

Adoption Date: May 28, 2023

STATEMENT OF POLICY

**The First Baptist Church of Asheville
Asheville, North Carolina**

CONSTITUTION

ARTICLE I NAME LOCATION

The corporate name of this church shall be "The First Baptist Church of Asheville, Inc." The location shall be in the city of Asheville, county of Buncombe, state of North Carolina. The title to all property of the church shall be vested in the corporation as set forth in the Articles of Incorporation.

ARTICLE II PURPOSE

It shall be the purpose of the First Baptist Church of Asheville, North Carolina, to do the work committed to the church by Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. To that end, our objective on this earth is to share God's love through Christ as a committed fellowship of baptized believers empowered by the Holy Spirit to:

Proclaim the gospel of abundant life through Jesus Christ.

Teach the Bible as the source of authority for Christian Faith and practice.

Assemble regularly for corporate worship and the praise of God.

Develop a nurturing community of faith in which all persons are welcome.

Minister to the spiritual, emotional, and physical needs of persons in our community and around the world.

Evangelize the lost and the unchurched.

Cooperate with other Christians in these tasks.

Every person, group and organization within the church shall seek to build up spiritual maturity within the membership and so exemplify the spirit of Christ and His gospel as set forth in these objectives. Anything contrary to this purpose and these objectives shall be eliminated from the work of this church.

ARTICLE III STATEMENT OF FAITH

The New Testament is the basis for the organization and operation of this Congregation and shall serve as its Articles of Faith.

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ARTICLE IV
CHURCH COVENANT

Having been brought by faith and by God's grace to receive the Lord Jesus Christ as our Savior, and by the influence of His Spirit to give ourselves up to Him, we do now with God's help most solemnly covenant:

That we will walk together in love as brothers and sisters in Christ.

That we will exercise Christian care and concern for each other.

That in all things we will preserve and protect the true function of the church.

That we will not forsake the assembling of ourselves together for prayer and worship.

That we will faithfully and sacrificially support the missions and ministries of this church with our tithes and offerings.

That we will continue steadfastly in prayer for ourselves, for others, and for the enterprises of the Kingdom of God.

That we will share each other's joys, and endeavor, with tenderness and compassion, to bear each other's burdens and sorrows.

That we will earnestly endeavor to bring up our children and others under our care in the nurture and admonition of the Lord.

That we will seek the help of God to enable us to live holy lives, denying ungodliness and every worldly lust.

That we will strive by example and effort to lead persons to saving knowledge of Jesus Christ, and seek to live to the glory of Him who has called us out of darkness into His marvelous light.

ARTICLE V
GOVERNMENT AND MEMBERSHIP

The government of this church is vested in the body of believers who compose it. The membership retains unto itself the right of self-government in all phases of the spiritual and temporal life of this church. Persons received by the members shall constitute the membership.

All internal groups created and empowered by the church shall ultimately report to and be accountable only to the congregation unless otherwise specified by church action. The church has chosen to organize its policy making and mission ministry under a system of collaborative governance to engage the congregation fully. Deacons, along with the Pastor, discern the vision within the Spirit-led congregation; Support Committees protect and manage the resources of the church; Councils and Teams, with the help of the Pastor and staff, translate the vision into the programs and missions of the congregation. This is a sovereign and democratic Baptist Church under the Lordship of Jesus Christ. As such, the church is subject to the control of no other ecclesiastical body, but it recognizes and sustains the obligations of mutual counsel and cooperation, which are common among Baptist churches.

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ARTICLE VI
PROPERTY

It is agreed by the present membership and all persons hereafter becoming members of the First Baptist Church of Asheville, Inc., that the securing and maintaining of real, personal, and mixed property by this church shall be for the express purpose of providing facilities for public worship and the engagement upon the missionary, educational and benevolent interest of this church of the character and in the spirit of this Statement of Policy and the Articles of Faith.

If at any time this church shall determine to alter the quality of its beliefs, usages and practices so as in any important respects to be at variance with the character described in this Statement of Policy and in the Articles of Faith, and if the decision is by less than the unanimous vote of those present at a regularly announced business meeting of the church, it is understood and agreed that the title and all right to the property of the church shall inure and remain vested in that part of the congregation which shall agree to continue to use the property for the purposes for which it was purchased and has been to that time maintained and in accordance with this Statement of Policy and the Articles of Faith.

This Article shall not be amended, altered, or repealed except by three-fourths vote of the membership present at a regularly announced business meeting of the church and then only if such proposed amendment, alteration, or repeal has been given in writing to the Pastor and church clerk and has lain on the table for a period of twelve months and no consideration of such proposal shall be voted upon until the period aforementioned has elapsed.

ARTICLE VII
CONSTITUTIONAL AMENDMENTS

This Constitution, with the exception of Article VI, may be amended, altered, or repealed by a three-fourths vote of the members present at any regularly announced business meeting of the church, provided, however, that written notice of such amendment, alteration, or repeal must be given in writing to the clerk and the proposed change shall be presented to the church at least thirty days prior to the time the vote is taken at a regularly announced business meeting of the church.

