church under the direction of the Board of Elders.
 - b) Keep an exact record of the business meetings of the church.
 - c) Keep alphabetical and chronological records of the date and manner of admittance and dismissal of church members.
 - d) Be responsible for correspondence relating to actions taken by the church at its business meetings, assisted by the church secretarial staff as needed.
- i. All duties described above may be performed directly by the Board of Elders or may be delegated or assigned by the Board of Elders to the Senior Pastor, Staff, Standing, Special Committees or other organized or ad hoc groups within the church.

ARTICLE F – DEACONS AND DEACONESSES

Section 1. Deacon and Deaconess

- a. Men and women that assist the Elders in caring for the church's temporal needs.
- b. Deacons and Deaconesses are members elected to serve on the standing committees per Article G.
- c. Deacons and Deaconesses shall meet the qualifications described in 1 Timothy 3:8-13 and be of exemplary Christian character (as further defined in Article A, Section 6 of these Bylaws).

ARTICLE G – STANDING COMMITTEES

Section 1. Standing Committees

The church shall have four (4) Standing Committees Global

Ministries

Stewardship and Fiscal

Property

Congregational Care

Section 2. Committee Composition

- a. Each Standing Committee shall consist of at least three (3) Deacons/Deaconesses, elected from the membership of the church. The Chair of each committee must let the Nominating Committee know the number of candidates that are needed for their committee.
- b. The Senior Pastor shall appoint to each Standing Committee one or more paid or unpaid church staff members who, in partnership with the elected and volunteer members of the Standing Committees, shall lead, direct and actively participate in the ministry areas assigned to specific Standing Committees.
- c. Candidates for any Committee's membership elected positions must qualify for the office of Deacon or Deaconess (per Article F), and have been recently active in or known to be qualified for the ministry assigned to the Committee for which nominated.

Section 3. Ministry and Organizational Objectives of Standing Committees

- a. The Standing Committees, which operate under the authority of the Board of Elders, are to function in both a supportive and directive role and shall facilitate the ministries of this church in their area of responsibility by:
 - 1) Assisting the staff leader to lead, coordinate and monitor the ministries assigned to that specific Standing Committee.
 - 2) Authorizing the expenditure of budgeted funds for ministries included in their specific area of responsibility in accordance with the fiscal policies and current instructions of the Stewardship and Fiscal Committee.
 - 3) Being accountable to the Board of Elders for fulfilling their responsibilities and holding accountable all groups and activities for which they have responsibility.
- b. The Standing Committees shall assist their respective staff leaders to identify any area that is not being served or adequately served. They shall also assist in identifying and minimizing ministry duplication.
 - 1) The purpose of every ministry activity of this church must be Biblically based and must contribute to the fulfillment of the mission of the church (that is, it must edify, equip or evangelize).

- 2) The members of every ministry activity must be committed to prayer, Holy Spirit led and accountable to the Board of Elders through the Senior Pastor and the staff leaders of the ministry areas.

Section 4. Standing Committee's Responsibility's

- a. Discharge the duties assigned to each specific standing Committee by these Bylaws and such other duties as assigned by the Board of Elders.
- b. Elect Committee officers other than the Chairperson, who will be appointed by the Chairman of the Board of Elders.
- c. Maintain a permanent record of all business.
- d. Meet prior to the monthly meeting of the Board of Elders and file a report of all regular and special meetings of the Committee with the Board prior to the meeting of the Board.
- e. Make an annual written report to the Board of Elders.
- f. In cooperation with the staff leader, secure the volunteer assistance and/or subcommittees needed to carry out the ministries for which the Committee has responsibility.
- g. Review and update and revise, as appropriate, policies applicable to their specific ministry area. Proposed policy revisions must be submitted to the Board of Elders for approval.
- h. Work with assigned staff to prepare a proposed annual budget reflecting the ministry priorities area and submit it to the Senior Pastor's designated staff member for consideration as part of the Church's annual budget.

