

FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH OF TORRANCE CONSTITUTION

ADOPTED JUNE 30, 2013
REVISED NOVEMBER 22, 2015

PREAMBLE

This Constitution establishes the principles which bring us together to form the First Baptist Church of Torrance. It captures our primary beliefs from God's Word, by which we freely associate as a community of faith. It also establishes a system of governance, necessary for the orderly execution of our corporate responsibilities. Since our ultimate goal is to fulfill God's plan to make disciples of Jesus Christ (Matthew 28: 16-20), the intent of this document is to aid in that endeavor, so we recognize that periodic changes to this document may be necessary and provisions for so doing are contained herein.

ARTICLE I - CHARACTER AND GOVERNMENT

Section 1 - Incorporation: This church shall be known as the First Baptist Church of Torrance (otherwise known as Torrance First Baptist or TFB). This church is a California non-profit corporation, duly incorporated under the provisions of Title 12, Article 1, of the Civil Code of the State of California. The Articles of Incorporation are dated 25 August 1922, and were endorsed 21 June 1971, to provide for perpetual existence. It is intended that the ecclesiastical and temporal powers of the church be integrated into one unit, a religious corporation having a membership governed by a Board of Directors known as the Board of Deacons.

Section 2 - Purpose and Mission: The purpose of this church is the advancement of the cause of Christ through introducing people to Jesus, bringing them into a community of believers, and helping each other become followers of Christ. This purpose shall be achieved through the development of its members' spiritual gifts and their spreading of the gospel of Jesus Christ throughout the community and the world. Our mission is God-driven, outwardly focused, worldwide in scope and has eternal significance. Each of us is called to fulfill our part in God's mission.

Section 3 - Doctrine: Our understanding and explanations of life and ministry are based on eternal truths from God as revealed in His Word. Such beliefs are the foundation on which we build our teaching, vision, plans and programs; these truths apply to all followers of Christ, in all cultures and for all generations. Therefore, this church teaches and seeks to act consistently with the following statement of faith and belief:

a. Essential Doctrine:

Bible: The Bible, consisting of the sixty-six books of the Old and New Testaments, alone is the inspired Word of God. It is without error in the original writings and is the complete revelation of God's will for salvation as well as the final authority for all Christian faith and life. Each believer in Jesus Christ is responsible for and capable of understanding God's Word through the guidance of the Holy Spirit (2 Timothy 3:15-17; 2 Peter 1:20-21; John 14:26).

God: There is only one true God, the Creator and Sovereign Ruler of the universe, eternally existing in three co-equal persons: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. God is holy, infinitely perfect, all-knowing, everywhere present, all powerful and never-changing. He is a personal God, relational and loving, merciful and just, kind and forgiving (Luke 3:22; Matthew 28:19; 2 Corinthians 13:14; Isaiah 40:25-29; 42:5; 43:10-11; 1 Timothy 6:15-16).

Jesus: Jesus is the Son of God, fully God and fully man, co-equal with the Father and with the Holy Spirit. He was conceived of the Holy Spirit, born of a virgin and lived a sinless human life. He offered himself as the perfect sacrifice for the sins of all people by dying on a cross. He arose bodily from the dead demonstrating his power over sin and death. He ascended into heaven, and having authority over all creation, He intercedes before the Father on our behalf. We look forward to His imminent bodily return to Earth to reign as King of Kings and Lord of Lords (John 1:1-3; John 1:14; Matthew 1:18-23; John 19:16-30; 2 Corinthians 5:21; Luke 24:36-53; Colossians 1:15-20; Hebrews 7:24-27).

The Holy Spirit: The Holy Spirit is God, co-equal with the Father and the Son. He is present in the world to convict people of their sin and their need for Jesus Christ. When someone personally receives Jesus Christ as their Savior, they are born again into God's family by the Holy Spirit Who guarantees their salvation and gives every believer spiritual gifts. He lives in every person who has trusted Jesus Christ for salvation, providing direct access to God, power for living, understanding of spiritual truth, and guidance for doing what is right (John 16:7-15; 1 Corinthians 12; Romans 8:9-16,26-27; Ephesians 1:13-14; 3:16; Acts 1:8; Galatians 5:22-23; John 14:16-17, 26; Titus 3:4-6).

Humanity: People are a special part of God's creation, formed in His image. All have sinned and have incurred both physical and spiritual death, separating them from God and destining them for God's eternal judgment (Genesis 1:26-28; Genesis 3:1-24; Romans 3:23; 5:12; 6:23).

Salvation: God loves people and desires to rescue them from the consequences of their sin; therefore, His Son died on the cross to pay sin's penalty and to offer forgiveness. God offers this free gift of salvation to everyone who personally receives Jesus Christ as their Savior. When we turn to Jesus Christ in faith, we receive new life in Him by the Holy Spirit. We are saved forever and look forward to our bodily resurrection at Christ's return (John 3:16; Ephesians 2:8-9; Titus 3:3-7; John 1:12; Romans 8:38-39; John 5:24; John 10:27-29, 1 Corinthians 15:35-58; 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18).

Eternity: Heaven and Hell are real places of eternal existence. All people will either exist eternally with God in Heaven through salvation in Christ or will be eternally separated from God in Hell for rejecting Christ (John 3:14-18, 36; Luke 16:19-31; 2 Corinthians 5:1-10; Galatians 6:8; Titus 2:12-13; Revelation 20-22; Daniel 12:1-3).

