

**BYLAWS OF THE FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH  
IN FRAMINGHAM**

**FRAMINGHAM, MASSACHUSETTS**

**January 2023**

## Table of Contents

PREAMBLE .....	1
ARTICLE I. PURPOSE.....	1
ARTICLE II. GOVERNMENT AND AFFILIATION .....	1
SECTION A. Government.....	1
SECTION B. Affiliation .....	2
ARTICLE III. MEMBERSHIP.....	2
SECTION A. Qualifications .....	2
SECTION B. Process.....	2
SECTION C. Duties and Opportunities for Members .....	2
SECTION D. Classification.....	3
SECTION E. Termination of Active Membership .....	3
ARTICLE IV. PASTORAL LEADERSHIP .....	3
SECTION A. Calling of a Pastor .....	3
SECTION B. Duties of Pastor(s).....	4
ARTICLE V. TERMS AND DUTIES OF OFFICERS.....	4
SECTION A. Moderator .....	4
SECTION B. Clerk .....	4
SECTION C. Treasurer.....	5
SECTION D. Financial Secretary .....	5
SECTION E. Chairperson of the Board of Administration and Finance.....	6
ARTICLE VI. EXECUTIVE COUNCIL .....	6
SECTION A. Purpose.....	6
SECTION B. Membership.....	6
SECTION C. Duties.....	6
SECTION D. Meeting Frequency, Open Meeting, and Quorum .....	7
ARTICLE VII. BOARDS.....	8
SECTION A. Board of Deacons/Ministry .....	8
SECTION B. Board of Administration and Finance .....	9
SECTION C. Board of Missions .....	11
ARTICLE VIII. COMMITTEES OF THE EXECUTIVE COUNCIL.....	11
SECTION A. Pastoral Relations Committee .....	11
SECTION B. Nominating Committee .....	12
SECTION C. Communications Committee .....	12
SECTION D. Delegates .....	12
SECTION E. Pastoral Search Committee.....	13
SECTION F. Church Internal Auditors .....	13
SECTION G. Historian or Historical Committee .....	13
SECTION H. Other Committees .....	14
ARTICLE IX. MEETINGS .....	14
SECTION A. Worship.....	14
SECTION B. Business Meetings.....	14
SECTION C. Quorum.....	15
ARTICLE X. TERMINATIONS.....	15
SECTION A. Of Pastorate.....	15
SECTION B. Of Elected Officers Executive Council Members, and Board Members .....	15
ARTICLE XI. GIFTS .....	16
SECTION A. Gifts as Property of the Church.....	16
SECTION B. Undesignated Gifts .....	16

ARTICLE XII. ELECTION OF OFFICERS, EXECUTIVE COUNCIL MEMBERS, BOARD MEMBERS, AND EXECUTIVE COUNCIL COMMITTEE MEMBERS AT THE ANNUAL MEETING.....16

    SECTION A. Method of Voting.....16

    SECTION B. Term of Office.....16

    SECTION C. Restrictions of Office .....16

ARTICLE XIII. PARLIAMENTARY PROCEDURE.....16

ARTICLE XIV. POSTING OF BYLAWS.....16

ARTICLE XV. AMENDMENTS TO BYLAWS .....16

**BYLAWS OF THE FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH IN FRAMINGHAM  
FRAMINGHAM, MASSACHUSETTS**

**January 2023**

**PREAMBLE**

The corporate name of this church is The First Baptist Church in Framingham (hereafter called First Baptist Church). This church, established in 1826, now exists as a corporation under the general laws of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts by virtue of a charter issued in 1888.

**ARTICLE I. PURPOSE**

First Baptist Church is a church:

- That is undergirded by the Bible
- That is informed by the preaching and teaching of the revealed word of God centered in Jesus Christ
- Whose members believe that God is revealed to individuals and more fully revealed in the gathered community
- That is committed to a worship of God that reflects the multicultural nature of the congregation
- That embraces the spiritual gift of hospitality and seeks to nurture a welcoming environment
- That recognizes its heritage in the stewardship of the building and is committed to continuing to use it as a major resource for mission in the City of Framingham
- That is committed to a mission of outreach, ministering to the local and global communities
- That promotes ecumenism and supports ecumenical programs and projects to the fullest extent possible in evidence of our realization of human concern and united witness

**ARTICLE II. GOVERNMENT AND AFFILIATION**

***SECTION A. Government***

1. The government of this church shall be established by church members and will have only church members as its officers.
2. The government will receive its authority from the membership of the church and will be subject to no other ecclesiastical body.