Section 5. Global Ministries Committee

The Global Ministries Committee, under the direction and authority of the Board of Elders and in partnership with its staff leader, shall be responsible for all aspects of programs and activities which promote the proclamation of the Gospel of Jesus Christ through individuals, educational facilities, mission boards, organizations or other means both within and without the United States exclusive of the immediate involvement of the congregation of First Baptist Church of Salem.

Section 6. Property Committee

- a. The Property Committee, under the direction and authority of the Board of Elders and in partnership with its staff leader, shall be responsible for the maintenance and improvement of all aspects of the Church's property not specifically assigned to other persons or Committees required by the church to accomplish its mission of edifying, equipping and evangelizing.
- b. The Committee and its staff leader, with respect to the real and personal property of the church shall:

- 1) Be responsible for control, maintenance, improvement and safeguarding of all church real and personal property in cooperation with the Senior Pastor and the Board of Elders.
- 2) Provide for the internal and external security of the church and traffic control and security in church owned parking lots during worship and other general meetings of the church.
- 3) Maintain an up-to-date inventory of church property.
- 4) Dispose, at the Committee's discretion, non-fixed assets such as furniture, vehicles, kitchen utensils, obsolete and/or irreparable items.
- 5) Establish policies relating to and be responsible for loaning church equipment and furniture.
- 6) Establish and keep a current schedule of charges (usage fees, not rentals) for use of church property and equipment including, but not limited to:
 - a) All real property owned or controlled by the church.
 - b) All personal property owned or controlled by the church, including its vehicles, furniture, decor, equipment and other materials used to meet its mission.
- 7) Current copies of this schedule must be provided to the church office staff.

Section 7. Stewardship and Fiscal Committee

- a. The Stewardship and Fiscal Committee, under the direction and authority of the Board of Elders and in partnership with its staff leader, shall be responsible for activities and programs related to providing the funds required by the church to accomplish its mission of edifying, equipping and evangelizing.
- b. The Stewardship and Fiscal Committee and its staff leader shall:
 - 1) Promote the practice of financial stewardship throughout the church.
 - 2) Be responsible for the security of finances in every area of the church by, in cooperation with the Senior Pastor and the Board of Elders, developing and recommending appropriate policies and procedures related to the finances of the Church, subject to the bylaws of the church. The committee shall inform the Board of Elders of any violation of policies and procedures and make recommendations as to any action the Board of Elders should take.
 - 3) Recommend the annual fiscal year operating budget of the church to the Board of Elders prior to its presentation to the church membership for approval. The budget must be printed and presented to the church membership not less than two (2) weeks before the annual business meeting of the church.
 - 4) Provide for an annual audit or review of the financial recording procedures and processes of the church by an independent qualified auditor or reviewer.

- 5) Ensure that the Church Bookkeeper, or other designated person:
 - a) Follows established policies for receipt and disbursement of Church funds.
 - b) Maintains such financial records as may be directed by this committee.
 - c) Prepare a monthly financial report for the Board of Elders and an annual written financial report to the church.
- c. The Church Bookkeeper shall be an ex-officio member of the Stewardship and Fiscal Committee.

Section 8. Congregational Care

The Congregational Care Committee contributes to the church's mission of edifying, equipping and evangelizing. Its activities include, but are not limited to, congregational care, assisting people at altar calls, baptisms, communion service, visitation, church social event support and other activities that may be agreed upon or directed by the Board of Elders.

ARTICLE H – SPECIAL COMMITTEES

Section 1. This Church shall have two (2) Special Committees

- a. Nominating
- b. Senior Pastor Search

Section 2. Nominating Committee

- a. The Nominating Committee shall be comprised of the following:
 - 1) The Vice-Chairman of the Board of Elders, who shall be the Chair of the Nominating Committee.
 - 2) The Vice-Chairperson of each of the four (4) Standing Committees.
 - 3) The Nominating Committee shall elect from among its members officers as needed.
- b. The Nominating Committee shall meet upon the call of its Chairman to identify and seek qualified candidates for elective positions to be voted upon at the Annual Meeting of the Church.
 - 1) The Nominating Committee shall prepare a slate of candidates to be voted upon at the Annual Meeting of the church as follows:
 - a) The Nominating Committee, utilizing the knowledge of active ministry participants, by seeking additional information from the church membership, shall develop a list of proposed candidates.

