

Church Family,

The Transition Team is offering the following recommendations at the regularly scheduled business meeting January 26, 2014.

The meeting will begin at 6 p.m. Three documents will be submitted as individual motions for your consideration: Constitution, Bylaws, and Business Meeting Guidelines. Whereas the Transition Team is a church appointed committee the motion will not require a second. Following Robert's Rules of Order the motion will be open for discussion on the floor. Each motion will be subject to the modifications by means of amendments and as well as all other applicable motions as prescribed by Roberts Rules of Order.

If you have any questions regarding the recommendations or the process First Baptist Church, Bryan follows for introducing recommendations please let me know at DavidGarzaGutierrez@gmail.com .

You will find in the following pages:

1. Explanations Related to the Q&A Session, January 15, 2014
2. The current 1980 Constitution and Bylaws
3. The 2014 recommended Constitution, Bylaws, and Business Meeting Guidelines

Explanations Related to the Q & A Session January 15, 2014

The Q & A Session offered on Wednesday, January 15, 2014, at 6 p.m. had approximately 150 in attendance. Each portion of the material was introduced by David Gutierrez, Suzanne Phelps, and Justin Barrett. Several questions were asked and answered and a few suggestions as to presentation and format were offered.

The following notations attempt to provide explanation to most of the matters discussed:

1. **Quorum:** no quorum is stipulated in the current 1980 Constitution. The recommended constitution identifies quorums at the following locations:

- Page 3 of 14 "A quorum for this ballot vote shall be established as 20% of the average worship attendance for the past month."
- Page 10 of 14 "A quorum for this vote shall be established as 20% of the average Sunday school attendance for the past month." NOTE: This has been updated: "20% of the average worship ~~Sunday school~~ attendance for the past month."
- Page 10 of 14 "Amendments to the Bylaws shall be approved by three-fourths (3/4) ballot vote of the church members voting in a duly-called business meeting. A quorum for the ballot vote shall be established as 20% of the average worship attendance for the past month."

Some concern was expressed that the quorum should be set against the number of total membership or at a higher %, or a combination of the two.

It was also expressed that a worship attendance would be inclusive of non-members (children, youth, adults alike) and a count would need to be registered each Sunday.

Explanation: In any case, no vote requiring a quorum will be issued without first having achieved the formation of a duly called business meeting. Such formation requires church-wide notification. Our church has demonstrated faithful attention to the notification of church members and the announcement of our church business meetings. If proper notification were not provided then no decision would receive proper authorization by the church. To the credit of our membership, our members have always demonstrated that when matters are to

be discussed which they deem significant, a more than adequate number of members gather for the duly called business meeting.

For several years, each Sunday a headcount of both worship services has been consistently reported to and recorded by the church office

2. Statement of Basic Beliefs: A concern was expressed as to if the basic beliefs expressed in the Constitution in anyway replaces the information expressed as Our Beliefs on the church website (<http://fbcbyan.org/about-us/our-beliefs>).

- Article II, current 1980 Constitution has a 6 line treatment of a Statement of Faith
- Page 2 of 14: Article IV Statement of Basic Beliefs in the recommended Constitution is more inclusive than the 1980 Constitution but is at best an abbreviated summary (not exhaustive) of our basic beliefs.

Explanation: The recommended constitution and the *Our Beliefs* on the church website are not in conflict and do not replace one another. The website information is an abbreviation of much of the Baptist Faith and Message information.

- Following the Q & A, an observation was made that the recommended constitution calls attention to and provides regard for both the Baptist Faith and Message 1963 (as noted in the 1980 Constitution) and the Baptist Faith and Message 2000.

Explanation: The differences between the two versions of the Baptist Faith and Message are important to many Baptists. The 1963 version was composed by a broad inclusion of Southern Baptist pastors, seminary professors, convention leaders, pastors, and laypeople. The 2000 version was composed by much fewer and carries with expectations of the local church (e.g. the senior pastor of a local church should be male) and has been used as a declaration of loyalty and belief (e.g. missionaries, seminary professors must sign acknowledgment of the practice of the BF&M 2000).

The inclusion of both versions is meant to demonstrate a contemporary essential accord with the Southern Baptist Convention and all such churches of like faith and order. It is carefully acknowledged the BF&M 1963 **nor** 2000 should be practiced as a creedal document.