Any member may present to the Deacons a recommended change in this Constitution. Such recommendations shall be studied by a Policy Review Committee and the Deacons and, if approved, the proposed amendment shall be distributed to the membership in accordance with the requirements of the above paragraph for the consideration of the church at the next business meeting. Amendments to the Constitution become effective at the close of the business meeting at which they are adopted.

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BY-LAWS

ARTICLE I MEMBERSHIP

A. General

1. The membership of this church shall be composed of persons who have made a profession of faith in Jesus Christ, who strive to live lives exemplified by Jesus Christ as outlined in our Articles of Faith and Church Covenant, and who have experienced baptism by a Christian Church.

B. Candidacy

1. Persons may offer themselves as candidates for membership in this church by one of the following:
 - a) Profession of faith in Christ and acknowledgement of His Lordship through believer's baptism. Believer's baptism is understood as baptism by any mode following a confession of personal faith in Jesus Christ.
 - b) Letter of recommendation from another Baptist church of like faith and order.
 - c) A satisfactory statement of a prior conversion experience and subsequent baptism.
 - d) A satisfactory statement of conversion in another Christian Church, provided the candidate experienced baptism as his or her church practiced it and subsequently confirmed his or her Christian commitment in a public profession of faith in Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior. Such individuals are asked to consider believer's baptism by immersion as a symbolic experience and are encouraged to attend new members' education that includes an explanation of Baptist beliefs and polity.
2. Candidates requesting membership will be welcomed at the end of Sunday morning worship services.
3. Candidates will be invited to enter into a covenant relationship with our church as described in Article IV of the Church Constitution. After their understanding and agreement to this covenant, they will be received into full fellowship upon affirmation by the Board of Deacons in the next monthly Deacon meeting.
4. Candidates for baptism will be immersed unless prevented by the candidate's health or infirmity. The Pastor and the Chairperson of the Deacons will determine an acceptable form of baptism should this be necessary.

C. Privileges of Membership

1. Only members are entitled to vote in all elections and on all questions submitted to the church in business session, provided the member is present or the church has made provision for absentee balloting.
2. Every member of the church is eligible for consideration by the membership as candidates for elective offices in the church, except as specifically stated otherwise in the By-laws, and only church members may serve in elected offices.
3. Every member of the church may participate in the ordinances administered by the church.

D. Termination of Membership

1. Membership shall be terminated by any of the following ways:
 - a) death
 - b) affiliation with another church

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- c) personal request in writing
 - d) exclusion by action of the church
2. Letters of dismissal for members in good standing may be granted to any church of like faith and order upon request. Membership in this church shall then terminate by common consent.
 3. When a member of this church joins a church of different faith and order, membership in this church shall terminate by common consent.
 4. When a member of this church requests in writing that membership be terminated, it shall terminate by common consent.
 5. The church, after due notice and opportunity for hearing and kind efforts to make such action unnecessary, may terminate the membership of persons who habitually absent themselves from the services when well and able to attend, or otherwise fail to fulfill the obligations of membership. Such action may be taken by a two-thirds vote of the members present and voting at an announced business meeting of the church.

E. Watch Care Fellowship

Individuals who profess faith in Christ as their personal Savior may request the membership to place them in the Watch Care Fellowship of this congregation. Watch Care Fellowship may be approved at any regular worship service by a two-thirds vote of the members present and voting. Watch Care Fellowship includes opportunities for service, and the support and Christian nurture of our members and staff, but does not include the privileges of membership. Opportunities for service shall include Bible study teaching and Team membership. Individuals within Watch Care Fellowship are not eligible as members of Support Committees, Ministry Councils, or as Deacons.

ARTICLE II CHURCH OFFICERS

A. Pastor

1. Selection

If the church is without a Pastor, a Pastor Search Committee shall be appointed to seek out an ordained person to serve in this office. This Committee shall be composed of fifteen (15) members, the first six (6) to be as follows: the Chairperson and the First Vice-Chairperson of Deacons, the Chairperson of the Finance Committee, the Chairperson of the Leadership Selection Committee, the Christian Formation and Fellowship Council – Adults Ministry Council Leader, and the Mission Council Leader. The Chairperson shall be elected by the six (6) designated members from among their number. These six (6) shall appoint nine (9) other members, which shall complete the committee. In the event the Search Committee has not completed its work at the time the new Church year begins Sept. 1, the Committee membership shall remain the same until their work is completed. In the event of Committee vacancies, the search committee shall, at its discretion, appoint replacements. The Committee, after study and deliberation, shall make its recommendation to the church in a called business meeting, bringing only one person at a time.

2. Election

Upon recommendation of the Pastor Search Committee, the church shall vote to call a Pastor whenever a vacancy has occurred. This election shall take place at a business meeting called for that purpose. A minimum of one week's notice shall be given in a mailed communication to all the resident membership and announcement at a Sunday morning worship service. The Pastor, thus elected, shall serve until the church or the Pastor terminates the pastoral relationship.

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3. Duties

The principal duties of the Pastor are to provide spiritual and administrative leadership to the church. The Pastor shall oversee the worship and ministries of the congregation and shall direct the work of the church staff. In cooperation with the Deacons, the Pastor shall be responsible for developing and carrying out programs adopted by the church. The Pastor shall be an ex-officio member of all church Ministry Councils and Support Committees.