The Church: Jesus Christ is the Head of the true Church which is composed of all who have trusted in Him for salvation. The Church's purpose is to glorify God. Its mission is to evangelize and disciple the world by preparing one another to do God's work and building up His Body. Its goal is the promotion of its members' spiritual growth and maturity through obedience to the Word of God and the indwelling Spirit (Ephesians 1:22-23; 4:11-16; 5:25-32; 1 Corinthians 12:12 -30; Romans 12:1-2).

b. TFB-Specific Doctrine:

As the First Baptist Church of Torrance, we further believe and practice:

Baptism and Communion: We believe that Jesus commanded His followers to be baptized and to celebrate the Lord's Supper, also known as Communion. Baptism is a public testimony of death to sin and resurrection to a new life after accepting Christ as personal Savior. The Lord's Supper is a memorial of Christ's sacrificial death. This church practices Believer's Baptism by immersion and observes the Lord's Supper as a symbolic memorial reserved for believers (Matthew 28:18-20; Romans 6:3-11; 1 Corinthians 11:23-30).

Spiritual Gifts: We believe that spiritual gifts are sovereignly given by God to every believer as He wills. These gifts are to be used for the building up of the Body of Christ. Although we believe that God continues to act in supernatural ways, we believe and teach that the "charismatic gifts" (for example: the gift of tongues, the gift of miracles and the gift of healing) had a special significance during the New Testament era in order to authenticate God's message. Today, we have God's completed message (the Bible); therefore such gifts are no longer essential and this congregation does not practice, encourage, or seek the exercise thereof (1 Corinthians 12-14).

Marriage: God's creation intent in marriage is for a faithful, lifelong commitment between one man and one woman. This church defines "marriage" as a covenantal union of one man and one woman. Only marriage ceremonies consistent with this definition will be performed in this church or by our pastors. A civil government's sanction of a union will be recognized as a legitimate marriage by this church only to the extent that it is consistent with this definition (Genesis 2:23-24; Malachi 2:13-15; Matthew 19:1-12; 1 Corinthians 7; Ephesians 5:22-33).

Human Sexuality: Legitimate sexual relations are exercised solely within marriage. Hence, sexual activities outside of marriage (referred to in the New Testament as "porneia") including, but not limited to, adultery, premarital sex, homosexuality, and pedophilia are inconsistent with the teachings of the Bible and the church. Further, lascivious conduct, transgender behavior, and the creation and/or distribution and/or viewing of pornography, are incompatible with the biblical witness. Anyone participating in such activities is not allowed to become a church member, staff member or volunteer in any sanctioned ministry of the church or any ministry led by our staff.

Leadership: We believe in a plurality of leaders, both lay and vocational (Acts 15:2-23). Our pastors and ministry leaders join with our Deacon Board, under their authority, to collectively lead our church family in ministry. Our pastors, as overseers and shepherds, are expected to provide vision and leadership for the ministries of our church (1 Timothy 5:17); they provide spiritual care, nourishment, protection for the flock and direction for its members (Acts 20:28-31). Our deacons are similarly called to manage their specific areas of ministry and also function as the Board of Directors for the corporation. God's Word calls for our leaders to lead with Godly maturity, wisdom, humbleness of heart, serving our church family and others. God's Word also calls for our church family to respectfully support our leaders (Matthew 20:25-28, 1 Peter 5:1-4, Hebrews 13:17).

Church Governance and Polity: God has not ordained any single means of church governance other than the Word of God, the Lordship of Christ, and the power of the Holy Spirit. The First Baptist Church of Torrance has elected to vest its government in the members who comprise it. For purposes of church doctrine, practice, policy, and discipline, the collective membership of this church, as represented by the Board of Deacons, is the final interpretive authority on the Bible's meaning and application. The church is self-governing, choosing its own leadership, managing its inner life, and determining its relationship to other churches. Torrance First Baptist Church is associated with Transformation Ministries which is a partnership of many ethnically and culturally diverse churches, adhering to baptistic convictions.

ARTICLE II - MEMBERSHIP

Section 1 - Qualifications: Any person who professes faith in Jesus Christ as his or her personal Lord and Savior and who is in accord with the faith and practices of this church may be considered for membership in this church.

Section 2 - Reception of Members: Persons may be received into membership upon recommendation by the Senior Pastor, hereafter referred to as the Lead Pastor, and by a majority vote of the Board of Deacons. Recommendation by the Pastor shall be based on any one of the following:

- a. Baptism: Any person professing faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, giving evidence of a change of heart and the testimony of a Christian life, may be received into this church upon baptism by immersion.
- b. Letter: Any person recommended by letter from another church of like faith may be received into this church, if baptism has been by immersion.
- c. Christian Experience: Any person of like faith may be received into this church by statement of their Christian faith and experience, providing they have been baptized by immersion.

Section 3 - Responsibilities: Based on God's Word, members are expected to honor the Lord through their lifestyle and spiritual service. They should strive to be fully devoted followers of Jesus Christ, faithfully loving and serving Him and one another. Members are to be active in this fellowship by regularly worshiping the Lord together, giving regularly to its support and benevolence, and sharing in its organized ministries and goals.

Section 4 - Rights: All members shall have equal rights, with the exception that those members under eighteen (18) years of age are ineligible to vote.

