

CONSTITUTION

As adopted March 13, 2024

**First Baptist Church
Maple at Washington Street
Downers Grove, IL 60515**

HISTORY

First Baptist Church of Downers Grove

On August 5, 1851, a group of 17 Christians assembled for the purpose of organizing a Baptist church in Downers Grove. They adopted articles of faith and a covenant and called G. F. Holt to be the first pastor. Meetings were held in a schoolhouse located on West Maple Avenue at Dunham Road. The church was first called "The First Baptist Church and Society."

By the spring of 1853 the membership had increased to 52, some of whom had been baptized in mid-winter in the St. Joe River. Land at 929 Maple Avenue was given to the church by Samuel Curtiss in January, 1854. A new church building was constructed on the land by the men of the church at a cost of about \$1,200.

Fire destroyed the church building in May 1871 and the membership, then numbering 90, launched another building program. In March, 1872 the church celebrated the dedication of their new building which had been built without incurring any debt. In 1906, this 34-year-old building was remodeled including relocating the entrance and steeple from the front to the side. The church took the name "First Baptist Church of Downers Grove" in 1902.

The needs of a growing membership resulted in the construction in 1925 of the annex behind the church building. A year later the parsonage at 5240 Washington Street was completed. To provide more rooms for Bible School expansion, in 1938 the men of the church excavated underneath the church building with pick, shovel and wheelbarrow. The rooms were finally completed 10 years later, through the persistence of a trustee, H. C. McMahan. The sanctuary of the 88-year-old building was remodeled in 1960 to provide a Bible School assembly room and adjacent classrooms.

As the membership grew, the seating capacity was often inadequate for the worship service congregations. A building program was launched to construct a larger sanctuary on the adjacent corner of Maple Avenue and Washington Street. Church member Fred H. Greil was appointed architect. Ground was broken in March, 1956, with dedication of the new building on August 12, 1957.

A long-standing dream had been the erection of a new building to connect the existing edifices and provide modern facilities for Bible School and parlors for church gatherings. This was accomplished in September of 1969 with the dedication of the W. Hamilton Sinclair Education Building. Rev. Sinclair retired as Senior Pastor in 1975 after 45 years of service to this church. He was then appointed as Pastor Emeritus.

Enrollment began for a Christian pre-school in 1970. As the church and the community saw the need for a Christ-centered education for their children, the school grew, adding additional grades year by year. Now called "Downers Grove Christian School," the student body numbers nearly 200 students in the preschool through grade eight and serves both as a base for Christian education and as a missionary outreach to the surrounding communities.

CONSTITUTION
Of
First Baptist Church of Downers Grove
As adopted November 12, 2023

The First Baptist Church of Downers Grove is a local church, a called out body of believers, that believes that the church exists to exalt the Lord Jesus Christ, to spread the Gospel for the salvation of our fellow men and women, and to further the believer's growth in grace. This church is an independent Baptist church, organized under the laws of the State of Illinois, and is governed solely by this constitution and the church's Statement of Faith.

EXALTATION — The Church Exists for Christ

We begin with the recognition that we do not belong to ourselves; we have been purchased by the death of Jesus Christ and He alone is Lord. Enthroned with all authority, He is the Head of the Church, the One to whom our entire allegiance is due. We thus should seek in all things to follow His will as revealed in the Bible and bring glory to His name (Philippians 2:8-11, Colossians 1:18).

EVANGELISM — The Church Exists for Proclamation

We believe we have a commission to proclaim the gospel. Our desire is to share as widely and effectively as possible the Good News of God's forgiveness in Christ. God equips and calls all believers into a variety of vocations and ministries, and within that context they are to be witnesses by word and deed to the Lord Jesus Christ. God offers His love to all without distinction, and He is concerned that believers achieve their full potential in Christ. The proclamation of the Gospel should be accompanied by genuine love and concern for all and for the whole person (Matthew 28:19-20, Mark 12:29-31).

EDIFICATION — The Church Exists for Itself.