4. Vacancy

During a period when there is no Pastor, or in the event of the Pastor's disability, the Chairperson of Deacons shall fulfill the Pastor's spiritual and administrative duties.

5. Interim Pastors

- a) In the event that a resignation is tendered by the Pastor or the Pastor is judged unable to continue in that role, an Interim Search & Pulpit Supply Committee (hereafter referred to as "the Committee") shall be formed by the Chairperson of the Deacons for the purpose of filling the role of worship leader of the congregation in accordance with this article.
- b) The Committee shall be made up of seven (7) members as follows:
 - 1) Chairperson or designee of the Personnel Committee
 - 2) Chairperson or designee of the Finance Committee
 - 3) One deacon officer selected by the Officers of the Deacons
 - 4) One member of the Christian Formation Ministry Council selected by the members of the Christian Formation Ministry Council
 - 5) Three members-at-large to be appointed by the Chairperson of the Deacons
- c) The Chairperson will be appointed by the Chairperson of the Deacons.
- d) Within two weeks after the Committee is formed, it shall assume the task of providing pulpit supply as the further work of the Committee is accomplished.
- e) This Committee shall evaluate the conditions surrounding the Pastor's absence and determine what they consider to be in the best interest of the church for filling the role of worship leader. The Committee may recommend the church seek an Interim Pastor or recommend the role of worship leader be filled in some other way. The Committee's recommendation will be submitted to the Deacons for approval or revision (by a majority of those present) no later than the first Deacon's meeting following the fourth full week of the Pastor's absence from the pulpit.
- f) After the above action of the Deacons, the Committee shall have the option of selecting up to four (4) other church members-at-large that they deem would be helpful in their further work.
- g) If the Deacons direct the Committee to seek an Interim Pastor, and when the Committee is ready to present a candidate, the Committee will present its first choice to the church in a called business meeting for consideration, discussion and vote. Concurrently with this vote, the church will consider for approval the financial package for the Interim Pastor prepared by the committee, approved by the Personnel Committee, the Finance Committee, and the Deacons.
- h) If employed, the job performance of the Interim Pastor will be formally evaluated by the Committee at six month intervals. At any time during the interim period, upon recommendation of the Committee, the Deacons may terminate the services of the Interim Pastor.

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B. Staff Ministers

The church shall call such other staff Ministers or Associate Pastors as its ministries require. All ministerial staff shall be recommended by the Pastor and Deacons and elected by the church in a called business meeting. They shall be assistants to the Pastor and will be under the Pastor's supervision or a designee assigned by the Pastor in carrying out the programs of the church. All ministers employed by the church shall be accountable to the Personnel Committee, employed in keeping with the annual budget adopted by the church, and with such benefits and policies as established by the Personnel Committee and Deacons. Each shall serve until the ministerial relationship is terminated by the minister or the church.

C. Deacons

The Board of Deacons is responsible for establishing the overall vision, mission and policy for the church in partnership with the congregation. The Deacons are charged with offering spiritual servant leadership to the church along with certain legal and fiduciary responsibilities. The term "the Deacons" as used in the By-Laws of First Baptist Church Asheville refers to the current group of deacons actively serving the Church as a collective body.

1. Standards

- a) Scriptural standards for deacons are found in the example and teachings of Jesus, and in I Timothy 3:8-13, Acts 6:1-7, Romans 16:1-2.
- b) Church Standards for deacons, which apply the scriptural standards to current church life, will be prepared by the Deacons and forwarded annually to the Leadership Selection Committee for the Committee's guidance. The Leadership Selection Committee shall inform the church about those standards as it seeks the congregation's input to the selection process. These standards are not intended in any way to depart from the spirit or the intent of what the scriptures say about the eligibility of persons. The Church Standards for deacons shall include the expectations that deacons will be people who have:
 - 1) demonstrated commitment to the will and ways of Jesus Christ.
 - 2) full membership in the church with sufficient experience in the congregation to be effective.
 - 3) a pattern of consistent participation in the life and ministry of the church.
 - 4) a record of constructive servant-leadership in the church.
 - 5) a pattern of faithful stewardship of their gifts, talents, energies and money.

2. Roles and Responsibilities

The most important responsibility of the Deacons is offering spiritual servant-leadership to the congregation. They also have certain legal and fiduciary responsibilities. In all of their work, they are accountable to the congregation; all actions and decisions of the Deacons are subject to the will of the church in business meetings. As spiritual servant leaders, they are responsible for:

- 1) providing, through their own practices of faith, models of spiritual maturity.
- 2) serving others through acts of compassion and care.
- 3) participating in worship leadership.
- 4) serving the vision and mission of the church and providing for their realization by:
 - a) guiding the congregation's ongoing discernment and articulation of its vision and mission.
 - b) setting strategic areas of focus and direction which serve the vision and mission.
 - c) clarifying significant goals which support the areas of strategic focus.
 - d) leading the development of the necessary human, financial, and capital resources for the achievement of the congregation's vision and mission.
- 5) evaluating the congregation's progress toward achievement of its vision and mission.
- 6) reporting and listening regularly to the congregation about the vision and mission, needs and hopes of the church.