## ***SECTION B. Affiliation***

First Baptist Church shall be affiliated with the American Baptist Churches of the United States of America (ABC USA), The American Baptist Churches of Massachusetts (TABCOM) and the Samuel Stillman Association. Beyond denominational ties, this church shall support ecumenism locally and globally.

## **ARTICLE III. MEMBERSHIP**

### ***SECTION A. Qualifications***

Membership in this church shall be open to all people of Christian faith and purpose who:

1. Agree with the stated purpose of this church (see Article I)
2. Ascribe to the church's bylaws and covenant
3. Have completed a pastor's membership course
4. Accept the duties and opportunities of membership as stated in section C of this article
5. Qualify in one of the following ways:
  - a. Baptism upon profession of faith: Persons who have confessed Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord in baptism, preferably by immersion.
  - b. Letter: Persons who provide a letter of transfer from another Christian church.
  - c. Affirmation of faith: Persons who cannot provide a letter but have been members of a Christian church or can give evidence of their Christian experience.
  - d. Reactivated membership: Persons whose names have been transferred from the active membership list to the inactive list may be restored to active membership upon their request and on recommendation of the Pastor and the Board of Deacons/Ministry.

### ***SECTION B. Process***

1. Upon recommendation of the Pastor and the Board of Deacons/Ministry, individuals will be admitted to membership by the right hand of fellowship.
2. All candidates for membership shall be given a copy of these bylaws and the church covenant before being admitted as members.
3. Upon new members' completion of Article III, Section A and after the above approval, the Clerk shall enter the names of the new members into the membership record.

### ***SECTION C. Duties and Opportunities for Members***

1. Duties: A member is expected to be faithful in the spiritual duties (e.g., Bible study, prayer, participation in the Christian fellowship essential to the Christian life), to contribute regularly for its support and its benevolences, and to share in its organized work.

2. Opportunities: Members are expected and encouraged to express their opinions on all facets of church life and administration.

#### ***SECTION D. Classification***

Church members shall be classified as active or inactive. Members are considered active when they:

1. Attend worship services *or*
2. Contribute financially to the church *or*
3. Participate on a board, committee, or church organization

Members also may maintain active membership if they:

1. Are full-time students, members of the armed forces on active duty *or*
2. Have a known hardship that hinders their attendance or financial support

#### ***SECTION E. Termination of Active Membership***

1. Letter of transfer: Upon request, a member will be granted a letter to another Christian church subject to the vote of the Board of Deacons/Ministry. Such a letter is to be sent by the Clerk to the church to which the member is transferring.
2. Inactivity: Members who continue to be absent for two years from the fellowship and service of communion of the church; who fail to support the church financially for a period of one year; and who evidence no interest in the church despite efforts of the Pastor and Board of Deacons/Ministry shall be placed on the Inactive List with the date recorded by the Clerk. Such members shall be notified in writing of this action by the Clerk. They will be transferred to inactive status if they fail to communicate with the church within 30 days after written notification of this proposed action. To facilitate this procedure, the Board of Deacons/Ministry shall review the membership roll annually. (Reactivation procedures are listed in Article III, Section A5d.)
3. Death.

### **ARTICLE IV. PASTORAL LEADERSHIP**

#### ***SECTION A. Calling of a Pastor***

1. The Pastor, upon recommendation of the Pastoral Search Committee (see Article VIII, Section E), shall be chosen and called for an indefinite period of time.
2. The date of the candidacy and vote shall be announced by electronic or U.S. mail to the membership two weeks in advance of the date and from the pulpit on the two Sundays preceding the date.
3. At the business meeting to vote on whether to call the Pastor, three-quarters (3/4) of all members present either in person or virtually must vote in the affirmative; a quorum of one-third (1/3) of active members must be in attendance.