Members have no property rights, and upon termination of membership, they shall not be entitled to any interest in or proceeds from the assets of the church.

In the event of the dissolution of the Corporation, the assets of the church shall be transferred in trust to Transformation Ministries.

Section 5 - Inactive Members: When a member has been inactive for a period of twelve (12) months, without manifesting any interest therein by attending services, communicating with the church, or otherwise supporting its ministries, the Board of Deacons may transfer his or her name to the "Historical Membership List." Persons whose names are on the Historical Membership List shall not be counted or reported as members, may not take part in church business meetings, and may not hold office. If they held office at the time of being transferred, the office shall be considered vacated.

Any person whose name has been placed on the Historical Membership List, who renews his or her ties with the church may be restored to membership by a majority vote of the Board of Deacons.

Section 6 - Dismissal of Members: Membership in this church will be terminated upon member's death or by a majority vote of the Board of Deacons. Dismissal may be by one of the following methods:

- a. Letter: Members may be released to unite with another church of like faith upon application. A letter of recommendation shall be sent to the Pastor or Clerk of the church designated. The member's name shall be moved to the Historical Membership List with appropriate notation of action taken.
- b. Removal: The Board of Deacons may order the names of members removed from the church roll for any of the following reasons:
 - 1) When the member has been inactive for one (1) year.
 - 2) At the request of the member.
 - 3) Un-Christian conduct (e.g., as discussed in 1 Corinthians 5:11) if the member is un-reconciled after counseling in accordance with Matthew 18:15-18.

Names of members removed for any of these reasons shall be transferred to the Historical Membership List with appropriate notation of the action taken. Members whose names are removed under this Section will be notified in writing within thirty (30) days of the Board's action, including the reason, and advised of the right to appeal such action. The member may appeal the removal to the Board of Deacons.

Section 7 - Membership Lists: The Deacon Board is responsible for the maintenance and review of the Active and Historical Membership Lists, reporting annually to the congregation.

ARTICLE III - BOARD OF DEACONS

Section 1 - Number: The number of Deacons shall be established on a representative basis of a minimum of one (1) Deacon for every fifty (50) active members provided that there shall not be less than one (1) Deacon for each standing committee (see Article IV).

Section 2 - Qualifications: Deacons shall be selected according to the principles set forth in 1 Timothy 3:8-13 and Titus 1:5-9. A Deacon shall have been an active member of this church for a minimum of one (1) year and be at least twenty-one (21) years of age.

Section 3 - Duties and Responsibilities: The Board of Deacons shall be responsible for the management of the spiritual and temporal affairs of the church, subject to the authority of the membership as expressed generally in Article I. The Board's duties shall be in accordance with the principles set forth in Acts 6:1-6. The Board shall carry out its work, as far as possible, through the pastoral staff and through the standing committees. In addition, Deacons shall serve on the standing committee to which they are appointed and other committees as needed. In accordance with the Articles of Incorporation, the Board of Deacons shall act as a Board of Directors. (Whenever the term "Deacon" is used it shall include "Director" and whenever the term "Director" is used, it shall include "Deacon.")

Section 4 - Elections: Deacons shall be elected by a majority vote at a called business meeting of the membership. So far as practical, one-third (1/3) of the Board shall be elected each year.

Section 5 - Term of Office: Deacons shall be elected for a term of three (3) years. A Deacon serving more than two-thirds (2/3) of a full term shall be ineligible for re-election until the elapse of one (1) year.

Section 6 - Removal: A Deacon shall be presumed to have vacated his office if he ceases to be an active member. A Deacon may also be removed from office for failure to attend meetings of the Board or his assigned committee without reasonable cause, failure to perform his assigned duties, or un-Christian conduct. Such removal must be recommended to the church by majority vote of the Board of Deacons. The membership may then remove him by a majority vote at a called business meeting.

Section 7 - Resignations: Resignation of a Deacon shall be in writing to the Board and will be effective upon majority approval of the Board.

Section 8 - Vacancy: In case of a Board vacancy, the Board may nominate a candidate to fill that vacancy. Upon ratification by the membership, the person shall assume his duties for the unexpired term. Ratification shall require a majority vote at a called business meeting of the membership. The name of the candidate shall be published at least fourteen (14) days prior to the meeting.

Section 9 - Executive Committee: The Executive Committee shall consist of the Board Chair, Vice Chair and Secretary. Duties include management of staff salaries and benefits. In addition, the Executive Committee shall assist the Lead Pastor with other personnel-related matters. This committee will meet on an as-needed basis.

ARTICLE IV – COMMITTEES (MINISTRY TEAMS)

Section 1 - Standing Committees (Ministry Teams): Standing committees, hereafter referred to as Ministry Teams, shall consist of a minimum of one (1) Deacon, one (1) Deaconess and two (2) Members-at-Large. The Chairman of each ministry team shall be a Deacon and the Vice-chairperson shall be either a Deacon or Deaconess. Members-at-Large shall be members in good standing of this church. Member-at-Large appointments shall be made annually by each ministry team and ratified by a two-thirds (2/3) vote of the Board.

The Lead Pastor and Chairman of the Board shall be ex-officio non-voting members of all ministry teams. Ministry Directors shall be ex-officio non-voting members of the ministry team associated with their area of ministry and may serve as additional voting Members-at-Large. However, Ministry Directors shall not count towards satisfying the ministry team membership requirements stated above.