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As fiduciary and legal stewards, the Deacons:

- 1) ensure that the church's capital, financial and human resources are kept secure and are used in service of the church's vision and mission.
- 2) provide oversight for the development, and recommendation to the church, of needed policies and procedures.
- 3) act for the church on emergency matters between business meetings.

3. Term and Selection

- a) The Board of Deacons is comprised of thirty (30) ordained adult members who serve three-year terms. After serving a full term or an unexpired term of more than one year, deacons shall be eligible for reconsideration after the lapse of two years.
- b) The standard term of office shall be three years, beginning September 1 after election. In case of the death, removal, or incapacity of a deacon, a new deacon may be chosen to fill the unexpired term (as provided in Paragraph 3f below) and to begin service on the day he or she is affirmed by the congregation. All terms of service will end August 31 of the expiration year.
- c) A Deacon Recommendation Form shall be made available to the membership along with a copy of the Church Standards for Deacons, a list of Deacons currently serving and a list of those ineligible to serve in the coming term.
- d) Any church member may recommend as many deacon candidates as there are available positions. All recommendations will be referred to the Leadership Selection Committee. All deacon nominees shall have the opportunity to accept or decline official nomination before their names are submitted to the church. The slate of official nominees shall be published at least one month prior to final affirmation by the congregation.
- e) Affirmation by the congregation of Deacon nominees will be held on a Sunday following worship at least thirty (30) days prior to September 1. The congregation will be given a list of ten (10) candidates vetted and selected by the Leadership Selection Committee to serve a three year term.
- f) In the case of vacancies in the Deacon Board during other times of the church year, the Leadership Selection Committee will recommend individuals to fill these vacancies.

4. Ordination

As soon as possible after the congregation has affirmed the slate, a Service of Ordination shall be scheduled for deacons not previously ordained.

5. Life Deacons

From time to time, the Pastor and the Chairperson of Deacons may nominate members for the office of Life Deacon to the Church for affirmation. Life Deacons shall be privileged to serve and vote as other active deacons and are exempt from the requirements of rotation.

6. Officers

Deacon Officers shall consist of a Chairperson, First Vice-Chairperson, Second Vice-Chairperson, Third Vice-Chairperson, and Secretary. Officers will be chosen annually in the August meeting. Deacon Officers also serve as the official officers of the corporation. The officers have the following tasks:

Chairperson: provides overall leadership to the work of the deacons and (as stated in Article II, Section 4) fulfills the Pastor's administrative and spiritual duties during a period when there is no pastor or in the event of the pastor's disability, and serves as president of the corporation. This chairperson serves on the Finance Committee, Personnel Committee, and the One Oak Committee.

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First Vice-Chairperson: serves as the Deacon Chair-elect, assumes the duties of the chair in the chair's absence, and chairs the Personnel Committee.

Second Vice-Chairperson: serves as Chair of the Leadership Selection Committee.

Third Vice-Chairperson: supports Deacon Service and serves as liaison to support collaboration and communication of purpose between the Board of Deacons and Ministry Council Leaders

Secretary: keeps minutes of the meetings of the Deacons and the Deacon Officers, and serves as the secretary of the corporation.

D. Moderator

The Pastor shall be the moderator of all church business meetings. The Vice-Moderator shall be the Chairperson of Deacons, or, in his/her absence, the next available deacon officer.

E. Clerk

The church shall annually affirm a Clerk as its clerical officer following a recommendation made by the Leadership Selection Committee. The Clerk shall keep accurate minutes of all church business meetings and keep in a suitable book a record of all the actions of the church, except as otherwise provided for in this Statement of Policy. The Clerk shall preserve on file all communications and written official reports and give legal notice of all meetings where such notice is necessary. The Clerk shall oversee the register of church membership and ensure its accuracy. The church shall certify messengers to the annual meetings of local, state, and national Baptist bodies. The Clerk shall serve for a term of one year and may be re-elected. The term of office begins September 1.

F. Historian

The church shall annually affirm a Historian who shall cooperate with the church's members, Media Center personnel, and organizations to seek ways to archive, catalog and preserve the church's historical archives and educate the church about its history.

ARTICLE III SUPPORT COMMITTEES

A. Support Committees exist to protect and preserve the resources of the congregation, thereby freeing time for the Deacons to focus more on matters of vision and direction. The Support Committees have specific areas of responsibility, taking action when needed to preserve the vitality of the church and recommending actions to the Deacons when appropriate.

General Provisions

1. All support committee members must be church members.
2. The Pastor and Chairperson of Deacons shall be ex-officio non-voting members of all committees, unless otherwise indicated in this Statement of Policy. The Pastor may designate individual staff ministers to serve as non-voting committee members.
3. The Leadership Selection Committee, having first solicited input from the congregation, shall appoint members of Support Committees and Ministry Councils, with certain specific exceptions set forth in this Statement of Policy.
4. Except as otherwise provided in this Statement of Policy, one-third of the members of each Support Committee shall be appointed each year for a three-year term. No person whose term expires after having served more than one year shall be reappointed to that Support Committee until a lapse of one year from the expiration date of the last term.
5. Terms of office shall begin September 1, unless otherwise specified.
6. Support Committee Chairpersons shall be appointed annually by the Leadership Selection Committee, unless otherwise indicated in this Statement of Policy. Each Support Committee shall elect other officers and form sub-committees as it deems appropriate.