4. If an assistant Pastor or an associate Pastor is desired, a search committee shall be formed. The committee, in cooperation with the Pastor, will develop a job description and carry out the steps necessary to secure the person(s) to fill the position(s), following the same procedure as that for hiring a pastor (see Article VIII, Section E).

### ***SECTION B. Duties of Pastor(s)***

1. The Pastor shall be or become, within two years of calling, an American Baptist Pastor ascribing to the code of ethics of the American Baptist ministers' council. This person shall maintain active cooperation with the fellowship and general program of the ABC USA (see Article II, Section B).
2. The Pastor shall be responsible for services of worship, including preaching the gospel and administering the ordinances.
3. The Pastor shall help create an overall vision for the ministry and growth of the church.
4. The Pastor's duties shall encompass overall administration of the business and programs of the church, with access to all church records.
5. The Pastor is to prepare a report annually to be included in the church's annual report.
6. The Pastor shall be an ex officio member without vote of all boards and committees, except Pastoral Relations, and shall work with them to implement the church purpose (see Article I).

## **ARTICLE V. TERMS AND DUTIES OF OFFICERS**

### ***SECTION A. Moderator***

1. The Moderator shall be elected to serve for a term of one year. The Moderator may be reelected to that position.
2. The Moderator will preside at Executive Council meetings and business meetings of the Church.

### ***SECTION B. Clerk***

1. The Clerk shall be elected to serve for a term of one year. The Clerk may be reelected to that position.
2. The Clerk also shall be
  - a. Recorder for all business meetings of the church
  - b. Recorder for all meetings of the Executive Council
  - c. Keeper of membership and baptismal records
  - d. Issuer of all letters of transfer, dismissal, and acceptance
  - e. Giver of notice to members of elections and appointments to boards and committees, and of meetings of the church as prescribed in Article IX, Section B of these bylaws

- f. Writer of an annual report of church membership for inclusion in the annual report
3. In the absence of the Moderator at any all-church meeting, the Clerk shall call the meeting to order and conduct the election of a moderator “pro tempore.”
4. The Clerk shall attend Board of Administration and Finance meetings as needed.

### ***SECTION C. Treasurer***

1. The Treasurer shall be elected to serve for a term of one year. The Treasurer may be reelected to that position.
2. The Treasurer shall be responsible, with approval of the Board of Administration and Finance, for the investment and expenditure of church funds except as otherwise stipulated in these bylaws. Expenditures shall be made in accordance with an annual budget recommended by the Executive Council and voted and approved by the church membership in accordance with these bylaws.
3. The Treasurer shall maintain sufficient books and provide the Board of Administration and Finance with monthly statements of receipts and disbursements.
4. The Treasurer shall provide a full and proper accounting of the Treasurer’s internally reviewed records for inclusion in the annual report. Such report will include a current statement of the financial condition of the church and a summary statement of all receipts, disbursements, and investments for the preceding year. Any member of the church may request, through the Board of Administration and Finance, a review of the Treasurer’s books and records.
5. The Treasurer will attend Board of Administration and Finance meetings as an ex officio member.
6. The Treasurer will make the Treasurer’s records available annually to be reviewed by the church internal Auditors.

### ***SECTION D. Financial Secretary***

1. The Financial Secretary shall be elected to serve for a term of one year. The Financial Secretary may be reelected to that position.
2. The Financial Secretary shall receive and record weekly offerings and other contributions to the church, deposit them to the church account(s), and send tally sheets to the Treasurer or administrator of the appropriate account(s).
3. The Financial Secretary shall maintain a record of individual pledges made and received and issue quarterly statements to each account.
4. The Financial Secretary will make the Financial Secretary's records available annually to be reviewed by the church internal Auditors for inclusion in the annual report and at other times as required.
5. The Financial Secretary shall attend Board of Administration and Finance meetings as an ex officio member.