3. Church Covenant: A concern was expressed that reference to abstain from the sale of and use of intoxicating drinks as a beverage is not referenced in the recommended Constitution.

- 1980 Constitution and Bylaws include Section III. Church Covenant.
- The recommended Constitution does not include the Church Covenant.

Explanation:

- Several church constitutions and bylaws from churches of like faith and order and of similar size to our church were evaluated in the formation of the recommended Constitution and Bylaws and Business Meeting guidelines. Though it was common practice in the 1980s and prior to include covenants in church constitutions, that is no longer a universal practice. Most churches of like faith and order our size treat covenants as separate documents.
- As is similar to the recommendation to separate the Constitution, the Bylaws, the Business Meeting guidelines, and the Committee, Councils, and Team guiding documents. The recommendation clearly presents each of these documents separate but in companionship to one another, as is the prevailing practice of today.

4. Church Officers: A suggestion was made to include the Chairman of the Personnel Committee.

- Article VI, Officers, 1980 current Constitution and Bylaws
- Page 6 of 14: Article IV, Church Officers, I. Officers, recommended Bylaws

Explanation: This was brought unaltered from the 1980 current Constitution and Bylaws directly into the recommended Bylaws.

5. Vote regarding candidates for Membership: Confirmation was given that new members come into the church after having been counseled by our ministerial staff and each will be voted on in a business meeting as confirmation of acceptance into membership.

- Page 5 of 14, recommended Bylaws, Article III, Candidacy, B. Membership, Names of candidates for membership will be presented for confirmation at the next regular business meeting.

6. Deacon Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) are now referred to as the Deacon Handbook.

- Page 8 of 14, recommended Bylaws, Article V, Leadership, II Deacons, C. Operating Procedures

The Deacon Handbook ~~Standard Operating Procedures (“SOP”)~~

7. Committee on Teams and Committees be included in those who may bring matters to the Deacon body.

- Page 11 of 14, Business Meeting Guidelines, III. Agendas and Notifications, C.

Explanation: This listing is in agreement with the Deacon Handbook listing as provided by the Deacon Fellowship.

In addition, the Committee on Teams and Committees as well as any other committee, council, or team are included in the statement *"...or other committees deemed by the Deacon Officers as significant to the harmony and fellowship of the membership..."*

8. Quarterly Business Meetings: Concern was expressed that a quarterly business meeting would not sufficiently inform the membership of important matters (i.e. finances) as is customarily conducted in monthly business meetings.

- Page 12 of 14, Regular Business Meetings, I. Regular business meetings shall be held once each calendar quarter.

Explanation: Many of the lessons learned over the past months have indicated a need to place our business meetings at a time that is more accessible to our younger families as well as at a time that other church activities are not being conducted (many children's leaders and ministry personnel are not available on Wednesdays from 6 to 7 p.m.).

Moving to quarterly Sunday business meetings allows:

1. Ample lead time for notification to our membership about upcoming business matters.
2. Adequate preparatory time by various ministries, church leaders, and staff
3. Provision for a time of celebration of our accomplishments and building anticipation for our efforts going forward.

4. Inclusion of intergenerational conversation and enlistment to a more responsible membership.

Important matters such as financial updates would be made available per the Finance Committee release through newsletters (used currently), worship bulletins, e-mails, website postings, mailings, program and ministry announcements, and pulpit announcements.

The provision of calling a special business meeting remains a remedy for any matter that cannot wait to be presented quarterly.

9. Concern that granting these recommendations will carry authorization of other recommendations not currently presented.

Explanation: There are 3 specific documents presented in this recommendation (e.g. Constitution, Bylaws, Business Meeting Guidelines) for January 26..

As stated on December 5 in the webpage materials, and on December 6 in the church wide notification, and on January 10 in the second church wide notification, the Transition Team informs the church:

"We intend to use three monthly business meetings from January to March, 2014:

- January 26, Sunday, 6 to 7 p.m.-Constitution and Bylaws, Business Meeting Guidelines
- February 23, Sunday, 6 to 7 p.m.-Committee, Council, Team Guidelines/Descriptions
- March 30, Sunday, 6 to 7 p.m. – As time may require for these or additional matters."

The numerous reports and various suggestions recorded and available for members to fully review on the church website will be informative to our new Senior Pastor. These materials demonstrate the studied consideration of many church leaders, but do not in and of themselves grant church authorization. Any actions not extended by the church to staff, church leaders, program organizations, committees, councils, or teams will require church consideration prior to authorization.

