

## FERNWOOD BAPTIST CHURCH PROCEDURES

These procedures are intended to be general guidelines. They should be fluid enough to allow flexibility as the church grows or changes direction from year to year.

This document may be modified by a simple majority of Deacons present and voting. Any committee/team governed by this document may initiate changes to the document that relate to their committee/team.

### I. General Procedures

#### A. Standing Committees

1. The Standing Committees of the Church shall be composed of Church members and shall be as follows:
  - a. Ministry Council (the Ministry Council Secretary shall serve as a non-voting, *ex-officio* member of the Council)
  - b. Building and Grounds Committee
  - c. Finance Committee (the Church Treasurer shall serve as a non-voting *ex-officio* member)
  - d. Personnel Committee
  - e. Facilities Use Committee
2. Nominees for Standing Committees are to be presented by the Ministry Council and voted upon by the Church at the time and by the method provided in Section II.D.6 of these Procedures.
3. All personnel so elected will assume office at the beginning of the Church year and shall serve through the Church year.
4. Members of Standing Committees shall serve a three-year term, rotating off for one year before being eligible for reelection to the same committee. Member rotation shall ensure continuity for approximately two-thirds of committee membership. The rotation schedule shall be determined by the committee itself. Under extenuating circumstances, a committee member may be asked by the Ministry Council to extend their term of service beyond these guidelines.
5. Any vacant, unexpired terms on any Standing Committee may be filled by the committee itself with the approval of the Ministry Council.
6. All committees may have a minister and/or a deacon as non-voting, *ex-officio* members.

#### B. Special Committees and Task Forces

1. Other committees and task forces with a limited scope and time frame may be established by the Diaconate with input from the ministerial staff.
2. The Diaconate will dissolve the committee or task force when the project for which it is established is complete.
3. All such committees may have a minister and/or a deacon as non-voting,

*ex-officio* members.

- C. Ministry Teams
1. Ministry Teams are focused on the Mission and Ministry of the Church rather than elements of formal business.
  2. All Ministry Teams shall be organized by the Ministry Council prior to the beginning of each Church year.
  3. Team members can be Church members or non-members.
  4. All Ministry Team members shall serve a term of one year. Any individual may serve on the same Ministry Team for as many terms as they wish.
  5. Ministry Teams may be added or eliminated based upon the changing needs of the congregation and community.
  6. The addition or elimination of Ministry Teams shall be at the recommendation of the Ministry Council with approval of the Diaconate.
  7. Each Ministry Team may choose its own leader or the Ministry Council may appoint one.

II. Ministry Council

A. Purpose

1. The Ministry Council shall exist as a Standing Committee of the Church, consisting of Church members who serve on a Ministry Team.
2. The Ministry Council's primary concern shall be the coordination of the ministries of the Church and the scheduling of Church activities.

B. Membership

1. Membership of the Ministry Council shall be comprised of the following: a Chair, a Chair-elect, and four at-large members who shall be responsible for representing the interests of the Ministry Teams.
2. These representatives will be selected for each of the following areas: Worship Ministries, Belonging Ministries, Serving Ministries, and Investing Ministries.
3. The Deacon Chair and/or Pastor will serve as *ex-officio* members of the Ministry Council. Deacon officers are ineligible to serve on the Ministry Council in any other capacity.
4. Standing Committees of the Church will be represented by one member of the Investing Ministries. They may also choose to participate in a Ministry Council meeting or be asked to provide information to the Ministry Council for planning and implementation of specific activities.

C. Election

1. The members of the Ministry Council shall be elected at the time and by the method provided for in Section II.D.6 for the election of Church Officers.
2. The proposed members of the Ministry Council shall be presented as a slate of candidates with the prior term's Chair-elect included on the slate as the new Chair.

D. Duties

1. The Ministry Council receives reports of actions developed by Ministry

Teams for information and for coordination with other functions. Actions developed by Ministry Teams can be handled directly by the individual team if it does not require coordination.