### ***SECTION E. Chairperson of the Board of Administration and Finance***

1. The Chairperson of the Board of Administration and Finance shall be elected to serve for a term of one year. The Chair may be reelected to that position.
2. The Chairperson of the Board of Administration and Finance shall preside at meetings of the Board of Administration and Finance.
3. The Chairperson of the Board of Administration and Finance shall prepare a report of the board's activities to be included in the church's annual report.
4. At any meeting of the Board of Administration and Finance, in the absence of the Church Clerk, the Chairperson of the Board of Administration and Finance will act as the Assistant Clerk for the purpose of signing required documents, including the clerk's certification of actions taken.

## **ARTICLE VI. EXECUTIVE COUNCIL**

### ***SECTION A. Purpose***

The Executive Council shall serve as a sounding board and a representative advisory group that is a vehicle of communication between the boards and the congregation. The Executive Council will receive proposals for church programs and budgets and recommend action to the congregation at large, except as may otherwise be reserved by these bylaws.

### ***SECTION B. Membership***

1. The Executive Council shall consist of the moderator, the clerk, the board chairpersons (or their designated representatives), the chairs of the Nominating and Communications committees (or their designated representatives), and at least one at-large member, all of whom are elected yearly by the congregation.
2. The Moderator shall vote only to decide any tie vote of the Executive Council. The Pastor(s) shall serve ex officio without vote.

### ***SECTION C. Duties***

1. To receive from the Nominating Committee a slate of candidates for membership on those boards established in accordance with Article VII of these bylaws. The slate will be published in the annual report and voted upon by the church membership at the annual meeting, with nominations possible from the floor.
2. To review the list of nominees prepared by the Nominating Committee to fill a vacancy on any board or Executive Council committee and to appoint such person(s) as the Executive Council approves to serve in such vacated position until the next annual meeting of the church.
3. To review the actions, requests, and recommendations of the boards and committees as needed.

4. To propose for consideration of the church at an annual meeting the annual budget prepared by the Board of Administration and Finance.
5. To represent the voice of the church, in its areas of responsibility, on any emergency arising between meetings of the church.
6. To appoint a Pastoral Relations Committee.
7. To determine the distribution of the Easter, Thanksgiving, and Christmas special offerings.
8. To request the internal Auditors to review the records, accounts, bank books, vouchers, and reports when a change in the office of treasurer(s) or financial secretary takes place and at such other times as the Executive Council in its discretion may deem necessary or appropriate.
9. To appoint a moderator pro tempore to act in the absence of the Moderator at any meeting of the Executive Council.
10. To appoint a recorder pro tempore to act in the absence of the Clerk at meetings of the Executive Council.
11. To direct the Clerk to issue a call for any special meeting of the church that the Executive Council deems necessary or appropriate or that is requested in writing by five (5) active members of the church.
12. To publish and make available to the members of the church an annual report of the activities of the church and the respective boards and committees, including financial reports.
13. To appoint a church historian or historical committee.

***SECTION D. Meeting Frequency, Open Meeting, and Quorum***

1. The Executive Council shall normally meet once each month and at such other times as necessary.
2. Meetings of the Executive Council shall be open to any member of the church, but those attending church members have no vote.
3. A quorum for Executive Council meetings shall be five (5) voting members, including the Moderator.

## **ARTICLE VII. BOARDS**

### ***SECTION A. Board of Deacons/Ministry***

1. Board members shall be church members and elected by the church membership at the annual meeting.
2. The term of office for each member of the Board of Deacons/Ministry shall be three years. In the event of a vacancy on the Board of Deacons/Ministry, the Nominating Committee shall recommend a member to complete the term with the approval of the Executive Council.
3. Members of the Board of Deacons/Ministry will meet the following criteria:
  - a. Membership in this church
  - b. Regular attendance
  - c. Willingness to share in ministering to the Pastoral and spiritual needs of the membership and community
4. Each year the board will select from its members a chairperson who will represent them on the Executive Council.
5. The Board of Deacons/Ministry shall normally meet once a month and at such other time as necessary.
6. It shall be the duty of the Board of Deacons/Ministry to:
  - a. Ensure that services of the church are observed with regularity and reverence
  - b. Meet regularly with the Pastor(s) regarding pastoral duties and congregational concerns
  - c. Assist the Pastor(s) in the evangelistic work of the church; in visitation; caring for the poor, the sick, the sorrowing, and the strangers; and ministering to the other spiritual interests of the church and community
  - d. Arrange assistance for the preparation and administration of the ordinances of communion and baptism
  - e. Assist in scheduling the Pastor's (Pastors') vacations and securing the services of a substitute leader of worship in the temporary absence of the Pastor(s)
  - f. Select, advise, counsel, and recommend termination of the services of an organist/pianist, choir director, and such other musical talent it deems necessary or advisable
  - g. Appoint such persons or committees — such as worship planning, music, flower, ushers — as may be necessary or advisable to carry out the duties of the Board of Deacons/Ministry in a responsible manner
  - h. Oversee the actions and review the recommendations of such persons or committees appointed by the board