The following shall be standing ministry teams of this church (the responsibilities outlined here are further detailed in the By-Laws):

- a. Discipleship Development Ministry Team, along with the Pastoral staff, shall be responsible for all church educational, children's, youth and adult ministries.
- b. Facility Management Ministry Team shall be responsible for all matters relating to the acquisition, maintenance and protection of church properties.
- c. Fellowship Ministry Team shall be responsible for implementing church-wide fellowship activities.
- d. Finance Ministry Team shall be responsible for administration and oversight of all financial matters. This ministry team shall prepare and present to the Board of Deacons a recommended annual budget for consideration according to the provisions of Article VII. The Church Treasurer shall serve as a voting Member-at-Large. The Assistant Treasurer and Financial Secretary shall be ex-officio non-voting members of the Finance Ministry Team and may serve as voting Members-at-Large.
- e. Global Outreach Ministry Team shall be responsible for all missionary interests, activities and commitments.
- f. Local Outreach Ministry Team shall be responsible for implementing outreach and evangelistic activities in this church and the community.

- g. Worship Ministry Team supports the worship services of the church in the areas of ushering, baptism, communion, decorations and supplies.

Section 2 - Deaconess Ministry Team: The Deaconess Ministry Team shall assist the Deacons and the Church Staff in seeking to promote the spiritual welfare of the church.

- a. Number: The number of Deaconesses shall be established on a representative basis of a minimum of one (1) Deaconess for every fifty (50) active members provided that there shall not be less than one (1) Deaconess for each standing ministry team (see Article IV).
- b. Qualifications: Deaconesses shall be selected according to the principles set forth in 1 Timothy 3:8-13. A Deaconess shall have been a member for a minimum of one (1) year and be at least twenty-one (21) years of age.
- c. Elections: Deaconesses shall be elected by a majority vote at a called business meeting of the membership. So far as practical, one-third (1/3) of the team members shall be elected each year.
- d. Term of Office: Deaconesses shall be elected for a term of three (3) years. A Deaconess serving more than two-thirds (2/3) of a full term shall be ineligible for re-election until the elapse of one (1) year.
- e. Removal: A Deaconess shall be presumed to have vacated her office if she ceases to be an active member. A Deaconess may also be removed from office for failure to attend meetings of the Deaconess Ministry Team or her assigned committee without reasonable cause, failure to perform her assigned duties, or un-Christian conduct. Such removal must be recommended to the church by majority vote of the Board of Deacons. The membership may then remove her by a majority vote at a called business meeting.
- f. Resignations: Resignations of a Deaconess shall be in writing to the Deaconess Ministry Team and to the Board of Deacons and will be effective upon majority approval of the Board of Deacons.
- g. Vacancy: In case of a Deaconess vacancy, the Board may nominate a candidate to fill that vacancy. Upon ratification by the membership, the person shall assume her duties for the unexpired term. Ratification shall require a majority vote at a called business meeting of the membership. The name of the candidate shall be published at least fourteen (14) days prior to the meeting.

Section 3 - Nominating Committee: The Nominating Committee shall be responsible for presenting a slate of candidates for Deacons, Deaconesses and Church Officers, other than the Lead Pastor. The committee shall consist of five (5) members, one of which must be a Deacon and one of which must be a Deaconess. Members of the committee shall be appointed by the Board of Deacons and no person shall serve on this committee two (2) years in succession. The slate of candidates shall be presented at a called meeting of the membership each year. Names of the candidates shall be published at least fourteen (14) days prior to the meeting. Nominations may be made from the floor with prior consent of the nominee.

Section 4 - Lead Pastor Search Committee: A Lead Pastor Search Committee, comprised of at least two (2) Deacons, one (1) Deaconess, and four (4) Members-at-Large at the time of its formation, shall be named by the Board of Deacons immediately upon it becoming necessary to call a Lead Pastor. The Committee membership shall be ratified by a majority vote at a called meeting of the membership. This committee shall take necessary steps to secure the names of prospective pastors and request full information about their experience and qualifications. The committee shall present only one candidate at a time to the Deacon Board for presentation to the congregation. The Lead Pastor shall be elected by a written ballot at a called business meeting scheduled for that purpose. Election shall require a three-fourths (3/4) vote of those attending and eligible to vote. Notice of the election must have been given from the pulpit on the two (2) preceding Sundays.

Section 5 - Pastoral Staff Search Committee: The Pastoral Staff Search Committee shall be comprised of the Lead Pastor, at least one (1) Deacon, one (1) Deaconess, and at least two (2) Members-at-Large and shall be named by the Board of Deacons as soon as it becomes necessary to call a member of the Pastoral Staff. This committee shall take necessary steps to secure the names of prospective pastors and request full information about their experience and qualifications. The Lead Pastor, with the consent of the committee, shall present one candidate for each position at a time to the Deacon Board for presentation to the congregation. Election shall require two-thirds (2/3) vote of those attending and eligible to vote. Notice of the election must have been given from the pulpit on the two (2) preceding Sundays.

Section 6 - Special Committees: The Board of Deacons shall appoint special committees as the need arises. Special committees shall be subject to review by the Board at least annually.