- b) Prior to March 1 of each year, the Nominating Committee shall announce, by publication, posting or otherwise, that it is seeking nominees for the various positions to be voted upon at the next Annual Meeting. Those nominations shall be submitted to the Chair of the committee on or prior to the announced submittal date.
 - c) Candidates, other than for Elder, must be identified by the Standing or Special Committee on which they will serve if elected.
 - d) The Executive Committee of the Board of Elders shall review the list of possible candidates and the final proposed slate of candidates and may delete any possible or proposed candidate for good and sufficient cause. The Nominating Committee shall be informed of any deletions.
 - e) The Nominating Committee shall post the approved slate of proposed candidates to be voted upon at the Annual Meeting of the church not later than five (5) weeks prior to the Annual Meeting.
 - f) The final slate of candidates to be voted upon at the Annual Meeting of the church shall be posted not later than two (2) weeks prior to the Annual Meeting.
 - g) No nominations may be made from the floor at the Annual Meeting of the church, nor will write-in candidate votes be accepted.
- 2) The Nominating Committee shall be responsible for the preparation of ballots, including absentee ballots, when a secret written ballot is required. The Nominating Committee is responsible for the collection and counting of all written ballots cast and shall promptly report the results of such voting in writing to the Senior Pastor and the Chairman of the Board of Elders.
 - 3) Midterm vacancies may be filled during the election at the Annual meeting. Those individuals filling vacancies must be identified on the ballot by the Committee on which they will serve and the number of remaining term years they will be serving.

Section 3. Senior Pastor Search Committee

- a. The Senior Pastor Search Committee, comprised of the following persons, shall be formed promptly upon a vacancy in the office of Senior Pastor.
 - 1) The Chairman of the Board of Elders who shall be Chairman of the Senior Pastor Search Committee.
 - 2) The Vice-Chairman of the Board of Elders.
 - 3) Four (4) members from the membership at large to be elected by the church membership from a slate of candidates prepared by the Nominating Committee and approved by the Executive Committee of the Board of Elders.

- 4) Should a committee member need to be replaced for any reason, that member shall be replaced in the same manner that the member being replaced was selected.
 - 5) A husband and wife may not serve together on the Senior Pastor Search Committee.
- b. The Senior Pastor Search Committee, once formed, shall continue with its original membership without change even though new church officers and others may be elected during the Senior Pastor search process. If any man, not already a member of the Senior Pastor Search Committee, becomes Chairman of the Board of Elders, he shall become an ex-officio member of the Committee.
- c. The Senior Pastor Search Committee shall:
- 1) Select a Corresponding Secretary, who need not be a member of the Committee, who shall keep a record of the minutes and official correspondence. All members of the Committee and the Corresponding Secretary shall pledge not to reveal any details of the deliberations of the committee until the Committee is ready to render its unanimous recommendation to the Board of Elders as to choice of Senior Pastor. The Committee shall not disturb any candidate on his field, or make known that he is under consideration, until it has word that he is willing to consider a call if given a favorable vote by the church membership, and then only by written recommendation to the Board of Elders is the name of the candidate revealed.
 - 2) Explore thoroughly the fields of qualified men who are available for call and whose doctrinal positions are in keeping with the faith and practice of this Church. The Committee shall investigate each prospective candidate as to his spiritual, educational, and theological qualifications to serve the needs of the Church. The committee shall present the name of only one candidate at a time to the Board of Elders and only if the members of the Committee unanimously agree that the candidate is fully qualified and a desirable Senior Pastor for this church.
 - 3) Following election of a Senior Pastor by the church membership, send a letter to the Senior Pastor-elect setting forth the terms of the call approved by the Board of Elders. This letter is to be signed by the Chairman of the Board of Elders and the Secretary of the Board, with a line provided for the signature of the Senior Pastor-elect if he accepts the call.
 - 4) Make periodic progress reports to the congregation during the weekend worship service(s) and through church publications.
 - 5) Automatically be dissolved upon the call, reception, and settlement of the new Senior Pastor. The Committee is responsible for making arrangements to complete these things before disbanding.