- i. Confer with and welcome all candidates for membership in this church and provide for such instruction as may be necessary or advisable in accordance with Article III, Section A of these bylaws
  - j. Approve the admission of members
  - k. Welcome all worshipers at the regular Sunday service and all other services as the Pastor(s) and the board deem advisable
  - l. Review and revise the classification of members annually with the Clerk and Pastor in accordance with Article III, Sections D and E
  - m. Submit to the Executive Council periodic reports of the board's activities and recommendations
  - n. Submit a summary of its activities to the Executive Council for inclusion in the annual report to the church
  - o. Administer the Deacons' Discretionary Fund (Communion Offerings), which is to be expended at the discretion of the Pastor, and appoint a church member as treasurer of the fund (An alternate signer shall be listed on accounts with the Deacons' Discretionary Fund Treasurer.)
  - p. Be generally responsible for fostering the Christian education of the church on behalf of the children, youth, adults, and families; with the interest and involvement of all church members, promote educational activities that nurture and guide members of the church in the Christian way of life to enable them to participate in the mission of the church
  - q. Make recommendations to the Board of Administration and Finance for hiring professional staff when necessary
  - r. Administer the scholarship fund and the campership fund
7. Deacons who have served this church on the Board of Deacons/Ministry for 15 years or more may, upon recommendation of the Board of Deacons/Ministry, receive Deacon Emeritus status at the church's annual meeting. They shall have no specific duties, but they may attend meetings of the Board of Deacons/Ministry and act as advisers to that group.
8. Attendance at board meetings is expected. After a member has missed three consecutive regularly scheduled meetings without a valid excuse, the chairperson may recommend to the Executive Council that the absent member be removed from the Board of Deacons/Ministry.

***SECTION B. Board of Administration and Finance***

- 1. Board members shall be church members and elected by the church membership at the annual meeting. In addition to the elected chairperson, the Board shall consist of the Treasurer and the Financial Secretary, who serve ex officio (with vote), and at least four church members.

2. The term of office for each member of the board shall be three years. In the event of a vacancy on the board, the Nominating Committee shall recommend a member to complete the term with the approval of the Executive Council.
3. The Board of Administration and Finance shall normally meet once a month and at such other times as necessary.
4. It shall be the duty of the Board of Administration and Finance to:
  - a. Prepare an annual budget and be in general charge of the administration and finances of the church
  - b. Be responsible for the care, security, maintenance, and beautification of all property belonging to the church
  - c. Make recommendations to the membership concerning buying, selling, and financing real estate
  - d. Ensure that the church is properly insured
  - e. Review and recommend the sufficient bonding of the Treasurer and Financial Secretary
  - f. Approve an alternate signer to be listed on accounts with the Treasurer
  - g. Authorize all requests for use of the church building, on recommendation of or concurrence with the Pastor, with the exception of religious services or programs of this church
  - h. Review to approve or deny all requests for the expenditures of funds not included in the approved annual budget
  - i. Appoint such persons or committees as may be necessary or advisable in carrying out the duties of the Board of Administration and Finance in a responsible manner
  - j. Oversee the actions and review the recommendations of such persons or committees appointed by the board
  - k. Appoint a Stewardship Committee each year to:
    - i. Be responsible for soliciting pledges necessary to underwrite the budget
    - ii. Promote stewardship throughout the year
  - l. Appoint a Memorial Fund Treasurer to maintain the fund and conduct correspondence as warranted (An alternate signer shall be listed on accounts with the Memorial Fund Treasurer.)
  - m. Oversee the job descriptions, hiring, salary, performance reviews, termination, and other issues involving church staff
  - n. Submit to the Executive Council for inclusion in the annual report to the church a summary of its activities
5. Attendance at board meetings is expected. After a member has missed three regularly scheduled meetings without a valid excuse, the chairperson may recommend to the Executive Council that the absent member be removed from the Board of Administration and Finance.