ARTICLE V - OFFICERS

Section 1 - Number: The officers of this Church/Corporation shall be:

- a. Chairman of the Board
- b. Vice-Chairman of the Board
- c. Secretary of the Board
- d. Lead Pastor
- e. Treasurer
- f. Assistant Treasurer
- g. Financial Secretary
- h. Moderator
- i. Vice Moderator

Section 2 - Qualification of Officers: All officers shall be active members of this church and shall meet the qualifications set forth in 1 Timothy 3. The Lead Pastor shall be an ordained evangelical Christian minister in agreement with this church's statement of faith. The Chairman, Vice-Chairman, and Secretary shall be Deacons.

Section 3 - Responsibilities:

- a. The Chairman of the Board shall be, and act as, the President of the Church/Corporation and shall preside at meetings of the Board. He shall be an ex-officio non-voting member of all committees. He shall appoint Deacons for their respective committees and shall advise the Deacons, officers, and committees of their responsibilities.
- b. The Vice-Chairman of the Board shall assume the duties of the Chairman of the Board in his absence.
- c. The Secretary of the Board shall be the Secretary of this Church/Corporation. He shall be responsible for the keeping of an accurate record of the proceedings at meetings of the Board and business meetings of the membership.
- d. The Lead Pastor shall be responsible for providing spiritual guidance for this church. He shall be an ex-officio non-voting member of the Board of Deacons and all committees/ministry teams. All paid employees of this church shall be under his general supervision. Pastoral and office administrative staff shall be under his direct supervision.
- e. The Treasurer shall be responsible for the counting of all offerings, shall provide an accurate record of all receipts and work under the supervision of the Finance Ministry Team. The Treasurer shall not be a Deacon or Deaconess, but shall be a voting Member-at-Large of the Finance Ministry Team.

- f. The Assistant Treasurer shall assist the Treasurer as appropriate and shall assume the duties of the Treasurer in his or her absence. The Assistant Treasurer shall not be a Deacon or Deaconess, but shall be an ex-officio non-voting member of the Finance Ministry Team and may serve as a voting Member-at-Large.
- g. The Financial Secretary shall maintain an accurate record of all receipts made to this church and provide an annual account statement to each contributor. The Financial Secretary shall not be a Deacon or Deaconess but shall be an ex-officio non-voting member of the Finance Ministry Team and may serve as a voting Member-at-Large.
- h. The Moderator shall preside at all business meetings of the congregation. He or she shall be responsible for the agenda of these meetings. The Moderator shall not be a Deacon or Deaconess.
- i. The Vice-Moderator shall assume the duties of the Moderator in his or her absence. He or she shall not be a Deacon or Deaconess.
- j. General - All officers shall be under the jurisdiction of the Board of Deacons and be responsible thereto. They shall render to the Board of Deacons and/or membership such reports as may be directed.

Section 4 - Election of Officers:

- a. The Chairman, Vice-Chairman, and Secretary of the Board shall be elected annually by a majority vote of the Deacons.
- b. The Lead Pastor shall be elected in accordance with Article IV, section 4, herein.
- c. All other officers shall be elected annually by a majority vote at a called business meeting of the membership.
- d. In case of a vacancy in any Church Office other than the Lead Pastor, the Board may nominate a candidate to fill that vacancy. Upon ratification by the membership, the person shall assume his or her duties for the unexpired term. Ratification shall require a majority vote at a called business meeting of the membership. The name of the candidate shall be published at least fourteen (14) days prior to the meeting.

Section 5 - Terms of Office:

- a. The Lead Pastor shall serve for an indeterminate term. The pastoral relationship may be terminated upon thirty (30) days' notice by the Lead Pastor or the Church. Resignation by the Lead Pastor shall be accepted by the Board. Termination by the Church shall be voted at a called business meeting, notice and purpose having been given from the pulpit on the two (2) previous Sundays. A three-fourths (3/4) vote of those attending and eligible to vote shall be required. Votes shall be by written ballot.
- b. All other officers shall serve for the term of one (1) year beginning 1 January and ending 31 December, or until their successors have assumed office. No officer, other than the Lead Pastor, shall serve more than three (3) consecutive one-year terms.

Section 6 - Removal: An officer, other than the Lead Pastor, shall be presumed to have vacated his or her office if he or she ceases to be an active member. An officer may also be removed from office for failure to attend required meetings without reasonable cause, for failure to perform his assigned duties, or for un-Christian conduct. Such removal must be recommended to the church by majority vote of the Board of Deacons. The membership may then remove him or her by a majority vote at a called business meeting.

ARTICLE VI - AUXILIARY MINISTRIES

The church regards as integral parts of itself all groups formed to carry out its ministries. Officers, teachers and leaders of on-going classes, activities and groups shall be members of First Baptist Church of Torrance. All such auxiliary groups shall be under the supervision of the Board of Deacons, through the relevant ministry team, and shall submit reports as requested by the Board.

ARTICLE VII - FINANCE

Section 1 - General: Finances for church operation, its programs and missionary outreach shall be obtained primarily through tithes and regular offerings. Additional designations and freewill offerings may be received as deemed advisable by the Board of Deacons. The Finance Committee and the Board of Deacons shall present a recommended annual budget for the consideration of the membership at a called meeting. The budget shall be published at least fourteen (14) days prior to the meeting. Approval shall be by a majority vote. The recommended budget may be amended, increased or decreased from the floor when it is presented. The annual aggregate of non-budgeted items and budgeted expense category overruns, in excess of one and one half percent (1.5%) of the total adopted/amended budget, shall require approval by a majority vote of the membership at a called business meeting.

