

“The government of the 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.” **Article 5 of First Baptist Church Constitution**

Greetings Fellow Deacons,

On behalf of the First Baptist Church congregation, welcome to the 2025-26 church year. We are wrapping up a year in which our church has become as vibrant and mission-oriented as anyone can remember. First, thank you to Deacon Chair Brenda Gorsuch, whose tireless and measured leadership helped craft solutions to issues, workarounds for the unexpected (for example, an organ that went *kaput!*) and plans for future events like our 2027 Centennial Celebration. Likewise, the banner year we’ve experienced could/would not have happened without what I believe is, hands down, the absolute best clergy and staff in the business!

Thirty deacons, 11 meetings, and carefully planned agendas that are both interesting and challenging...whether you have served as a Deacon before or not, I trust you will discover, as I have, that these Monday gatherings are unique, refreshing and inspiring. You will likely feel the need to share, when appropriate, the plans, hopes and dreams that emerge from this collaboration, and that is certainly a key component of our role as ambassadors to our congregation and beyond. Beautiful Belonging. It’s contagious!

Here is a more formal outline of our duties, as presented in our Collaborative Ministry Model of church governance: Deacons are tasked with nurturing the spiritual focus of all leaders, guiding congregational discernment, outlining the church’s mission/vision, overseeing support and resources, setting primary policies/by-laws, creating overall accountability measures, and leading the church to greater spiritual maturity. Easy? No. Can we accomplish this work as a team? Absolutely!

In a nutshell, each of us has been appointed as a servant-leader for First Baptist Church Asheville. A good way to do that is by being good role models — attending worship and other church activities regularly, practicing generous stewardship and enhancing our roles in the “art of beautiful belonging.” I call that accountability. And you will hear more of it as our new church year rolls on.

For nearly 200 years now, our congregation has successfully practiced the Baptist fundamental of self-governance as a wholly autonomous entity. Our members retain the authority to determine all matters affecting congregational life. As 30 creative, dedicated and caring Deacons, may God guide us as we strive to offer strong lay leadership in the upcoming year, the kind of leadership that has distinguished First Baptist Asheville decade after decade.

Bottom line: Our monthly meetings will keep you up to date on what is happening across our congregation, challenge you to help discern God’s will for our missions and ministry, and solicit you to provide your input as we journey on. Let’s make that work both productive and joyful.

Warm Regards,



Charlie Glazener
Deacon Chair 2025-26