### ***SECTION C. Board of Missions***

1. Board members shall be church members and elected by the church membership at the annual meeting.
2. The term of office for each member of the board shall be three years. In the event of a vacancy on the board, the Nominating Committee shall recommend a member to complete the term, with the approval of the Executive Council.
3. Each year, the board will select from its members a chairperson who will represent them on the Executive Council.
4. The Board of Missions shall normally meet at least quarterly and at such other times as necessary.
5. It shall be the duty of the Board of Missions to:
  - a. Foster and stimulate mission activities of the church and determine ways the congregation can participate by personal involvement and financial gifts
  - b. Encourage the understanding and support of American Baptist missions, Massachusetts ministries, and special fund efforts for local and global missions
  - c. Submit to Executive Council for inclusion in the annual report to the church a summary of its activities
  - d. Prepare a budget based on the financial secretary's report of all funds that have been pledged to support the church's missions
  - e. Direct the church Treasurer to dispense such funds in accordance with an annual budget voted by the church
6. Attendance at board meetings is expected. After a member has missed three consecutive regularly scheduled meetings without a valid excuse, the chairperson may recommend to the Executive Council that the absent member be removed from the Board of Missions.

## **ARTICLE VIII. COMMITTEES OF THE EXECUTIVE COUNCIL**

### ***SECTION A. Pastoral Relations Committee***

1. It shall be the duty of the Pastoral Relations Committee to meet as needed and to:
  - a. Review the Pastor's (Pastors') performance annually and recommend changes in salary to the Board of Administration and Finance
  - b. Review the Pastor's (Pastors') overall vision for the ministry and growth of the church
2. The Pastoral Relations Committee will function as a liaison and sounding board between the congregation and the Pastor.
3. The Pastoral Relations Committee shall consist of six members. A member's term will be for three years.

4. Attendance at committee meetings is expected. After a member has missed three consecutive regularly scheduled meetings without a valid excuse, the chairperson may recommend to the Executive Council that the absent member be removed from the Pastoral Relations Committee.

### ***SECTION B. Nominating Committee***

1. The Church shall elect annually a Nominating Committee chairperson who will serve on the Executive Council and recruit a committee. The chairperson shall be required to attend Executive Council meetings the three (3) months prior to the annual meeting and at other times as needed. The Pastor shall be an ex officio member of this committee without voting privileges. The committee shall prepare a list of candidates for election at an annual meeting pursuant to Article VI, Section C1 of these bylaws.
2. It shall be the duty of the committee to recruit people to serve as officers, board members, at-large Council members, Communications Committee chairperson, Nominating Committee chairperson, Delegates, and internal Auditors and to submit its report of nominations to the Executive Council for inclusion in the annual report and church vote. Nominations also may be made from the floor at the annual meeting, provided the nominees are willing to accept such position if elected. The committee is to make sure that the nominees understand their duties.
3. If an elected officer vacates office prior to the expiration of the term, a special business meeting will be called at which the Nominating Committee shall propose to the church the name of the candidate to serve in such office until the next annual meeting of the church.
4. The committee shall prepare a list of candidates to fill vacated positions on boards and Executive Council committees, submitting that list to the Executive Council for approval in accordance with Article VI, Section C2 of these bylaws.

### ***SECTION C. Communications Committee***

1. The Church shall annually elect a Communications Committee chairperson who will serve on the Executive Council and appoint any members to the committee that the chair deems necessary.
2. The committee assists in preparation and publication of all matters of communication, such as publicity through the media, church newsletter, advertisement, and fliers.
3. The committee maintains and updates the church website.