We believe that one of the goals of the Church must be the life-transformation of its members. This requires a strong program of Bible teaching, discipleship and personal evangelism. Church members are to be committed one to another in fellowship and worship. We are a body composed of interdependent members, each having received from the Holy Spirit gifts to be exercised for the upbuilding of the whole body and for the bearing of one another's spiritual and temporal burdens. We thus desire to encourage in one another the development and use of each other's abilities, knowing that "the whole body, joined and held together by every supporting ligament, grows and builds itself up in love, as each part does its work." (Ephesians 4:16, NIV 2011)

BAPTIST DISTINCTIVES

As a historic Independent Baptist local church, we hold these beliefs as distinctive:

- We believe that the Bible, the 66 books that make up the Old and the New Testament, is our final authority for faith and practice.
- We believe in both the autonomy of the local church and the congregational rule thereof.
- We believe that believer's baptism and the Lord's Supper are the only two ordinances of the local church.
- We believe in separation, both of church and state and the separation of the believer from the world.
- We believe in the priesthood of the believer.
- We believe that each believer has soul liberty.
- We believe there are only two Biblically required offices in the local church: Pastor and Deacon.
- We believe in a regenerate church membership.

MEMBERSHIP

Qualifications

Membership at First Baptist Church is open to anyone 18 years of age or older, who professes faith in Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior, is in full agreement with the church's Statement of Faith, and has been baptized after salvation. We believe that baptism by immersion of the believer is the most accurate picture of what Baptism entails and will baptize only in that manner. Exceptions to the mode of Baptism will be considered on a case by case basis by the Deacon Board. We will consider for membership those who have, after salvation, been baptized as a believer by some other mode (affusion, aspersion).

How to become a member

1. Persons desiring church membership should contact one of the pastoral staff or one of the Deacons.
2. They will attend a membership class taught by the Lead Pastor or by someone designated by the Lead Pastor or the Deacon Board. The purpose of the class is to become familiar with First Baptist Church and its ministries, its Statement of Faith, and this constitution.
3. Upon completion of the membership class, they will be interviewed by two Deacons concerning their personal Christian Faith.
4. Upon the approval of the two deacons, they will be approved for church membership by a majority vote of the Deacon Board.
5. They will publicly affirm their membership decision at the first convenient service thereafter and will be received into the church.

Members are expected to:

- Be faithful in prayer (Romans 12:12).
- Share with the Lord's people who are in need, practice hospitality (Romans 12:13).
- Serve one another humbly in love (Galatians 5:13).
- Make every effort to keep the unity of the Spirit (Ephesians 4:3).
- Value others above themselves (Philippians 2:3).
- Have confidence in their leaders and submit to their authority (Hebrews 13:17).
- Use their gifts to serve others (1 Peter 4:10).
- Walk in truth and light and thus maintain fellowship (1 John 1:6-7).
- Assume financial responsibility for the total ministry of the church according to one's gift and ability (II Corinthians 9:1-15).
- Be willing to resolve disagreements with others in accordance with 1 Corinthians 6:1-6 and Matthew 18:15-17 and in conjunction with Romans 14:19.

Removal of Members

Any member habitually absent from the regular services of the church during a period of two years without legitimate reason (e.g., extended illness, deployment) and, after failure of efforts to restore him or her to active involvement, shall by majority vote of the Deacons, to be taken at a regularly scheduled meeting of the board, be removed from the church roll, and if it seems necessary, be sent an official letter of dismissal. Deacons shall review the rolls annually. These former members do not have the right to vote, to hold office, or to teach after they have been notified by letter of their status from the Deacon Board.

Church Discipline

In case of persistent misconduct by a member of the church, the Pastor and/or Deacons shall counsel with the member concerned in order to help that person to repentance and to restoration (Matthew 18:15-17, Galatians 6:1). Should such counsel be ignored or rejected, membership shall be terminated and fellowship broken off by a majority vote of the Deacon Board. If the member repents, the Deacons, upon a majority vote in favor, shall restore him or her. This vote should take place at a regularly scheduled meeting of the board.

MINISTERING STAFF

Lead Pastor

First Baptist Church believes that words translated in the New Testament as Pastor, Bishop, Elder and Overseer are three different ways to refer to the same office. The person holding this position is referred to as the Lead Pastor of the church.