- 6) Seal and place its records with other vital church records for three (3) years, after which time they shall be destroyed. Should the church need to seek a new Senior Pastor within the three (3) year period, the records may be given to the new Senior Pastor Search Committee.

ARTICLE I – MEETINGS

Section 1. Worship Meetings

- a. At a minimum, a Worship Service shall be held each Sunday morning unless temporarily cancelled for good cause by the Executive Committee of the Board of Elders. The Board of Elders may designate other times and places for worship, prayer, praise or Bible study.
- b. The Senior Pastor, or in his absence, the Chairman of the Board of Elders, or in his absence, the Vice-Chairman of the Board of Elders may cancel any worship service or other meetings for good cause.
- c. A communion service at which the elements of the Lord's Supper are served shall be held monthly during Sunday morning and other general public worship service(s).
- d. Baptismal services generally will be held during a public worship service of the church.

Section 2. Congregational Forums

The Board of Elders may schedule congregational forums to inform the church body of any matter including, but not limited to, proposed budgets, changes in church organization or bylaws, discipline of members, calling or involuntary termination of a Senior Pastor, building programs and purchase or sale of real property. At congregational forums members shall have the right to question those presenting information relating to the subject of the meeting and the Board of Elders shall take into account the questions and comments of the meeting participants before bringing the matter under discussion to a vote of the membership.

Section 3. Business Meetings

- a. The Annual Business Meeting of the church shall be held in June. At this meeting votes are cast for elective positions and budgets presented for approval.
- b. The financial year of the church shall be a fiscal year beginning July 1 and ending the next June 30. Terms for elective positions shall coincide with the church fiscal year.
- c. Special business meetings of the church may be called by the Board of Elders or as provided in Article A, Sections 3e and 3f provided that notice of such meeting has been given at a preceding business meeting or all regularly scheduled worship services held not less than seven (7) days before that special business meeting.

- e. Rules of Order:
- 1) Decorum and behavior at all congregational meetings shall be guided by our Membership Covenant.
 - 2) Business meetings are conducted in accordance with our Bylaws, and for any unspecified matters, we adhere to **Robert's Rules of Order Revised**.
- f. Quorums for regular and special business meetings.
- 1) The quorum for the following items of business shall be two hundred (200) active members fifteen (15) years of age and older:
 - a) When real property is to be purchased or sold or the assets of the church encumbered.
 - b) When the Senior Pastor is to be called or dismissed.
 - c) At the annual business meeting.
 - d) When any change in the Articles of Incorporation, Constitution or Bylaws of the church is to be decided.
 - 2) The quorum for all other business meetings shall be one hundred (100) active members fifteen (15) years of age and older.
- g. A secret written ballot is required for:
- 1) Church elections.
 - 2) Changes in the Articles of Incorporation, Constitution or Bylaws of the church.
 - 3) The calling or dismissal of the Senior Pastor.
 - 4) When real property is to be purchased or sold or the assets of the church encumbered.
 - 5) Approval of the Annual Budget of the church.
- h. Matters shall be decided by the following affirmative vote:
- 1) Amending the Articles of Incorporation, Constitution or Bylaws of the church, $\frac{3}{4}$ majority.
 - 2) Calling the Senior Pastor, $\frac{3}{4}$ majority.
 - 3) Dismissing the Senior Pastor, $\frac{3}{4}$ vote of confidence (the Senior Pastor must receive a $\frac{3}{4}$ majority positive vote seeking his retention. If the Senior Pastor receives less than $\frac{3}{4}$ of the vote seeking to retain him, he shall be dismissed).
 - 4) Revoking license, simple majority.
 - 5) Authorizing licensing, $\frac{3}{4}$ majority.