Section 2 - Salaries: Salary line items may be changed through the annual budget process or at any called meeting of the membership. A majority vote shall be necessary.

Section 3 - Obligation Authority: Only those individuals who are authorized by this Constitution or the By-laws of TFB may obligate/commit church funds.

Section 4 - Disbursements: All disbursements of church funds shall utilize accountable means such as a check, electronic transfer, church credit card or accountable petty cash.

Section 5 - Fund Raising: All fund raising activities shall require the approval of the Board of Deacons.

ARTICLE VIII - MEETINGS

Section 1 - Worship Services: Services shall be held each Sunday and at such other times as the Lead Pastor and/or the Board may direct.

Section 2 - Annual Meeting: A meeting of the membership shall be held annually to receive reports and transact business.

Section 3 - Business Meetings:

- a. Called - A business meeting may be called at any time by the Lead Pastor or the Board. Reports of the nominating committee, election of officers, and the adoption of the budget shall occur at such called meetings.
- b. Other - Immediately before or following any regular worship service, business may be transacted, provided that the business transacted is not in conflict with other provisions of the Constitution.

Section 4 - Board of Deacons: The Board shall hold a regular meeting each month at such time and place as the Board may determine. Additional meetings of the Board shall be held whenever considered necessary by the Chairman, the Lead Pastor, or a majority of the Board.

Section 5 - Notice:

- a. Notice of regular meetings of the Deacons, Deaconesses and standing committees shall be published.
- b. Unless otherwise specified in the Constitution, notice of called business meetings shall be given by pulpit announcement at any worship service on the Sunday preceding the meeting, or by other reasonable means, at least seven (7) days prior, to inform the membership of time, place, and purpose of such meetings.

Section 6 - Quorum: A minimum of fifty (50) members present and entitled to vote shall constitute a quorum at any business meeting of the membership. A majority of the elected Deacons shall constitute a quorum at any regular or called meeting of the Board. Quorum requirements for committees shall be in accordance with the By-Laws.

Section 7 - Procedure: Unless otherwise stated, Robert's Rules of Order, of last revision, shall be the procedural guide for all proceedings of the church.

Section 8 - Reports: The Board of Deacons and each Standing Ministry Team shall prepare an Annual Report of activities for the year. The report shall be compiled and distributed prior to the annual meeting of the membership.

ARTICLE IX - AMENDMENTS

This Constitution may be amended, modified, rescinded, or a new Constitution adopted by a two-thirds (2/3) vote at an annual or called business meeting of the membership. Due notice of the proposed action shall be given by:

- a. Written notice to the membership at least thirty (30) days prior to the date of the meeting, or
- b. Public announcement from the pulpit at regular services during the three (3) weeks prior to the date of the meeting.

ARTICLE X – BY-LAWS

By-laws developed to aid in carrying out the provisions of this Constitution may be amended, repealed or revised by a majority vote at a called business meeting of the membership.

BY-LAWS

FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH OF TORRANCE

ESTABLISHED June 20, 2013

ARTICLE I - ORGANIZATION AND CHURCH OPERATION

Section 1 - Organization of the Church

The organization of the First Baptist Church of Torrance vests its final authority for its government with the membership. A Board of Deacons is established as the central governing body and has general management responsibility over the church's programs, operation, and staff. The Board of Deacons shall carry out its work, as far as possible, through the Pastoral Staff and through the Standing Committees, hereafter referred to as Ministry Teams. These teams are delegated certain responsibilities and tasks by the Constitution which are further detailed in these By-Laws. Policies and procedures developed or revised by the Ministry Teams require the review of the Board of Deacons.

The Administrative organization of the church provides for the Church Office Staff, as well as the Pastoral Staff to be under the direct supervision and management of the Lead Pastor. The Lead Pastor may designate an Associate Pastor to perform this function. If no designation is made, the senior Associate Pastor (by tenure) shall assume this responsibility in the absence of the Lead Pastor. Further, delegation of authority and responsibility shall be as defined by the Board of Deacons as the occasion arises and circumstances dictate.

The Lead Pastor is responsible for the spiritual oversight of the church and is answerable to the Board of Deacons.

Section 2 - Standing Committees (Ministry Teams)

a. Discipleship Development Ministry Team, along with the Pastoral Staff, is responsible for all church educational, children's, youth and adult ministries. These activities include such things as: Sunday School, Bible studies, small groups, intern programs, nursery, teacher training, literature, libraries, distribution and maintenance of educational materials, mid-week programs, athletic activities, camping, men's, women's and senior adult ministries.

- 1) Duties and Responsibilities - The Discipleship Development Ministry Team, in cooperation with the Pastoral Staff, shall:
 - (a) Provide assistance in developing, implementing and administrating educational, children's, youth and adult ministries.
 - (b) Assist in the recruitment of qualified personnel for discipleship related ministries.
 - (c) Develop/approve policies for and assist in the supervision of all church libraries.
 - (d) Assist in the development of training programs for all Discipleship Development related ministries.
 - (e) Review programs, curricula and material to be used in Discipleship Development ministries.
 - (f) Review and approve all expenditures for materials, equipment, supplies, and activities that fall under the purview of the Discipleship Development Ministry Team.
 - (g) Review the Discipleship Development programs annually to determine fiscal support required for the following year.