Current 1980 Constitution and Bylaws

**CONSTITUTION AND BY-LAWS
FOR
FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH
BRYAN, TEXAS**

CONSTITUTION

Preamble

We declare and establish this constitution for the preservation and security of the principles of our faith, and that this body may be governed in an orderly manner. This constitution will preserve the liberties of each individual member of this church and the freedom of action of this body in relation to other churches.

I. Name

This body shall be known as the First Baptist Church of Bryan, Texas, located 3100 Cambridge Drive, Bryan, Texas 77802.

II. Statement of Faith

The Holy Bible is the inspired Word of God and is the basis for any statement of faith. The church subscribes to the doctrinal statement of the Baptist Faith and Message as adopted by the Southern Baptist Convention in 1963. We band ourselves together as a body of baptized believers in Jesus Christ, personally committed to sharing the good news of salvation to lost mankind. The ordinances of the church are Baptism and the Lord's Supper.

III. Church Covenant

Having been led, as we believe, by the Spirit of God, to receive Jesus Christ as our Savior and Lord and on the profession of our faith, having been baptized in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy

Spirit, we do now, in the presence of God and this assembly, most solemnly and joyfully enter into covenant with one another as one body in Christ.

We engage, therefore, by the aid of the Holy Spirit to walk together in Christian love; to strive for the advancement of this church, in knowledge, holiness and comfort; to promote its prosperity and spirituality; to sustain its worship, ordinances, discipline and doctrines; to contribute cheerfully and regularly to the support of the ministry, the expenses of the church and the relief of the poor, and spread the gospel through all nations.

We also engage to maintain family and secret devotions; to educate our children in the Christian faith; to seek the salvation of our kindred and acquaintances; to walk circumspectly in the world; to be just in our dealings; faithful in our engagements and exemplary in our deportment; to abstain from the sale of and use of intoxicating drinks as a beverage; to be zealous in our efforts to advance the kingdom of our Savior.

We further engage to watch over one another in brotherly love; to remember one another in prayer; to aid one another in sickness and distress; to cultivate Christian sympathy in feeling and Christian courtesy in speech; to be slow to take offense, but always ready for reconciliation and mindful of the rules of our Savior to secure it without delay.

We, moreover, engage that when we remove from this place we will, as soon as possible, unite with some other church where we can carry out the spirit of this covenant and the principles of God=s Word.

IV. Character

Section 1. Polity

The government of this church is vested in the body of believers who compose it. It is subject to the control of no other ecclesiastical body, but it recognizes and sustains the obligations of mutual counsel and cooperation which are common among Baptist Churches. Insofar as is practical, this church will cooperate with, and support the association, and state convention affiliated with the Southern Baptist Convention.

Section 2. Doctrine

This church receives the Scriptures as its authority in matters of faith and practice. Its understanding of Christian truth as contained therein is in essential accord with the belief of other Southern Baptist Churches.

BYLAWS

V. Membership

Section 1. General

This is a sovereign and democratic Baptist Church under the Lordship of Jesus Christ. The membership retains unto itself the right of exclusive self-government in all phases of the spiritual and temporal life of this church.

The membership reserves the exclusive right to determine who shall be members of this church and the conditions of such membership.

Section 2. Candidacy

Any person may offer himself as a candidate for membership in this church. All such candidates shall be presented to the church at any regular worship service for membership in any of the following ways:

- (1) By profession of faith and for baptism according to the policies of this church,
- (2) By promise of a letter from another Baptist Church of like faith and order,
- (3) By restoration upon a statement of prior conversion experience and baptism in a Baptist Church when no letter is obtainable.

Should there be any dissent as to any candidate, such dissent shall be referred to the Pastor and the Deacons for investigation and the making of a recommendation to the church within thirty (30) days. A three-fourths

(3/4) vote of those members present and voting shall be required to elect such candidates to membership.

Section 3. Termination of Membership

Membership shall be terminated in the following ways:

- (1) Death,
- (2) Dismission to another Baptist Church,
- (3) Exclusion by action of this church*,
- (4) Affiliation with a church of another faith or denomination.

* Should a member become an offense to the Church and to its good name by reason of immoral or unchristian conduct, or the teaching of heresy (that is, Jesus Christ is not the divine Son of God), the Church may terminate his membership by a three-fourths (3/4) vote of those who are in attendance, but only after due notice and hearing and after faithful efforts have been made to bring such member to repentance and amendment.