2. The Ministry Council shall oversee and coordinate the function, number, responsibilities, needs, and composition of the Ministry Teams.
3. The Ministry Council shall oversee and maintain the Church media center/library and provide for the storage and maintenance of documents related to the Church's history.
4. The Ministry Council shall oversee and coordinate Church ministries and activities to ensure efficient and appropriate use of Church facilities, equipment, budgeted items, and other resources. This duty shall include primary responsibility for scheduling Church ministries and activities.
5. The Ministry Council shall serve as a nominating committee. They will provide candidates from the Church membership to fill all leadership or committee memberships except for the Diaconate, search committees, Pastor Relations Team (its initial selection), and ministerial and non-ministerial staff. The Ministry Council may receive recommendations from Standing Committees for new members.
6. Church Officers and any other elected position established under these Procedures, unless otherwise provided, shall be elected no later than two months prior to the beginning of the Church year. The Ministry Council will be responsible for preparing this slate of officers and teachers for presentation to the Church. Elected officers or other elected individuals shall assume positions at the beginning of the Church year and serve through that Church year. The Church membership shall receive notice of the nominees for each elected position at least two weeks prior to the scheduled election.
7. The Ministry Council shall maintain a task list of actions under consideration. The Council shall also maintain and make available to the Church the minutes of each meeting, no later than the beginning of each succeeding meeting of the Ministry Council.
8. Maintain a Church calendar.

### III. Building and Grounds Committee

#### A. Purpose

The committee shall provide for the maintenance and normal upkeep of the Church's existing buildings and grounds.

#### B. Duties

1. Maintain a close working relationship with persons assigned custodial duties.
2. Determine, along with the persons assigned custodial duties, what expenditures are necessary for cleaning and janitorial supplies, and then make recommendation to the Finance Committee for inclusion in the Church Ministry Plan.

3. Schedule routine maintenance/repairs/replacement of Church systems and facilities.
4. Make recommendation to the Finance Committee of expenditures beyond the scope of the current Ministry Plan.
5. Maintain an ongoing priority list of larger, non-routine maintenance tasks.

#### IV. Finance Committee

##### A. Purpose

The Finance Committee, in conjunction with the Treasurer, shall oversee all financial matters of the Church.

##### B. Duties

##### 1. Budgeting

- a. Make plans for the varied elements of the Church Ministry Plan and recommend to the Deacons the expenditure of any funds in excess of \$1500 not included in the Ministry Plan.
- b. Be responsible for making the Ministry Plan presentation to the Church for approval.
- c. Review all special offerings or special monetary appeals not included in the regular Ministry Plan and make any related recommendations to the Deacons.

##### 2. Accounting and Reporting

- a. Establish a regular review of accounts payable.
- b. Prepare a monthly report of the financial status of the Church to the Deacons with a summary to be included in the Church newsletter.
- c. Provide for an annual audit of the books. This audit will be conducted by a Certified Public Accountant every three years, with a team of Church members selected by the Finance Committee conducting the audit in the two intervening years.
- d. Lead the Church Treasurer, the Assistant Church Treasurer, and the clerical staff, in managing the financial transactions of the Church. The duties of this group will include accounts payable, payroll, and tax-related matters. This group will also generate reports and prepare checks but will not countersign the checks.

##### 3. Insurance and Indemnity

- a. Ensure the Church is covered adequately for any liability of actions by or to the Church or its members in activities related to the Church.
- b. Review insurance policies and verify that proper coverage is maintained.
- c. Work with other committees and staff members to advise about other insurance issues related to transportation, health, fire and casualty, and the like.

V. Personnel Committee

A. Purpose

The Church has charged the Personnel Committee to provide guidance, oversight, and support to ensure policies, procedures, and processes are in place for Church staff.