- 6) Ordaining a licensee, $\frac{3}{4}$ majority.
 - 7) Purchasing or selling real property or encumbering assets of the church, $\frac{2}{3}$ majority.
 - 8) Election in the event that there is a single candidate for a position requires seventy-five (75) percent favorable vote of all eligible ballots cast.
 - 9) If there are two (2) or more candidates for a position, a plurality of favorable eligible votes cast is required for election.
 - 10) If there are multiple candidates to fill more than one vacancy for identical positions, the positions shall be filled first by the candidate receiving the most favorable votes, the candidate with the second greatest number of affirmative votes next and so on until all vacant positions are filled.
 - 11) All other matters shall be decided by majority vote.
- i. Absentee Ballots:
- 1) Absentee voting shall be permitted on all decisions except votes concerning dismissal of the Senior Pastor or termination of elected members.
 - 2) Absentee ballots may be requested by any eligible voting member up to two (2) weeks in advance of the business meeting and will be accepted in signed, sealed envelopes received prior to the beginning of the applicable business meeting.

ARTICLE J – LICENSING AND ORDAINING

Section 1. Licensing

- a. The Board of Elders may recommend to the membership of the church that any qualified member in good standing be licensed pursuant to then current laws. The Board of Elders may recommend only men who satisfy the qualifications of 1 Timothy 3 and Titus 1 to be licensed to preach the Gospel of Jesus Christ. If other licenses are allowable by law, the Board of Elders shall adopt policies and procedures for recommendation of candidates for such other licenses.
- b. The license shall be granted provided three-fourth ($\frac{3}{4}$) of the members present and voting at any regular or special business meeting agree with the recommendation of the Board of Elders.
- c. The license shall be effective, unless sooner revoked, until such time as the licensee is dismissed from the membership of this church.

Section 2. Ordaining

- a. The Board of Elders may recommend to the membership of the church that an Ordination Council be convened to examine the qualifications of a licensed preacher who, in the judgment of the board of Elders, possesses the scriptural qualifications and training for ordination.

- c. The church shall convene an Ordination Council provided three-fourths (3/4) of the members present and voting at any regular or special business meeting agree with the recommendation of the Board of Elders.
- d. Upon receiving a favorable report from the Ordination Council, the church shall proceed with the ordination service.

ARTICLE K – AMENDMENTS

The Bylaws may be amended by a three-fourths (3/4) favorable vote of qualified church members present and voting at any regular or special business meeting provided that such amendments have been provided in writing to the membership not less than thirty (30) days prior to the meeting at which the vote is cast.

Exhibit 1

ELDERS AND DEACONS/DEACONESSES

TWO OFFICES IN THE LOCAL CHURCH

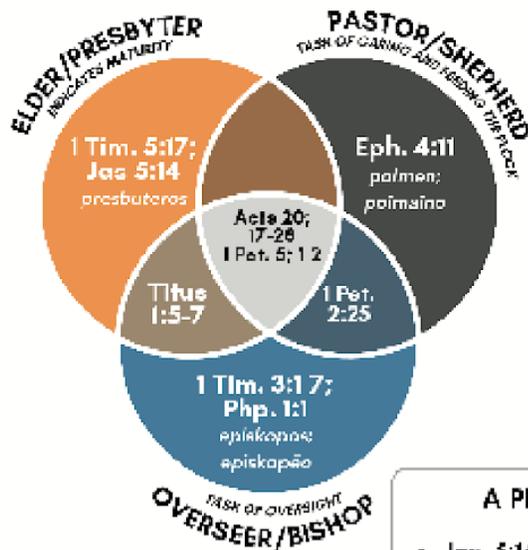
“To all the saints in Christ Jesus who are at Philippi, with the overseers and deacons.” (Php. 1:1)