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7. Affirmation by the congregation of Committee and Council members will be held on a Sunday following worship at least thirty (30) days prior to September 1. The congregation will be given a list of all Committee and Council members as vetted and selected by the Leadership Selection Committee to serve a three year term in advance of this affirmation.
8. Each committee which is required to take action or which has taken action shall report in writing to the Deacons regularly, describing its activities since the last report.
9. Committees with budgetary implications shall report regularly to the Finance Committee and Board of Deacons.
10. At the discretion of the Pastor, committee chairpersons shall be available to meet with the Pastor, ministerial staff, deacon officers, and program directors for program and calendar coordination.
11. Except for certain Deacon officers, the Chairperson of Finance and the Vice Chair of Budget Pledging as set forth in this Statement of Policy, no member shall serve in more than two (2) positions as Deacon, Ministry Council Member, or Support Committee Member at the same time.
12. All recommendations from committees shall be brought to the Deacons for their review and action prior to consideration by the congregation.

B. Leadership Selection Committee

The Leadership Selection Committee (LSC) shall appoint all other Support Committees and Ministry Councils except the Pastor Search Committee and any ad hoc committees. When Support Committee or Ministry Council replacements are needed, the LSC is tasked with finding replacements to complete the unexpired terms. With appropriate opportunity given for input from the congregation, the LSC recommends for election all church officers (other than ministerial staff) and provides the slate of Deacons, Support Committee and Ministry Council members for congregational affirmation.

1. The LSC shall consist of the following eighteen (18) members, each serving a one year term:

The Second Vice-Chair of Deacons, who shall serve as Chair for the LSC

Four (4) active Deacons, appointed by the Deacon Board

Four (4) members appointed by the Christian Formation and Fellowship Council – Adults, with special attention given by the Council to representing the diversity of the congregation that they represent.

Three (3) members appointed by the Christian Formation and Fellowship Council – Children and Students, with special attention given by the Council to representing the diversity of the congregation that they represent.

Six (6) members total, two (2) appointed by each of the remaining three Ministry Councils

2. No individual may serve on the LSC more than two consecutive one year terms. With the exception of the Second Vice-Chair of Deacons and the four Deacon members appointed by the Deacon Board, no LSC member may be an active deacon or current Ministry Council member. The term of the LSC shall extend until the next LSC is seated the following year. In the event a vacancy should occur on the LSC, it will be at the discretion of the LSC to fill that position.

C. Finance Committee

The Finance Committee shall plan and administer the church's finances, including the planning of annual budgets for the church's approval in a called business meeting and the regular oversight of all financial affairs. The Finance Committee will be responsible for investing and managing funds of the church set aside for specific purposes for periods that span more than the current budget year, unless those funds were given to the church's Endowment Fund. When funding needs arise for which there is no budgeted provision, the Committee is authorized to administer unbudgeted funds (derived from prior years overages, interest accumulations, and other standard sources) up to but not exceeding an amount equal to 2% of the total annual budget as long as the use of these funds is in keeping with the currently-funded programs or ministries of the church. If new funding is requested which is beyond the methods and plans in the current

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budget, and the requested funds do not exceed 2% of the total budget, the action of the Finance Committee must be approved by the Deacons before the new project shall be funded. Unbudgeted expenditures exceeding the 2% limit will require the approval of the Deacons and the congregation. This Committee shall consist of ten (10) members: The Leadership Selection Committee shall name a Chairperson, Vice-Chairperson for Budget Planning, Vice-Chairperson for Budget Pledging, and six (6) other Finance Committee members. The Deacon Chair shall also serve on the Finance Committee as a non-voting ex-officio member.

D. Personnel Committee

The Personnel Committee has responsibilities in three (3) major areas: employment, evaluation and compensation, and personnel policies. This committee shall consist of nine members. Six (6) shall be appointed by the Leadership Selection Committee with two (2) rotating off each year. Other members include the First Vice-Chair of Deacons, who shall serve as Chair for Personnel, the Chairperson of the Deacons, and the Chairperson of the Finance Committee.

1. Employment

- a) This Committee, in consultation with the appropriate committees and organizations, has the responsibility of discovering, interviewing, and recommending to the Deacons for approval the employment of staff members of ministerial level (other than the Pastor) and the termination of the same.
- b) When functioning as a Search Committee for ministerial positions, the Personnel Committee will select for the Search Committee up to four (4) members from the congregation to supplement their number from the area of the church most representative of the position they are seeking to fill. These additional members will be full members of the Search Committee in every respect during the search and selection process. The Search Committee so constituted shall function as an ad hoc committee until the search has been completed.
- c) The Committee shall oversee the employment of all other church employees within the adopted church budget.

2. Evaluation and Compensation

- a) The Committee shall oversee a program of annual evaluation of all church employees.
- b) On the basis of these evaluations, the Committee shall make annual salary and benefit recommendations to the Finance Committee as part of the process of budget planning.

3. Personnel Policies

The Committee shall develop comprehensive Personnel Policies to govern the administration of employee benefits, vacations, holidays, sabbaticals, and other personnel matters, and administer these policies with the approval of the Deacons.