- b. Facility Management Ministry Team is responsible for all matters relating to the operations and maintenance of all church property.
- 1) Duties and Responsibilities: The Facility Management Ministry Team shall:
- (a) Provide management, policy guidance, direction, and assistance in administering the following functions:
 - Custodial services
 - Vehicle operation and maintenance
 - Church security
 - Insurance (property, liability including coverage for Directors and Officers, workers compensation and bonding for the Treasurer and Assistant Treasurer)
 - Church property administration and maintenance
 - Purchasing of items not specifically delegated to other committees or individuals.
 - Capital equipment acquisition and maintenance.
 - (b) Review and approve all expenditures for functions outlined herein. The committee may delegate expenditure authority for standard supplies for the office, worship center, custodian, kitchen and gardening. Such expenditures will be reviewed monthly for appropriateness and future guidance to responsible individual(s).
 - (c) Administer all church parsonages and rental properties (maintenance, rent receipts and accounting)
 - (d) Review and approve compensation for custodial, security, and grounds maintenance personnel.
 - (e) Resolve all facility operational problems and provide interpretation of operating procedures for which it has responsibility.
 - (f) Review all capital equipment acquisitions recommended by other committees.
 - (g) Review and approve all purchase contracts for repairs, maintenance and construction to the facilities, vehicles, parsonages or rental properties.
 - (h) Review the Facility Management Ministry Team activities annually to determine the fiscal support required for the

following year.

- c. Fellowship Ministry Team is responsible for implementing church-wide fellowship activities.
- 1) Duties and Responsibilities: The Fellowship Ministry Team shall:
 - (a) Plan church-wide fellowship meals, programs, receptions, etc.
 - (b) Provide bereavement meals.
 - (c) Oversee the operation and use of the kitchen.
 - (d) Establish and maintain a standard inventory of supplies for the kitchen.
 - (e) Review and approve all expenditures for fellowship activities included in the church's approved budget.
 - (f) Review fellowship activities annually to determine the fiscal support required for the following year.
- d. Finance Ministry Team is responsible for the proper handling of all financial matters.
- 1) Duties and Responsibilities: The Finance Ministry Team shall:
 - (a) Prepare and present a recommended budget to the Board of Deacons annually.
 - (b) Review and approve for correctness all church expenditures for which approval is not granted to committees according to these By-Laws.
 - (c) Monitor/review all expenditures to determine adherence to established budget and policy guidance.
 - (d) Establish and maintain current church operating procedures for:
 - Invoice verification and processing
 - Advance Replacements (AR)
 - Budget changes
 - Requests for Disbursement (RFD)
 - Receipts of donations and other income

- (e) Provide budget guidance recommendations, as needed, to the Board of Deacons and Ministry Teams to assure expenditures are compatible with receipts.
 - (f) Review all long-term capital equipment lease agreements. All such lease agreements are subject to final approval by the Board of Deacons.
 - (g) Review real property acquisition and disposition studies (sale, trade, etc.), and recommend appropriate action to the Facilities Management Ministry Team or the Board of Deacons, as appropriate.
- e. Global Outreach Ministry Team is responsible for all missionary interests, activities and commitments.
 - 1) Duties and Responsibilities - The Global Outreach Ministry Team shall:
 - (a) Administer the mission program of the church according to the current Global Outreach Policies of the First Baptist Church of Torrance.
 - (b) Keep the church informed of mission activities, in coordination with the Discipleship Development Ministry Team and the Pastoral staff.
 - (c) Review and approve all expenditures for mission programs and activities included in the church's approved budget.
 - (d) Review mission activities annually to determine fiscal support required for the following year.
- f. Local Outreach Ministry Team is responsible for implementing outreach and evangelistic activities in this church and the community.
 - 1) Duties and Responsibilities: The Local Outreach Ministry Team shall:
 - (a) Publicize the church's programs and activities to the local community.

- (b) Contact visitors.
 - (c) Develop methods of assisting disadvantaged people in our community.
 - (d) Coordinate and cooperate with the Pastoral Staff in developing and implementing outreach activities.
 - (e) Review and approve all expenditures for outreach activities included in the church's approved budget.
 - (f) Review outreach activities annually to determine fiscal support required for the following year.
- g. Worship Ministry Team is responsible for supporting the worship services of the church.
- 1) Duties and Responsibilities: The Worship Ministry Team, in coordination with the Pastoral Staff, shall:
 - (a) Schedule, and assist in the implementation of Communion and Baptism.
 - (b) Recruit and supervise ushers and greeters for all worship services.
 - (c) Review and approve material to be placed in pew racks.
 - (d) Provide support and assistance to the worship ministry in the areas of decorating and worship supplies.
 - (e) Review and approve all expenditures for worship programs and responsibilities outlined herein.
 - (f) Maintain current church operating procedures for:
 - Baptism service
 - Communion service
 - Ushers and greeters (selection, performance procedures, and having available for worship services.)
 - (g) Review Worship activities annually to determine the fiscal support required for the following year.

Section 3 - Deaconess Ministry Team

The Deaconess Ministry Team shall assist the Board of Deacons and the Church Staff in executing their responsibilities for the welfare of the church. The number, qualifications, term of office and method of selection are described in Article IV, Section 2 of the Constitution.