### ***SECTION D. Delegates***

1. The Church shall annually elect Delegates to TABCOM and the Samuel Stillman Association.
2. The Delegates shall represent the church at such conferences, conventions, meetings, or special functions of the groups stipulated in Article II, Section B as necessary.

3. The Delegates shall report directly to the church (preferably through the newsletter) after having so represented the church.

#### ***SECTION E. Pastoral Search Committee***

1. Within a week after it is known there will be a pastoral vacancy, the Executive Council will recommend nine church members, representing all areas of church life, to serve on the Pastoral Search Committee. The slate will be submitted to the membership for election at a specially called church meeting.
2. The committee shall elect a chair and may be guided in its actions by the printed recommendations on procedure made available through The American Baptist Churches of Massachusetts.
3. The committee shall recommend for vote of the church an interim Pastor, defining appropriate duties and salary, and making all necessary arrangements.
4. The committee shall interview and select a suitable candidate for Pastor who shall be presented to the church for approval. Only one candidate shall be presented at a time.
5. The committee shall include in its call to the Pastor a job description as well as information on housing, salary and other financial benefits, vacation, and any other arrangements.
6. The committee shall be responsible to the Executive Council and to the church.
7. The committee shall complete its duties with the installation service for the newly called Pastor.

#### ***SECTION F. Church Internal Auditors***

1. The church shall annually elect internal Auditors.
2. The internal Auditors will perform the following duties:
  - a. Examine all church financial records, accounts, bank books, and vouchers for compliance with the bylaws
  - b. Review the records and accounts of the treasurers and financial secretary
  - c. Audit annual reports of the church Treasurer, Financial Secretary, and the treasurers of all church organizations to be included in the annual report to determine if they are in order
  - d. Indicate by signature and date all reports that have been approved

#### ***SECTION G. Historian or Historical Committee***

1. The church shall annually elect a Historian or Historical Committee.
2. The Historian or Historical Committee will perform the following duties:
  - a. Record the important events of each year in the official historical records of the church
  - b. Assemble for preservation such objects and material as are pertinent to the history of the church



- c. Provide, with the assistance of the Board of Administration and Finance, a proper place for storing and/or exhibiting historic items of the church
- d. Publish or maintain a brief history of the church for instructional use in the church school and revise this publication periodically

### ***SECTION H. Other Committees***

The Executive Council shall appoint such other committees as it deems necessary or advisable to carry out the Executive Council's responsibilities as set forth in Article VI, Section C of these bylaws.

## **ARTICLE IX. MEETINGS**

### ***SECTION A. Worship***

1. Public worship of God shall be held on Sunday and at such other times as the Board of Deacons/Ministry determines.
2. The Lord's Supper shall be observed regularly on the first Sunday of each month. The Pastor, in conjunction with the Board of Deacons/Ministry, may choose another special day of the month with notification to the membership.

### ***SECTION B. Business Meetings***

1. Attendance at all church meetings may be in person or virtual.
2. Voting at all church meetings shall be by open ballot. After the call for a vote, the members may request, by majority vote, a closed ballot
3. The annual meeting of the church shall be held the fourth Sunday in January. The purpose of the meeting shall be to receive the annual report, to elect officers and members of the Executive Council and boards to replace those whose terms have expired, to take action on the budget, and to transact such other business as may be proper at such meeting.

Written notice stating the time, place, and object of the annual meeting shall be posted by the Clerk two Sundays in advance of the meeting and announced in regular publications of the church calendar. The articles to be voted on shall be included in the posting.

4. Special business meetings of the church shall be called by the Executive Council. Alternatively, five (5) active members of the church may call a meeting. Those members' signatures must appear on the posted call for the meeting.

The Executive Council shall cause the Clerk to give such notice of a special meeting as is required for the annual meeting, stating the subject(s) to be considered thereat, and no other business may be transacted at such special meeting.

5. Members under the age of eighteen (18) years may not vote on issues related to contractual concerns or in situations that have fiscal implications.