E. Building and Grounds Committee

This committee shall consist of nine (9) members, with one member selected chair by the Leadership Selection Committee.

This committee shall be responsible for the care and maintenance of all church property, including building, grounds equipment, and furnishings. Specific responsibilities include:

1. formulating policies governing the use of the church property and the allocation of building space.
2. setting schedules and priorities for major repairs and upkeep.

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3. overseeing the selection and purchase of major supplies, equipment, and furnishings.
4. monitoring the church's energy use and making regular reports to the Finance Committee on utility expenses.
5. eliminating hazards and designing safety features into our buildings and grounds.

F. Child Development Center Committee

The Child Development Center Committee shall consist of six (6) members selected by the Leadership Selection Committee, with one member chosen as chair.

The Child Development Committee oversees the goals and practices of the Child Development Center and First Kids Preshool ministries in keeping with the overall ministry of the First Baptist Church.

G. Academy for the Arts Committee

The Academy for the Arts Committee shall consist of six (6) members, selected by the Leadership Selection Committee, with one member chosen as chair.

The Academy for the Arts Committee oversees the goals and practices of the Academy in keeping with the overall mission and ministry of First Baptist Church of Asheville.

H. Endowment Fund Committee

The Endowment Fund was established by the church in 1996 and operates under an amended and restated governing document adopted by the church in September of 1999. That document entrusts responsibility for management and administration of the fund to a Board of Trustees comprised of eight (8) voting members and one (1) ex-officio member. The voting members are the Chairperson of the Deacons, the Chairperson of the Finance Committee, the Vice-Chair Person of Budget-Pledging, and five (5) other persons (“at-large members”) appointed by the Leadership Selection Committee. The ex-officio member shall be appointed by the Pastor, who may appoint himself or herself to that position. Further details about the Constitution and Selection of the Endowment Fund Board of Trustees are found in the Fund’s governing document.

1. The Endowment Fund exists primarily for the charitable purposes of the church with its principal objectives being the promotion and development of religious, charitable, and educational activities, to support capital improvements of the Church, to maintain and improve the existing Church facilities, and to support non-recurring purposes not regularly budgeted by the church.
2. The Endowment Committee is responsible for oversight of the Sacred Garden and recommending and establishing policies for the garden. The Committee may also designate teams to support the functions of the garden. Any major changes to the operations or purpose of the Sacred Garden recommended by the Endowment Committee must be submitted to and approved by the Deacons.

I. One Oak Plaza Trust Committee

The One Oak Plaza Trust Committee shall be accountable for the financial performance of the rental operation of the One Oak Plaza office building and shall oversee and operate the Church's investment in the building as a commercial office building (for so long as the church permits), leasing office space to public and private interest in accordance with generally accepted business practices of the community. The Committee shall maintain adequate cash reserves to finance the operations of the Building, to fund anticipated renovations, to make necessary repairs, to maintain insurance that will adequately protect the building and the church's interest (as in their business judgments are required), to negotiate for short and long term rental contracts, to maintain the building as a suitable operating space for the tenants and to do all other acts that are within the normal course of operating a commercial office rental business, whose acts will be binding on the church. The Committee shall give annually, through the Finance Committee and the Deacons, a report to the church reflecting the financial performance of the property.

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The Committee shall be comprised of five (5) appointed members and the Chairperson of the Deacons. Each of the five members shall be appointed for a five year term with one member appointed each year so that one member will retire each year. If a member becomes Chairperson of the Deacons while serving as an appointed member of the Committee, a replacement to serve the remaining part of this unexpired term shall be appointed by the Leadership Selection Committee as soon as possible after the vacancy occurs.

This Committee in its entirety or any individual member thereof may be replaced by a vote of a majority of the Deacons when the Finance Committee recommends the termination of such. The unexpired term of any member(s) who may be removed under this provision or who may cease to be a member of this Committee for any other reason, shall be filled as soon as possible for the aforementioned appointment group.

Utilization of any part of the building for church use shall be approved by a majority of both the Finance Committee and the Deacons. If more than 25% of the building (or when a combination of incremental uses exceed 25% of the total rental space) is to be appropriated for church use, then approval for such use must be obtained from the church upon recommendation from the Finance Committee and approved by the Deacons. The Committee shall not be financially responsible for space utilized by the Church.

[Comment] Because the management of this property requires special business expertise, and because of the contractual nature of the church's involvement with the business community, and also because of the business acumen required by the members of this committee, the committee is established as a Trust with fiduciary responsibility to the church through the Deacons exclusively for the operation and management of this property.

ARTICLE IV MINISTRY COUNCILS AND TEAMS

The missions and ministry programs of the church will be implemented with the leadership of Ministry Councils. Ministry Councils will be responsible for developing strategies and budget requests in response to the vision and mission embraced by the congregation and communicated by the Deacons. The councils may establish teams, as needed, for specific programs and tasks. Team members may serve on and lead multiple teams.

Ministry Council members will be active and engaged members of the church who represent its wide diversity of age, experience and perspective.

Staff members appointed by the Coordinating Pastor will serve as liaisons to Ministry Councils. The staff members will work alongside the Deacons, Support Committees and Ministry Councils to support the work of implementing the vision and mission of the church.