1. The Lead Pastor shall be the spiritual leader and coordinator of all spiritual activities of the church. The thrust of his prayer, visitation, teaching, and Bible preaching shall be to edify the saints and evangelize the lost. He shall normally preach the Word of God at regular church services and administer the ordinances of Baptism and the Lord's Supper. He shall maintain, along with the Deacon Board, church discipline among the membership. The qualifications for a Lead Pastor, at a minimum, should include those listed in 1 Timothy 3:1-7; Titus 1:6-9; 1 Peter 5:1-4; and Acts 20:28.
2. The Lead Pastor shall be a voting member of the Deacon Board and a nonvoting member of all other committees. He shall be the executive administrator, directing and coordinating the work of the church staff.
3. The Lead Pastor and his wife, if married, shall automatically become members of the First Baptist Church of Downers Grove upon his installation as Pastor.

Call of the Lead Pastor

1. Upon determining the need for a new Lead Pastor, a Pastoral Search committee shall be formed by the Deacon Board from among the members of the church. The committee shall include no fewer than one-half ($\frac{1}{2}$) of the Deacon Board. The Deacon Board shall also appoint to the committee an equal number of non-Deacon members. The total number of members shall be, at a minimum, six.
2. The Pastor shall be chosen by written ballot at a constitutionally-called business meeting. At least sixty (60) members or 25% of the membership (whichever is less) shall constitute a quorum for this purpose. An affirmative vote by three fourths ($\frac{3}{4}$) of the ballots cast shall be needed to extend a call. Members physically unable to attend the business meeting may vote by absentee ballot. The absentee ballots must be received by the Church Clerk prior to the start of the meeting.

Dismissal of a Lead Pastor

A majority vote by the Deacon Board or a petition signed and presented to the Deacon Board by at least fifty percent (50%) of the members of the church will suggest that the ministry of the Lead Pastor may be completed. Upon completion of that vote or receipt of the petition, the Deacon Board shall call a special business meeting. At least sixty (60) members or 25% of the membership, whichever number is less, shall constitute a quorum for this purpose. The Moderator shall call for a vote of confidence by written ballot without public discussion. A majority affirmative vote of the members present shall be necessary to give a vote of confidence which shall mean continuance of the ministry of the Pastor. Should the vote of confidence not be sustained, this fact shall be due notice to the Pastor that his term of office is to cease at a time not more than three months later. However, the Deacon Board has the authority to terminate the Pastor's ministry at any time within the three-month period should the Board deem it to be in the best interest of the church.

Assistants to the Lead Pastor

1. The Lead Pastor, as needed, shall suggest to the Deacon Board the need for assistants (including, but not limited to, Assistant, Associate, Worship, or Youth Pastors) for the work of the ministry of First Baptist Church. Upon the approval of the Deacon Board, the title, duties, responsibilities and qualifications of positions to be filled by these assistants to the Lead Pastor shall be presented in detail to the church membership at a constitutionally-called business meeting. At least sixty (60) members or 25% of the membership (whichever is less) shall constitute a quorum for this purpose. An affirmative vote by three-fourths (3/4) of the ballots cast shall constitute approval of the position. The Lead Pastor shall then recommend to the Deacon Board those of his choice to fill these positions. The Lead Pastor can delegate this process to a Search Committee if desired. The Deacon Board can then choose to investigate the recommended candidates. An affirmative vote by three-fourths (3/4) of the Deacon Board shall constitute a call and/or pursuit of someone to fill the decided position.

2. Assistants to the Lead Pastor shall be voting members of all committees concerned with work in their respective areas. An assistant to the Lead Pastor may be dismissed by a majority vote of the Deacon Board.

3. Beyond any basic job function related qualifications, any assistant to the Lead Pastor should, at a minimum, meet the criteria listed in 1 Timothy 3:1-7; Titus 1:6-9; 1 Peter 5:1-4; and Acts 20:28.

Resignation

Should a member of the ministering staff (i.e., Pastor or his assistants as noted above) decide to resign, a letter of resignation giving at least thirty (30) days notice is requested. The Lead Pastor shall address his resignation to the Deacon Board; others shall address theirs to the Lead Pastor. The thirty days (30) or any part thereof may be waived by the Deacon Board should it seem in the best interest of the church. Severance pay for the Lead Pastor or assistants to the Pastor shall be determined by majority vote of the Deacon Board.