“If anyone aspires to the office of overseer, ... Deacons likewise must be...” (1 Tim. 3:1, 8)

1. ELDERS (ALSO CALLED PASTORS & OVERSEERS*)

**from the Greek episkopos, translated as “bishop” in KJV*

THREE TERMS FOR ONE OFFICE



QUALIFICATIONS:

- Mature, blameless character and behavior
 - “Able to teach”
- 1 Tim. 3:1-7; Titus 1:5-9

APPOINTMENT:

- Tested first; not a quick process
- 1 Tim 5:22; cf. 1 Tim 3:10
- Ordained
- 1 Tim. 4:14; cf. Acts 6:6

DUTIES:

- “Rule” the church
- Provide spiritual oversight
- Teach and Preach

1 Tim. 5:17; 4:16; 1 Pet. 5:2; 2 Tim. 4:2

A PLURALITY OF ELDERS WITH A SENIOR PASTOR

- Jas. 5:14, “call for the elders [plural] of the church”; cf. Acts 20:17; Php. 1:1; Titus 1:5
- Paul addresses Timothy as lead pastor in Ephesus; 1 Tim. 1:2

2. DEACONS/DEACONESSES

**from diakonos, the Greek word for “servant”; deacons/deaconesses are exemplary servants*

QUALIFICATIONS:

- Mature, blameless, wise
- 1 Tim. 3:8-13; Acts 6:3

APPOINTMENT:

- Tested first; 1 Tim 3:10

DUTIES:

- Assist the elders
- Acts 6:1-7
- Care for church’s temporal needs
 - Labor as a servant of those in need

POSITIONS:

- 1 Finance Committee
- 2 Property Team
- 3 Global Missions Board
- 4 Congregational Care Team

A PLURALITY OF DEACONS/DEACONESSES SERVING UNDER THE ELDERS

- Php. 1:1, “deacons” [plural]; cf., Acts 6:3; e.g., Rom 16:1

Bible Study on 1 Timothy 3:1–13 and Titus 1:5–9

1. There are _____ clearly defined offices in the local church: (1) overseer and (2) deacon.

- 1 Timothy 3:1–2, 8: “the *office of overseer** ... an overseer must be ... *Deacons likewise* must be ...”
- Cf. Philippians 1:1: “To all the saints in Christ Jesus who are at Philippi, with the *overseers* and *deacons*.”

*The King James Version translates this as “bishop”; the Greek word *episkopos* literally means “above looking” or overseeing.

2. Overseers are also called _____ and pastors (*elder* is by far the most common term in the NT).

- Titus 1:5, 7: “appoint *elders* in every town ... an *overseer*, as God’s steward, must be above reproach”
- Cf. Acts 20:17, 28: Paul “called the *elders* of the church” and said to them “the Holy Spirit has made you *overseers*, to *care for* [literally, ‘shepherd’ or ‘pastor’] the church of God.”
- Cf. 1 Peter 5:1–2: “I exhort the *elders* among you, ... *shepherd* [pastor] the flock of God that is among you, exercising *oversight*.”
- John Wesley explained, “Bishops [overseers] and Presbyters* [elders] are of the same order” (*Sunday Service*).
- Every elder is a pastor—a *real* pastor. Every pastor, including the Senior Pastor, is an elder.

*Elders are also called presbyters (from *presbuteros*, the Greek word translated as “elder”).

3. A person must be _____ by the God-given qualifications before being appointed to an office.

- 1 Timothy 3:10, “let them also be tested first; then let them serve as deacons if they prove themselves blameless” (cf. 1 Tim. 5:22, “do not be hasty in the laying on of hands”).
- Becoming an elder or deacon is not a quick process; it involves *testing* or *examination*.

4. Both elders and deacons must have _____ character and behavior in every area of life.

- The qualifications for both offices focus on personal holiness and spiritual maturity (cf. Acts 6:3).
- Giftedness, ability, and intellect are important, but not nearly as important as godliness, integrity, and wisdom.