- a. Duties and Responsibilities: The Deaconess Ministry Team shall:
 - 1) Assist in the leadership of the Ministry Team to which they are assigned.
 - 2) Promote the benevolent care of the church family.
 - 3) Review Deaconess' activities annually to determine the fiscal support required for the following year.

Section 4 - Nominating Committee

Nominating Committee is responsible for compiling and recommending to the Board of Deacons a slate of candidates, for Deacons, Deaconesses and Officers, that are to be elected at a called meeting of the membership annually.

- a. Duties and Responsibilities - Following their appointment, the members of the Nominating Committee shall:
 - 1) Obtain a list of those positions to be filled.
 - 2) Compile a list of prospective candidates for specific positions based on the current certified active membership list.
 - 3) Conduct personal interviews with prospective candidates and related staff members to ascertain qualifications and willingness to serve in the specific positions.
 - 4) Assure at least one candidate for each position vacancy.
 - 5) Submit a final slate of candidates to the Board.

Section 5 - Annual Reports

Deacon, Deaconess and Standing Ministry Team annual reports shall address significant accomplishments and problems encountered by the team in the preceding year. Reports may also include recommendations for specific actions to be considered by the Board of Deacons or the following year's Ministry Team. The report shall be submitted to the church office for inclusion in the Annual Report of the First Baptist Church of Torrance.

Section 6 - Meeting Requirements

The Deacons, Deaconesses and Standing Ministry Teams shall meet and conduct their activities according to this Section of the By-Laws. Unless otherwise provided, Robert's Rules of Order, of latest revision, shall be the procedural guide for all meetings.

a. Meetings:

- 1) The Deacons, Deaconesses and Standing Ministry Teams shall meet monthly and at such other times as called by the Chair.
- 2) A majority of the voting membership shall constitute a quorum for any meeting.
- 3) Notice of regularly scheduled meetings shall be published.

b. Minutes: Minutes of the proceedings shall be recorded for all regular and called meetings. Minutes shall be approved at a subsequent meeting.

c. Officer Duties:

- 1) The Chair shall preside at all meetings.
- 2) The Vice-Chair shall act in the absence of the Chair.

Section 7 - Membership/Church Roll:

The Church roll consists of the registry of all active church members.

- a. Maintenance - The Active and Historical membership lists shall be updated monthly by the church office.
- b. Annual Certification – The Board shall certify the active membership list annually.

ARTICLE II - FINANCE

Section 1 - Authority to Spend/Obligate the funds of the First Baptist Church of Torrance is limited to the individuals specified herein and according to the provisions of these By-Laws.

- a. Budget requirements: All expenditures must be within the amounts approved in the budget except as provided in Article VII, Section 1 of the Constitution. (Budget approval does not of itself constitute obligation authority. It is a guideline or limit of total dollars which may be obligated.)
- b. Authority to Commit:
 - 1) Chairpersons may obligate up to the annual budgeted amount for any line item for which they have responsibility. Necessary expenditures in excess of this amount should be offset, to the greatest extent practical, by reduced spending on other budget line items. Any line item excess which cannot be offset must be approved by the Board of Deacons. Chairpersons may delegate authority to specific individuals within the guidelines of these By-Laws or as approved by the Finance Ministry Team.
 - 2) Fixed Expenses (salaries, taxes, association dues, utilities, service contracts, and payment on approved loans) will be paid when due as budgeted.
 - 3) The Chairman of the Board of Deacons or his designee may obligate amounts from membership approved special funds and from Special Designation accounts.
- c. Obligation Authority/Instruments are not used by the church; however, authorized individuals may sign sales orders/contracts or other obligation instrument to the extent authorized. When only a verbal commitment is required, the obligor shall advise the Church Office Supervisor and/or bookkeeper who shall maintain a log of such obligations for presentation to the Finance Ministry Team. Copies of all signed obligations will also be presented to the Finance Ministry Team.

Section 2 - Disbursements/Expenditures

- a. All disbursements/expenditures, except for petty cash expenditures, shall be made by check, church credit card or electronic transfer of funds.

- b. All bills/invoices shall be reviewed by the responsible Ministry Team and approved for payment, except as otherwise specified herein.
- c. Signatures Required: All checks in excess of \$500 shall be signed by any two (2) of the individuals listed below. Lesser amounts shall require only one (1) signature of the listed individuals.
 - 1) Church Treasurer
 - 2) Assistant Church Treasurer
 - 3) Financial Secretary
 - 4) Finance Ministry Team Chairman
 - 5) Chairman of the Deacon Board
 - 6) Vice Chairman of the Deacon Board
 - 7) Secretary of the Deacon Board

ARTICLE III - ASSOCIATE/ASSISTANT PASTORS/DIRECTORS

The qualifications, responsibilities, and duties of the Associate and Assistant Pastors and Directors shall be defined in the position description for the particular staff function. Associate, Assistant Pastors and Directors shall be called for an indefinite period of time. The employment of Associate, Assistant Pastors and Directors may be terminated by the Lead Pastor after consultation with the Board of Deacons, upon thirty (30) days' notice. Resignation shall require thirty (30) days' notice and shall be accepted by the Board. Termination initiated by the congregation shall require a three-fourths (3/4) majority vote at a business meeting called for that purpose. Notice and purpose of the called meeting shall have been read from the pulpit on the two (2) Sundays prior to the date of the meeting.