CONGREGATIONAL GOVERNMENT/AUTHORITY

The government of the church is vested in its membership and shall be administered through a Deacon Board, men chosen from, elected by, and responsible to the membership. All actions of the Deacon Board shall be subject to review by the membership at any constitutionally-called business meeting.

The Deacon Board shall consist of the Lead Pastor and one Deacon elected for every twenty five to fifty members. Each year, as need arises, the existing Deacon Board shall review names of eligible members to fill any anticipated openings in the board. The Deacon Board shall choose a sufficient number of candidates and present those individuals to the congregation at the appropriate meeting. Deacons will not normally be chosen for partial terms.

A man is qualified for election to the office of Deacon only as he lives his life in accordance with the scriptural qualifications stated in Titus 1:6-9; 1 Timothy 3:8-13; and 1 Peter 5:1-3. Beyond this, each member of the Deacon Board shall have been a member of this church for one (1) year or more. The Deacon Board shall elect a Chairman, Vice Chairman, Secretary, and Assistant Secretary annually at its first meeting after the annual election. This meeting will be chaired by the present year's Chairman or his designee to complete the election process. The term of office of a deacon shall be for three (3) years. The terms of office shall expire so that one-third (1/3) of the offices become vacant each year. A deacon completing two (2) consecutive terms totaling five (5) years or more shall not be eligible to succeed himself.

The Deacon Board, as the elected representatives of the congregation, shall have oversight of all the members, committees, and organizations inside the First Baptist Church and of relationships with other churches and organizations outside the church.

The Deacon Board shall have supervision over all legal and fiscal affairs of the church with power to act, including the incurrence of necessary cost not to exceed three percent (3%) of the annual church General Fund budget. The Deacon Board cannot encumber the church with loan, transfer, sale, or purchase of real estate except by authorization conveyed through a majority vote, expressed by written ballot, of the membership present at a constitutionally-called business meeting of at least sixty (60) members or 25% of the membership of the church, whichever number is less. The Deacon Board shall consider suggestions, recommendations, and grievances of any member or organization of the church. All standing committees are under the supervision of, and are responsible to, the Deacon Board. The Deacon Board shall annually review the membership roll and confirm those members that are active and remove those who are not.

The Deacon Board, along with the Lead Pastor, is responsible for supervising the adult Christian Education programs of the church, including but not limited to Adult Sunday School, Small Groups, and Adult Bible studies (excepting those supervised by the Deaconess committee).

Regular Deacon Board meetings shall be held at least once a month, at a time decided by a majority vote of the board and made public by the church. Special meetings may be called by the chairperson or by any three (3) members of the Deacon Board. Two-thirds (2/3) of the Deacon Board shall constitute a quorum. Except as otherwise noted in this constitution, official action shall require at least three-fourths (3/4) affirmative vote of those members present.

The Deacon Board shall call congregational meetings to recommend actions requiring a vote by the membership and/or to receive advice or instructions. The Deacon Board may remove any appointed officer or discharge any committee it has appointed, when by a three-fourths (3/4) vote of the total membership of the Board, such action shall be deemed to be in the best interest of the church. As part of the normal yearly budgeting process, the Deacon Board shall review all church salaries.

COMMITTEES

The Deacon Board shall have the power to appoint such special committees as it deems necessary, and it shall carry on its work through the standing committees listed below. The chairperson of these standing committees must be approved by the Deacon Board.

Each committee will have a Deacon representative who will act as a liaison between the Deacon Board and the committee. However, except for the exceptions noted below, the Deacon representative should not be considered a member of the committee for the purposes of voting or achieving a quorum.

Unless otherwise noted, all committee members are elected for two-year terms. Vacancies in offices may be filled for the remainder of the term by appointment of the Deacons and with approval of the congregation.

Nominating Committee

The Nominating Committee shall have at a minimum five (5) members consisting of the Lead Pastor, the chairperson of the Deacon Board, one additional Deacon selected by the Deacon Board, and two individuals in good standing and of a good report selected from the congregation (this selection to be made by the previous year's Nominating Committee).