5. What distinguishes elders is that they must be “_____ to teach” or “skillful in teaching” (elders are the church’s teaching officers).

- 1 Timothy 3:2, “an overseer must be ... able to teach” (NASB, “skillful in teaching”).
- Cf. Titus 1:9, “able to give instruction in sound doctrine and also to rebuke those who contradict it.”
- Cf. 1 Timothy 5:17, “Let the elders who rule well be considered worthy of double honor, especially those who labor in preaching and teaching.”
- A Senior Pastor may be appointed to have the regular, primary role of public preaching and teaching, but every elder must be able to teach and shares responsibility for speaking God’s word and promoting sound doctrine.

6. Deacons _____ the elders with the church’s temporal needs so that the elders can more fully devote their time to prayer and teaching.

- Deacons are listed after the elders because they have a secondary, supportive role.
- The Greek word translated as deacon (*diakonos*) literally means “servant” and is often translated that way.
- Cf. Acts 6, seven people are ordained to “serve tables” (*diakoneō*)—that is, distribute funds to the widows—so that the church’s teaching officers can “devote ourselves to prayer and to the ministry of the word” (Acts 6:4).

7. A local church is to be led by a _____ (think “team”) of qualified elders and deacons.

- Cf. Titus 1:5, “appoint elders [plural]”; cf. James 5:14; Acts 20:17; Philippians 1:2.
- No one should pastor alone. God has ordained for his church to be led by a pastoral team assisted by deacons.

ANSWERS: 1. TWO; 2. ELDERS; 3. TESTED; 4. BLAMELESS; 5. ABLE; 6. ASSIST; 7. PLURALITY

EXHIBIT 2 – DECLARATION OF FAITH

THE WORD OF GOD – We believe the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments are the inspired Word of God, inerrant in the original writings, complete as the revelation of God’s will for salvation, and the supreme authority in all matters to which they speak.

2 Tim. 3:15; 2 Peter 1:20-21; 2 Tim. 1:13; Ps. 119:105, 12:6; Prov. 30:5

THE TRINITY – We believe in one God, Creator and Sustainer of all things, eternally existing in three persons - Father, Son and Holy Spirit; that these are equal in every divine perfection and that they execute distinct but harmonious offices in the work of creation, providence and redemption.

GOD THE FATHER – We believe in God the Father—an infinite, personal Spirit, perfect in holiness, wisdom, power and love. We believe He concerns Himself mercifully in the affairs of men, that He hears and answers prayer, and that He saves from sin and death all who come to Him through Jesus Christ.

Genesis 12:1,26,27; Psalm 90:2; Matthew 28:19; 1 Peter 1:2; 2 Cor. 13:14

JESUS CHRIST – We believe that Jesus Christ is God’s eternal Son, and has precisely the same nature, attributes and perfections as God the Father and God the Holy Spirit. We believe further that He is not only true God, but true man, conceived by the Holy Spirit and born of the virgin Mary. We also believe in His sinless life, His substitutionary atonement, His bodily resurrection from the dead, His ascension into Heaven, His priestly intercession on behalf of His people, and His personal visible, pre-millennial and imminent return from Heaven.

Matt. 1:22-23; Isa.9:6; John 1:1-5; 14:10-30; Heb. 4:14-15; 1 Cor. 15:3-4; Rom. 1:3-4; Acts 1:9-11; 1 Tim. 6:14-15; Titus 2:13

HOLY SPIRIT – We believe in the Holy Spirit, His personality, and His work in regeneration, sanctification and preservation. His ministry is to glorify the Lord Jesus Christ, to implement Christ’s work of redeeming the lost and to empower the believer for godly living and service.