The Ministry Councils and staff liaisons will report regularly to the Deacons and congregation regarding progress on achieving vision and mission of the church. They shall also report regularly to the Finance Committee and Board of Deacons on budgetary matters.

A. Ministry Councils

1. Ministry Councils will have nine (9) members each, including a council leader. With congregational input, the Leadership Selection Committee will recommend six members (2 per year), including the leader. The staff liaison will name three members to the council (1 per year). Members will serve three-year, rotating terms. A member who rotates off a council may not serve on the same council until the lapse of at least one year.
2. Terms of office for new Ministry Council members will begin on September 1. When council replacements are needed, the Leadership Selection Committee will be tasked with finding replacements to complete the unexpired terms.

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3. Councils will include:

The **Christian Formation and Fellowship Council – Adults** will oversee the development of strategies, teams, programming and resources to nurture the spiritual growth of adults. The council will be responsible for the coordination of discipleship training and Bible study for a wide variety of age and interest groups. In addition, the council will be responsible for such areas as Christian life training; the development of educational resources; stewardship; ensuring that new members become involved in the church’s fellowship and ministries, that all members form meaningful and supportive relationships within the congregation and that potential new leaders have the opportunity to develop their gifts and to serve; orienting new members and regular attenders; and providing Christian care to members.

The **Christian Formation and Fellowship Council - Children and Students** will oversee the development of strategies, teams, programming and resources to nurture the spiritual growth of children, youth, and college students in our church. The council will be responsible for the coordination of discipleship training and Bible study for young people ages birth through college. In addition, the council will be responsible for the development of educational resources; programming for children, youth and college students; recreation ministry; family outreach events; scholarships; and affinity groups for all ages.

The **Congregational Worship Council** will oversee the development of strategies, teams, programming and resources to foster a rich life of worship within the church. The council will be responsible for the coordination of the church’s music ministry programs and for tasks related to church ordinances, worship enhancement, offering collection and ushering.

The **Mission Council** will oversee the development of strategies, teams, programming and resources to implement a broad array of mission opportunities for members, other volunteers, and mission partners. The council will be responsible for the coordination of the varied mission activities of the congregation and for the identification and maintenance of strategic partnerships and affiliations related to the church’s vision and mission.

The **Communications and Outreach Council** will oversee the development of strategies, teams, programming and resources to ensure communication of the gospel and the church’s identity through various media and to encourage outreach in the broader community. The council will be responsible for internal communications, broadcasting, external marketing and programs that promote the church within the community.

B. Teams

1. The appropriate Ministry Council will approve the primary mission / function of each Team and will provide support, guidance, coordination, evaluation and access to funding.
2. Teams will form to meet a specific need or task. Members may begin their service on a team at any time and are not limited by election cycles or rotation requirements.
3. A list of current teams will be published regularly.

ARTICLE V
AD HOC COMMITTEES

When the Pastor and the officers of the Deacons conclude that a committee other than one of the Support Committees is needed for a special purpose, the Chairperson of Deacons may, with the advice of the Pastor, appoint members and a Chairperson to serve for the purpose necessary to complete the special task.

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ARTICLE VI
CHURCH MEETINGS

A. Worship Services

The church shall meet regularly on Sundays and at other designated times for the worship of God, Bible study, fellowship, prayer and Christian training. These meetings will be open to church members and to all others and shall be conducted under the direction of the Pastor. The ordinances of Baptism and the Lord's Supper shall be observed at times designated by the Pastor and Chairperson of Deacons, with the provision that the church will observe the Lord's Supper no less than six (6) times per year and baptism as often as necessary.

B. Parliamentary Procedure

1. Robert's Rules of Order (Revised) shall be the authority for parliamentary procedure for all church business meetings.
2. A quorum shall consist of at least 100 MEMBERS present for regular business meetings except for the following:
3. When a business meeting is planned for the calling of a minister, for the election of deacons, for the purchase or sale of real estate, or for borrowing funds in excess of 10% of the church's annual operating budget, the quorum shall be a number calculated and set annually as follows: that quorum will be 80% of the average, in-person Sunday morning worship attendance for the past church year. Excluded from that calculation will be Sundays with extraordinarily high or low attendance. The number of VOTING MEMBERS (present and those who voted absentee) will be used to determine if the requirements of a quorum have been established.
 - a) VOTING THE MOTION - This quorum may be achieved by both members physically present at the meeting and those who have voted absentee on specific preannounced motion(s). In such cases, the church must make appropriate provisions for absentee voting prior to the scheduled meeting in accordance with membership privileges as specified in bylaw Article I.
 - b) AMENDMENTS - If an amendment is offered and found acceptable by the moderator and quorum requirements have been met by a combination of absentee voters and those physically present, the amendment will be voted on by those physically present. A simple majority will decide if the amendment is accepted or rejected. If the amendment is accepted, the original motion will be tabled by the moderator for sufficient time (not to exceed two weeks) to allow the absentee voters to be informed and given the opportunity to vote on the amended motion. Then the original motion will be taken off the table until such time when a new business meeting is convened to vote on the amended motion.