The Nominating Committee is responsible for recommending to the Deacon Board and the congregation for election at the specified meeting a list of applicants to fill the vacancies for the members and committees noted below. Candidate names are obtained from multiple sources, including but not limited to the Nominating Committee's own contacts as well as pastoral and congregational recommendations. Each committee will choose its own Chairperson, subject to the approval of the Deacon Board.

Deaconess Committee

The Deaconess Committee shall consist of at least five (5) members, elected to a two-year term, and one (1) appointed Deacon representative. At the first meeting of the fiscal year, a Chairperson shall be elected. The Deaconess Committee shall minister to women by means of prayer, discipleship, women's Bible studies and various other activities. The Committee shall be responsible for hospital and wellness visits to women as needed, communion setup and coordination, and assistance with female candidates during baptismal services. The Chairperson shall report to the Deacon Board through the assigned Deacon as needed.

Local Outreach Committee

The Local Outreach Committee shall consist of at least four (4) elected church members, one (1) appointed Deacon representative and one (1) appointed Deaconess. This committee shall further the Great Commission, as found in Matthew 28:19-20, by assisting the Deacon Board in training and providing members of the congregation with tools and materials to accomplish the First Baptist Church goals for evangelism and discipleship. This committee shall raise awareness of First Baptist Church within Downers Grove, IL, and surrounding communities by facilitating church members' participation in and organization of local community events and service projects. This committee may also aid in visitation and discipleship as directed by the Deacon Board.

Global Outreach Committee

The Global Outreach Committee shall consist of five (5) or more members from the church, including one (1) appointed Deacon representative. The committee shall appoint a Missionary Treasurer. The committee shall be responsible for the missionary outreach of the church and for promoting, organizing, and coordinating all missionary activities. It shall make recommendations to the Deacon Board of all changes in the makeup of supported missionaries, plan the Missions Conference, and seek to enlist the entire membership in personal involvement in the global outreach program in the U.S. and abroad. It shall be aware of the goals and works of the missionaries. This committee, in cooperation with the Finance Committee, will recommend the annual missionary budget to the church. The Global Outreach Committee is responsible for the management of the Missionary Fund of the church.

Worship Arts Committee

The Worship Arts Committee shall consist of at least five (5) members, including the Worship Pastor/Director, and one appointed (1) Deacon representative. This committee shall be responsible for assisting the Worship Pastor/Director in the planning of worship services. It shall make recommendations for the direction of the worship services and the Worship Arts Department, keeping in mind the spiritual aspects of musical endeavors. The committee shall meet at least once a month.

Trustee Committee

The Trustee Committee shall consist of at least eight (8) members and one (1) appointed Deacon representative. Each member's term shall be for no more than three (3) years. The terms of office shall expire so that one-third (1/3) of the offices become vacant each year. A Trustee completing three (3) consecutive terms totaling at least eight (8) years is not eligible to succeed himself.

The Trustees have jurisdiction over all real and personal property of the church. This would include physical needs in the church, its buildings, properties, possessions, vehicles, and other items which require maintenance, upkeep or replacement.

In discharging this responsibility, the Trustee Committee has authority to incur the necessary costs including any non-budgeted transaction costing less than three percent (3%) of the annual church General Fund budget, except that it shall not encumber the church with loan transfer, sale, or purchase of real estate except through a majority vote of the membership present at a constitutionally-called meeting consisting of at least sixty (60) members or 25% of the membership of the church, whichever number is less.

The Chairperson of the Trustee Committee shall be the President of the Corporation.

Finance Committee

The Finance Committee consists of one (1) Deacon, one (1) Trustee, the General Fund Treasurer, the Financial Secretary, and one (1) representative of the Global Outreach Committee.

The committee members shall be identified the first month after committee elections and serve for a one-year term during the following fiscal year. They shall meet during the first month of the fiscal year and elect a Chairperson.

The Finance Committee is charged with the responsibility of directing the financial program of the church and its affiliated organizations, with the exception of the Downers Grove Christian School.

The Finance Committee shall annually prepare a General Fund budget. The proposed budget shall become effective after adoption by the Deacon Board and ratification by the church at the March general business meeting as noted below. A change in the amount approved may be made by a positive two-thirds (2/3) vote of the members present at a general or special business meeting.