B. Duties

1. Make reports to the Deacons concerning Church staff personnel.
2. The Personnel Committee of Fernwood is responsible to the congregation for developing, administering, and overseeing all Personnel policies and procedures for all church staff.
3. The Personnel Committee is also responsible for assisting the Pastor in developing and overseeing the performance appraisal plan for all staff employees (other than ministerial staff and the Pastor). In consultation with the Pastor, the Personnel Committee shall develop and update job descriptions, recommend salaries and benefits, evaluate working conditions, and comply with employment laws and regulations.
4. Working with the Pastor, the Personnel Committee shall review performance appraisals, provide continuing education opportunities, and enlist coaching where needed. If necessary, the Personnel Committee will assist the Pastor in coordinating disciplinary actions, with input from others. (i.e. The Building and Grounds chair may provide input regarding the custodian).
5. Cooperate with the Building and Grounds Committee, the Finance Committee, and other Church committees or Ministry Teams with regard to employment of non-ministerial staff who perform tasks related to the responsibilities of these Church committees or Ministry Teams.
6. Make recommendations to fill vacated staff positions except as provided by these Procedures and the Church Constitution.
7. Maintain an Employee Handbook and Personnel Policy Manual.
8. Aid in the arbitration of the Church staff with regard to policies and procedures.

VI. Facilities Use Committee

A. Purpose

Oversee all aspects of the usage of facilities that comprise the campus of Fernwood Baptist Church.

B. Duties

1. Be responsible for maintaining a policy for the use of Church facilities.
2. Be responsible for setting, annually reviewing, and updating as needed a usage fee schedule per area of the campus.
3. Review all requests from members and non-members for the use of any area on the campus not covered by the facilities use policy or not part of normal Church functions.
4. Work with Church staff in inspecting the facilities after usage has occurred

- for any potential damage.
5. Be responsible for collecting reimbursement for any damage, ensuring the collection of all fees and security deposits related to facilities usage.
  6. Ensure that Fernwood Baptist Church is in compliance with all legal regulations applicable to rental of facilities, so that our non-profit status will always remain intact.
  7. Ensure that Fernwood Baptist Church is adequately insured at all times for the use of our facilities by non-members.
  8. Report scheduled use of facilities to the Ministry Council which maintains the Church calendar. Any requests needing Church approval must be submitted to the Deacons.

C. Membership

1. The Facilities Use Committee will consist of a member of the Finance Committee, a member of the Building and Grounds Committee, and an at-large Church member.
2. Any Ministry Team whose activities require the use of specific facilities of the Church campus will report to the Facilities Use Committee as part of the planning of such activities.

VII. Pastor Relations Team

A. Purpose

The Pastor Relations Team (PRT) shall be formed to support and provide non-financial aid to the pastor and their family as well as to foster communication between the congregation and pastor to promote healthy relationships.

B. Duties

1. The PRT shall meet quarterly, with additional meetings scheduled as deemed necessary by a majority of its members. Each meeting for the PRT will convene at a date and time set by the Team in consultation with the pastor.
2. With the exception of matters subject to South Carolina laws regarding mandated reporting, all members of the Pastor Relations Team shall make a commitment of confidentiality to the pastor and pastor's family.

C. Membership

1. For the first year of a pastor's tenure, the PRT shall be composed of the members of the Pastor Search Team. At the quarterly meetings, a quorum shall consist of at least four members of the Pastor Search Team and the pastor.
2. After the first year, the PRT shall be made up of three members of the congregation who live the church's vision, do not gossip, who are deemed to have good judgment, and who care for the pastor and the pastor's family. The members of the PRT shall consist of one member of the Diaconate, one member selected by the Deacons, and one member selected by the pastor. However, the member who is a Deacon shall only serve for one year, the member selected by the pastor shall only serve for two years, and the member of the congregation selected by the Deacons shall serve three years. This rotation will continue with no member serving consecutive years.

VIII. Diaconate

A. Purpose

Refer to the Constitution, Section VII.B.

B. Duties

Refer to the Constitution, Section VII.B.

C. Membership

1. For requirements, see Constitution, Section VII.B.

2. Selection process—At least two weeks prior to any deacon selection process, a list of those members who are eligible for deacon nomination will be provided to the congregation for its consideration.
3. The annual selection of Deacons shall occur on or about the first Sunday of May of each year.