2 Cor. 3:17; John 16:7-13, 14:16-17; Acts 1:8; 1 Cor. 2:12, 3:16; Eph. 1:13; Gal. 5:25; Eph. 5:18

MAN – We believe God created man—male and female—in the image of God and free from sin. We further believe that man became and is now a sinner by nature and choice and is therefore spiritually dead. We also believe that the Holy Spirit regenerates those who repent of sin and trust Jesus Christ as Savior.

Gen. 1:27; Ps. 8:3-6; Isa.53:6a; Rom. 3:23; Isa. 59:1-2

SALVATION – We believe in salvation by grace through faith in Jesus Christ. We further believe that this salvation is based upon the sovereign grace of God and was purchased by Christ on the cross, and is received by man through faith, apart from any human merit, works or ritual. We believe on the basis of John Chapter 10 and Romans Chapter 8, that this salvation once experienced by the individual is eternally secure.

Rom. 6:23; Eph. 2:8-9; John 14:6, 1:12; Titus 3:5; Gal. 3:26; Rom. 5:1

THE CHURCH – We believe that the Church is the spiritual body of which Christ is the head. We believe that the true Church is composed of all persons who through saving faith in Jesus Christ have been regenerated by the Holy Spirit. We believe that this body expresses itself in local assemblies whose members have been immersed upon a credible confession of faith and have associated themselves for worship, for instruction, for evangelism and for service. We believe that the two ordinances of the local church are believer's baptism by immersion and the Lord's Supper.

SEPARATION OF CHURCH AND STATE – We believe that each local church is self-governing in function and must be free from interference by any ecclesiastical or political authority. We further believe that every human being is directly responsible to God in matters of faith and life and that each should be free to worship God according to the dictates of his conscience.

CHRISTIAN CONDUCT – We believe that the supreme task of every believer is to glorify God in his life; that his conduct should be blameless before the world; that he should be a faithful steward of his possessions; and that he should seek to realize for himself the full stature of maturity in Christ.

I Cor. 3:9-15; II Cor. 5:9-11

ETERNITY – We believe in the bodily resurrection of the saved and the lost, the eternal existence of all men in Heaven or Hell, in divine judgments, rewards and punishments.

John 3:16; 14:17; Rom. 6:23; 8:17-18; Rev. 20:15; I Cor. 2:7-9

EXHIBIT 3

Membership Covenant

What it means to be a member of Salem First Baptist

Having been led by the Spirit of God, I have received the Lord Jesus Christ as my Savior. I have publicly confessed my faith by word and in baptism. I subscribe to the Declaration of Faith of SFB and do now, with other members of this church, as one body in Christ state my purpose and desire as a member.

1. To walk lovingly and humbly with my brothers and sisters; to pray for them and to separate myself from worldly and unchristian practices (John 13:35; Titus 2:12).
2. To pray for the advancement of SFB in knowledge, spiritual growth and fruitfulness (I Peter 3:15).
3. To give cheerfully, as God provides, for the support of the mission of SFB (2 Corinthians 9:6, 7).
4. To serve faithfully as God directs according to my spiritual gifts and abilities taking care to assume only such duties as can be effectively performed (Romans 12:4-8).
5. To maintain a strong commitment to the sanctity of marriage; and if married, to pursue a healthy marital relationship both monogamous and heterosexual, as partners in life and ministry before God (I Corinthians 7:1-6; Ephesians 6:1-4).
6. To endeavor by my example, effort and word to point people to Christ, and to do my part in building them up in the faith (Luke 15; Matthew 28:19-20).
7. To endeavor to understand and appreciate my fellow members in the church especially those who may have personalities, ministries and backgrounds different from mine. To submit to the teaching of Scripture regarding matters of discipline when differences arise. (John 17; Matthew 18:15-20)
8. To follow the Bible as my rule of faith and practice, endeavoring to put into practice those Scriptures relating to our church as the local Body of Christ; to remove myself from church membership if, at any time, supported by Scripture, I find myself in irreconcilable disagreement with the bylaws and/or philosophy of ministry of our church as supported by Scripture.

Signed:

Name

Date