The Finance Committee shall supervise investments as well as the disbursements of funds.

Children's Christian Education Committee

The Children's Christian Education Committee shall consist of at least six (6) members and one appointed Deacon representative, the Children's Christian Education Director, and/or the Youth Pastor.

This committee shall oversee, coordinate, and promote the children's educational ministries of the church. In cooperation with the Deacon Board and Pastoral staff, they shall evaluate the quality and doctrinal soundness of materials used.

This committee is responsible for childcare (i.e., nursery) during scheduled First Baptist Church activities. They shall approve and appoint workers and teachers as needed. They shall be responsible for the training and encouragement of those working in the educational ministry of the church, except for the Downers Grove Christian School.

Christian School Committee

The Christian School Committee is responsible for the operation of The Downers Grove Christian School, which is a ministry of First Baptist Church. The Christian School Committee is commonly referred to as the Downers Grove Christian School Board. They are one and the same organization.

The Downers Grove Christian School Committee consists of the Christian School Principal, at least one (1) appointed Deacon representative, and at least five (5) church members. Given its unique ministry, the Downers Grove Christian School Committee can consider for membership such persons who are active school parents that may not be members of First Baptist Church to fill no more than two (2) seats on the committee. The Downers Grove Christian School Committee shall be responsible for the work of the Downers Grove Christian School and will be responsible for overseeing the operations of the school including the school budget, programs, school staff salaries, recruitment policies, curriculum, and other areas which pertain to the operation and function of the school.

Social Committee

The Social Committee shall consist of at least five (5) members, elected to a two-year term, and one (1) appointed Deacon representative.

An organizational meeting shall be called by the incumbent Chairperson within two weeks of election to elect a Chairperson and Vice Chairperson for the ensuing year and to otherwise organize as the needs dictate. Additional meetings shall be held as frequently as needed to punctually fulfill the functions of the committee. The Chairperson shall report to the Deacon Board monthly through the assigned Deacon.

The functions of the Social Committee include, but are not limited to:

1. Offering suggestions for the yearly social calendar for church-wide functions. Creative ideas are encouraged for the edification of the entire body.
2. Managing the provision and serving of food for occasions such as fellowships, farewells, and special banquets.
3. Providing, having custody of, and maintaining the dishes, utensils, towels, etc. for the kitchen.

SUPPORTING OFFICERS

The supporting officers of the church shall consist of the Moderator, Clerk, Financial Secretary, General Fund Treasurer, and Head Usher. All supporting officers must have been a church member for at least six (6) months except where otherwise noted.

The supporting officers shall serve under the guidance of the Pastor(s) and Deacons and shall regularly consult with them concerning their respective ministries. The supporting officers, that is those persons holding these offices, shall be responsible for annual and quarterly reports and projections of goals from their areas of ministry.

Moderator

The Moderator shall preside at all church business meetings. In the absence of the Moderator, the Lead Pastor or Chairman of the Deacon Board will preside. The Moderator shall be elected for a two-year term.

Clerk

The Clerk shall keep records of all church business meetings and make official reports of all acts of the church at the next business meeting. The Clerk shall keep a register of baptisms and members and shall conduct the membership correspondence of the church as directed. The Clerk shall be elected for a two-year term.

Financial Secretary

The Financial Secretary shall receive and make a record of all monies received by First Baptist Church, excepting those designated for DGCS. The Financial Secretary shall record the source of all funds received and the purpose for which they were contributed. The Financial Secretary shall be elected for a two-year term.

General Fund Treasurer

The Treasurer shall oversee the recording of all General Fund monies received by the church. The Treasurer shall have custody of the same and shall oversee payment of all legitimate bills of the church. He or she shall give reports of all General Fund monies received and disbursed at the regular business meetings of the church and to the monthly meetings of the Deacons. The Treasurer shall meet with the Deacons as requested. The Treasurer shall be elected for a two-year term.

Head Usher

The Head Usher shall be responsible for the orderly entrance, exit and comfort of the congregation, receiving the offerings, and keeping the attendance records. The Head Usher shall be elected for a two-year term.