### ***SECTION C. Quorum***

1. Twenty-five percent (25%) of active members must be in attendance, either in person or virtually, at a meeting to constitute a quorum, except for a calling (see Article IV, Section A3) or termination (see Article X, Section A) of Pastoral service.
2. When a quorum is present at any meeting, the majority of the votes cast by the members in attendance, either in person or virtually, or represented by proxy shall decide any question brought before such meeting unless the question is one upon which, by express provision of the statutes or these bylaws, a different vote is required. In that case, such express provision shall govern and control the decision of the question.

## **ARTICLE X. TERMINATIONS**

### ***SECTION A. Of Pastorate***

1. The Pastor may resign by submitting a written minimum two-month (or less, by mutual consent) notice to the Board of Deacons/Ministry.
2. The church membership may dissolve the Pastoral relationship through the following procedure:
  - a. On recommendation of the Board of Deacons/Ministry, the Executive Council shall send a notice of the intended action to the Pastor and all active members. The notice must be disseminated to the congregation two weeks before the meeting at which members will vote on the Pastor's termination.
  - b. At the church business meeting, the Pastoral relationship shall be terminated by a three-quarter (3/4) vote of all members present and voting; a quorum of one-third (1/3) of legal voting members (as determined by Massachusetts state law) must be in attendance.
  - c. The Executive Council shall give written notice to the Pastor, with a termination period as specified in the Pastor's employment agreement.

### ***SECTION B. Of Elected Officers Executive Council Members, and Board Members***

1. An elected officer, Executive Council member, or board member shall submit a letter of resignation to the Church Clerk, who shall notify the Executive Council. For an officer or Council member, the Executive Council will task the Nominating Committee with proposing to the church the name of a candidate to serve in such capacity until the next annual meeting of the church. For a Board member, the Executive Council, in conjunction with the Nominating Committee, shall appoint an individual to fill the position until the next annual meeting.
2. The church membership may call a special meeting to remove any elected officer, Executive Council member, or board member who is unable or unwilling to fulfill his or her duties.

## **ARTICLE XI. GIFTS**

### ***SECTION A. Gifts as Property of the Church***

All gifts become the property of the church.

### ***SECTION B. Undesignated Gifts***

All undesignated monetary gifts under \$500 shall go into the church's General Fund. For each undesignated monetary gift of \$500 or more, ninety percent (90%) shall go into the General Fund. Ten percent (10%) of each of these gifts shall go to the Missions Fund.

## **ARTICLE XII. ELECTION OF OFFICERS, EXECUTIVE COUNCIL MEMBERS, BOARD MEMBERS, AND EXECUTIVE COUNCIL COMMITTEE MEMBERS AT THE ANNUAL MEETING**

### ***SECTION A. Method of Voting***

All voting shall be by open ballot, except as stipulated in Article IX, Section B2. All elected positions shall be decided by a majority vote.

### ***SECTION B. Term of Office***

Term of office shall end following elections at the annual meeting as usually held in January (Article IX, Section B3).

### ***SECTION C. Restrictions of Office***

1. An elected officer, except the Chairperson of the Board of Administration and Finance, shall not serve as a member of any board, except ex officio.
2. One who has filled an unexpired term may be elected or appointed to subsequent three-year terms.

## **ARTICLE XIII. PARLIAMENTARY PROCEDURE**

Authority for guidance in proceedings of any meetings for business shall be "Robert's Rules of Order." If there is a difference between these bylaws and "Robert's Rules of Order," the Bylaws of The First Baptist Church in Framingham supersede the Rules.

## **ARTICLE XIV. POSTING OF BYLAWS**

A copy of these complete bylaws shall be available in the church building, convenient at all times for consultation by the membership.

## **ARTICLE XV. AMENDMENTS TO BYLAWS**

These bylaws may be altered, amended, added to, or repealed by a two-thirds (2/3) vote of the legal members (as determined by Massachusetts state law) in attendance and voting at any annual or special meeting, provided that notice of such action on the

proposed amendment to be taken at the meeting is inserted in the call and that the proposed amendment is posted and reference made to it from the pulpit in the worship service and by U.S. Postal Service and/or email notice at least 60 days before the date of the proposed action.