C. Church Conference and Business Meetings

1. Church Conference Meetings
 - a) The church will meet regularly for informative discussion meetings at least twice each year. The meetings will be scheduled one in the Spring and the other in the Fall by the Pastor and Chairperson of Deacons at a time convenient to the congregation. The time and location of these meetings will be publicized at least 30 days in advance.
 - b) The purpose of these church conference meetings shall be to discuss topics submitted by any church member, including the Ministry Staff, Deacons, Ministry Councils or Support Committees as outlined and limited in subsequent paragraph e) below. Any topic to be presented must be submitted in writing to the Moderator at least two weeks prior to the meeting.
 - c) Additional church conference meetings may be called when needed to share matters of specific and particular importance to the church. All topics shall also be limited as specified in subsequent paragraph e) below. Such meetings shall be scheduled and announced to the congregation with a specific agenda of topics no less than one week in advance. The time and location of these meetings shall be determined by the Pastor and Chairperson of Deacons at a time convenient to the congregation.

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- d) Topics discussed at church conference meetings shall be informational, but they may also be referred to the Staff, Deacons, or appropriate Committee or Council for further consideration and potential action. Since final business decisions cannot be made at such conference meetings, the policy requirement for a quorum will not apply. Meeting minutes shall be maintained.
- e) These church conference meetings are open to all topics of mutual interest or potential decisions the church body may wish to consider except for sensitive personnel issues which cannot be discussed or debated in an open forum without risk of personal embarrassment or liability to the church, its members, or staff. The Moderator is given the authority to rule any issue out of order in open session and may refer that issue to the appropriate committee or to the Deacons to consider in executive session.

2. Business Meetings

Regular or called business meetings are for the purposes of discussion and decisions regarding all church business transactions subject to congregational approval. Advance notice shall be given for all business meetings, including time and place of the meeting and a description of the matters to be decided, so that the congregation can make an informed decision. Meeting minutes shall be maintained. Except as specified otherwise in this policy, adoptions of successful motions will be based upon exceeding a majority of votes cast.

All regular business meetings shall be subject to advance notice requirements as set forth in this policy depending on topic matter. Where matters are to be decided that do not have specific notification requirements, the Pastor and Chairperson of Deacons will determine an appropriate period for advance notice. Called business meetings may be called at any time by the Pastor or Chairperson of Deacons after due notice has been given to the membership in a previous Sunday's church bulletin, announcement from the pulpit or a mailing to the resident membership mailed at least one week before the meeting. In unusual circumstances or in matters of great urgency, this notice for a called business meeting may be waived by a two-thirds vote of the church members assembled on Sunday morning. No business may be transacted in a called business meeting other than that specifically stated in the notice.

ARTICLE VII CHURCH BUSINESS

- A. For business and financial purposes, the church year shall run from January 1 through December 31 of each year. The church adopts a Regular Budget to fund the ministries and programs of the church and a Capital Improvements Budget to fund major capital construction and renovation projects. Several special offerings are taken each year to fund a variety of missions' causes. All special offerings solicited by the church must be approved in advance by the Finance Committee.
- B. Church business matters approved by the Deacons that require action by the church membership shall be presented to the church at the next scheduled business meeting, provided the notice requirements can be met, but in no case shall more than one hundred twenty (120) days pass without such matters being brought before the church for action by the membership.
- C. During extraordinary times when it is not safe to gather in person, the church will strive to carry on by whatever means possible in order to fulfill the stated objectives of corporate worship, Christian education, missional opportunities, and church business.

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ARTICLE VIII
CHURCH PUBLICATIONS

A. Church Bulletin

The church shall publish a weekly bulletin for distribution on Sunday mornings containing the order of worship and current information on church activities.

B. Church Newsletter

The church shall publish and distribute to each resident a newsletter containing detailed information about current and upcoming church activities.

C. Church Directory

The church shall publish a directory for resident members containing a complete church roster, the Statement of Policy, a listing of all church officers, Deacons, Ministry Council Members, Support Committees, and other information vital to the life of the church.

ARTICLE IX
NAMING OF ORGANIZATIONS

No organization of the church shall be named after any living person unless that person is a career missionary.

ARTICLE X
BYLAW AMENDMENTS

These Bylaws of this Statement of Policy may be amended, altered or repealed by a majority vote of the members present at any regularly announced business meeting of the church, provided however that written notice of such proposed amendment, alteration, or repeal must be given in writing to the clerk and the proposed change presented to the church at least thirty days prior to the time the vote is taken at a regularly announced business meeting of the church.

Any member of the church may present to the Deacons a recommended change in these Bylaws. Such recommendation shall be studied by a Policy Review Committee and the Deacons, and, if approved, the proposed amendment shall be distributed to the membership in accordance with the requirements of the above paragraph for the consideration of the church at the next business meeting.

Amendments to the Bylaws become effective at the close of business meeting at which they are adopted.

FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH OF ASHEVILLE POLICY REVISION NOTE

This current church policy update was recommended by the Ad Hoc Policy Review Committee and was approved for submission to congregational vote by the Board of Deacons April 3, 2023. Subsequently, following required due notice and opportunity, this policy update was approved by congregational vote on **May 28, 2023**. This current policy now fully and wholly replaces the previous revision dated December 13, 2015.