Supporting officer vacancies may be filled for the remainder of the term by appointment of the Deacons and with approval of the church members. Assistants to the above positions may be filled by appointment of the Deacons.

CONGREGATIONAL BUSINESS MEETINGS

General Business Meetings

The First Baptist Church has three regularly scheduled business meetings each year, on the second Wednesday of March and May and on the second Sunday of November or as close to those dates as is practicable. In the conduct of business meetings, any parliamentary questions not resolved by this constitution shall ordinarily be resolved in conformity with the latest edition of Robert's Rules of Order. All votes by the members at business meetings shall be conducted using private paper ballots. Business not involving the status of the organization, the election or dismissal of a Pastor, or the transfer or mortgaging of property may be conducted at any regular business meeting of the church provided that the meeting is attended by the required quorum.

Annual Election

The general business meeting held in March will include the election of officers and committees as well as the approval of the annual budget.

Annual Reports

The general business meeting held in May will include the reception of annual reports, the approval of the Christian School Committee budget, and the transaction of general church business.

Fiscal Year: The fiscal year of the church shall begin April 1.

Special Business Meetings

A special business meeting of the church may be called by the Pastor, Deacons, or any twenty five (25) members, provided that notice stating the exact time, place, and nature of the proposed business shall have been given to the membership by notice in the church bulletin or by announcement from the pulpit on at least one previous Sunday.

Real Estate Transactions

As noted previously, transactions resulting in the transfer, purchase, or sale of real estate may only be approved at a special business meeting of the church that is attended by a sixty (60) member quorum or 25% of the membership of the church, whichever number is less. Approval shall be determined by a majority vote of the members present, provided the proposed transaction has been given to the membership by notice in the church bulletin or by announcement from the pulpit on at least one previous Sunday.

QUORUM

Under normal circumstances, all votes by the Deacon Board will be done at a regularly scheduled Deacon Board meeting. A two-thirds (2/3) presence is required for a quorum at a Deacon Board meeting. Votes required for passage shall normally be a three-fourths (3/4) majority of the members present, except as noted elsewhere in this document.

At a general or specially-called church business meeting, a quorum shall consist of not less than fifteen percent (15%) of the eligible voting membership, i.e., the church members. Exceptions to this quorum rule include:

- Meetings whose purpose it is to call or dismiss a Lead Pastor
- Meetings whose purpose it is to approve the creation of additional Assistant/Associate Pastor positions
- Meetings whose purpose it is to amend or replace this constitution
- Meetings involving the approval of the transfer, sale, or purchase of real estate
- Meetings involving the approval of expenditures encumbering the church in excess of three percent (3%) of the church budget.

At least sixty (60) members or 25% of the membership, whichever is less, shall constitute a quorum for these exception meetings, and a three-fourths (3/4) vote is required for the approval of the motion.

Prior to the March business meeting, the Clerk, in consultation with the Lead Pastor and the Deacon Board, shall predetermine the eligible voting membership of the church for the coming year. New members eligible to vote shall be added to the voting membership upon reception into membership.

At any regular business meeting at which the membership is not represented by a quorum, the rules may be suspended by unanimous vote of the eligible members present, but only for the purpose of receiving regular or special reports and without any power to take binding action.

ORDINATION AND LICENSURE

This church reserves the right to license or ordain men to the ministry of the Gospel. The Deacons may, upon the recommendation of the Lead Pastor and the approval of the church, call a council of ministers and brethren to conduct an examining council to recommend the advisability of proceeding with ordination.

AMENDMENTS

This constitution may be amended in whole or in part at any regular or special business meeting of the church, attended by sixty (60) members or 25% of the membership of the church, whichever number is less, with a three-fourths (3/4) vote of the members present. The proposed changes must first have been submitted in writing and approved at a regular or special meeting of the Deacon Board. The proposed changes must then be posted in the church foyer and attention called to it on the two (2) Sundays prior to a congregational meeting.

DISSOLUTION

Upon dissolution, any assets of the church must be distributed to one or more organizations which fulfill the statement of purposes, i.e., an organization established for exaltation, evangelism and edification, as set forth in this constitution and approved by the church members.