4. The Church shall cast ballots for new Deacon nominees, each member voting for no more than the number of vacant positions.
5. Persons receiving the greater number of votes by the congregation and agreeing to serve will fill the open positions. The vote shall be by secret ballot and the ballots shall be counted immediately after the vote by the Deacon Chair and two deacons appointed by the Chair. These deacons will notify the newly selected deacons as soon as possible. Ballots should remain at the Church during the count and then be stored in the office safe for one year.
6. The terms of service for the Deacons shall be so arranged that the terms of one-third of the Diaconate shall expire annually.
7. In the event of death, resignation, or incapacity of a Deacon, which shall occur more than twelve months before the expiration of such Deacon's term, the next person in order from the most recent Deacon selection process will be asked to fill the unexpired term.
8. A Deacon selected to serve an unexpired term of one year or more shall not be eligible for re-selection until a period of one year shall have elapsed from the expiration date of their term.
9. A Deacon selected and serving a full term shall not be eligible for re-selection until a period of two years has elapsed from the expiration of their term.
10. Officers of the Ministry Council are ineligible to serve as Deacons.

D. Officers

1. Chair
2. Vice-Chair
3. Secretary
4. These will be selected by the Diaconate for one Church year.

E. Meetings

1. The regular meetings of the Deacons shall be held once a month, or at such intervals determined by the Deacon Chair.
2. The Chair, or in the absence or disability of the Chair, the Vice-Chair, may call a special meeting at such times as the affairs of the Church may require.
3. A quorum for transacting business at any regular or special meeting shall consist of a majority of the Deacons currently serving.
4. The minutes of all meetings will be maintained in the Church office and made available to the congregation at their request.
5. A report from the Deacons will be included in the Church newsletter monthly.

IX. Treasurer and Assistant Treasurer

A. Purpose

See Constitution, Section VII.D.

B. Duties

1. Maintain two digital back-ups of the financial records, with at least one in the cloud
2. Ensure an annual audit shall be prepared and submitted to the Deacons.
3. Be authorized to sign all financially-related documents and have oversight of such documents, along with the pastor-appointed clerical staff member who shall have the same authorization.
4. Along with the Finance Committee, keep regular records and reports of accounts, submit them together with vouchers, receipts, and other papers upon request to the Deacons, and perform such other and further duties as are incident to the office.
5. Open, review, and sign any and all bank statements received by the Church.
6. Ensure the prompt sale of any stock certificates/shares received as gifts to the Church. Members donating stock should contact the Church office on the day of the transfer of the stock to ensure a timely sale takes place.

X. Other Church Employees

See the Personnel Policy Manual

XI. Changes to Procedures

Any changes to these Procedures by the Deacons will be published in the first newsletter following such changes.

XII. Fernwood's Emergency Assistance Process (revised 10/24/25)

Fernwood has long been known for its generosity. So, it is quite common for people requiring emergency assistance with rent, utilities, food, etc., to contact the church office requesting help.

This is the process we follow in the church office, along with assistance from the Missions Assessment Team (2 volunteers plus the Pastor).

- The church's Administrative Assistant is usually the first point of contact for people seeking assistance, either by phone or in-person. The Adm. Assistant asks questions about the nature of the need and other places the individual might have sought assistance. The first option is then to use the information sheet on Local Relief Agencies (*see attachment*) in the community that can be sources of help. Often this proves to be enough information for the person to use to access the aid that is needed.

- If further assistance is needed, the information is shared with the Pastor, who speaks with the individual and assesses the need as well as the church resources available to help.

As always, Fernwood's policy is that any financial assistance will be issued to a third party (landlord, utility company, etc.) and not the individual being assisted.

- If the individual is a church member, the Pastor will consult with the Deacon Chair regarding use of the Benevolence Fund to assist with any financial needs. If the need is for resources other than financial (such as food, clothing, furnishings, etc.), the Pastor will consult with the Missions Assessment Team, which can either solicit the resources from the church at large or share the information with a Sunday school class(es) to help fulfill the needs of the person.
- After assessment of the need, if the individual is a non-church member the Pastor will consult with the Deacon Chair regarding use of the Benevolence Fund to assist with any financial needs. If the need is for resources other than financial (such as food, clothing, furnishings, etc.), the Pastor will consult with the Missions Assessment Team, which can either solicit the resources from the church at large or share the information with a Sunday school class(es) to help fulfill the needs of the person.
- The MAT volunteers for 2025-26 are Clarence Batts and Caleb McDaniels.

Updated 3-26-2026