VI. Officers

The officers of the corporation shall be the Chairman of Deacons, Vice-Chairman of Deacons, Secretary of Deacons, Chairman of the Finance Committee, Chairman of the Properties Committee and Church Clerk.

VII. Policies and Procedures

The constitution and bylaws of the First Baptist Church, Bryan, Texas, hereby adopt the [Standard Operating Procedures and Policies as they existed in January, 1979, as part of this constitution and bylaws](#), with the added declaration that the Standard Operating Procedures may be amended at any regularly called business meeting of the First Baptist Church, Bryan, Texas.

APPROVED BY THE CHURCH 5/21/80

**ACTIONS TO BE TAKEN BY
FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH
FOLLOWING ACCEPTANCE OF
ARTICLES OF INCORPORATION**

1. At the next meeting of the Church, the Constitution and Bylaws will be presented for adoption.
2. Deacons and Trustees will resign, then be immediately re-elected by the Church.
3. The officers of the Corporation will be named, i.e., Chairman of the Deacons, Vice-Chairman of the Deacons, Secretary of the Deacons, Secretary of the Deacons, Chairman of the Property Committee, Chairman of the Finance Committee and the Church Clerk.
4. The existing Church Trustees shall be named Honorary Trustees for life.
5. The [Standard Operating Procedures, as revised in January 1979,](#) will be adopted as the Bylaws.

THE RECOMMENDATION

A Q&A Session was held on Wednesday, January 15, 6:00 p.m., Worship Center hosted by your Transition Team. No changes have been made to the recommended Constitution sent on January 10. The Transition Team presents this recommended Constitution to the church in business meeting on January 26, 6:00 p.m., Worship Center.

CONSTITUTION OF FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH OF BRYAN, TEXAS

PREAMBLE

We declare and establish this Constitution to preserve and secure the principles of our faith and to govern the Church in an orderly manner. This constitution will guide this Church in conducting Christ's ministry locally, nationally or across all borders as He leads.

ARTICLE I

NAME

The church shall be known as the First Baptist Church of Bryan, Texas, located at 3100 Cambridge Drive, Bryan, Texas 77802.

ARTICLE II

MISSION STATEMENT

First Baptist Church of Bryan is a body of baptized believers who strive to live with a passion for Jesus Christ and His purposes in the world by leading people to a personal, growing relationship with Jesus Christ.

ARTICLE III

OBJECTIVES

To be a dynamic spiritual body empowered by the Holy Spirit to evangelize, teach, baptize, and disciple as many people as possible. (Matthew 28:18-20)

To help members realize their spiritual gifts and encourage them to use these gifts in the sharing of Christ and building up the body of Christ. (I Corinthians 12:1-11)

To be a church whose purpose is to be a reflection of Christ's character in our daily living and to intentionally surrender total commitment to the Lordship of Jesus Christ. (I Thessalonians 2:1-13)

To help members grow in the knowledge of God and His relationship to man through church programs of Bible teaching, training and education. (Acts 2:42-47)

To encourage members to support with time, abilities and financial resources the ministry of First Baptist Church of Bryan, Creath-Brazos Baptist Association, Baptist General Convention of Texas, and the Southern Baptist Convention. (Luke 6:38).

ARTICLE IV

STATEMENT OF BASIC BELIEFS

We voluntarily band ourselves together as a body of baptized believers in Jesus Christ personally committed to sharing the good news of salvation to lost mankind and to minister to all. We affirm the Holy Bible as the inspired word of God and the basis of our beliefs. This Church recognizes the doctrinal statement of The Baptist Faith and Message as adopted by the Southern Baptist Convention in 1963 and 2000 as representative expressions of the beliefs of most Southern Baptists; however, we never hold such statements as creeds in regard to fellowship, service and employment. We believe there are two New Testament ordinances, both symbolic in nature: Believer's Baptism and the Lord's Supper. We believe immersion in water answers Jesus Christ's command to baptize, and immersion symbolizes the heart of the Gospel message: the death, burial and resurrection of Jesus Christ. The Lord's Supper is an act of remembrance of Jesus Christ's suffering for our sins and a looking forward to His coming return.

ARTICLE V

POLITY AND RELATIONSHIPS

The government of this church is vested in the members of its body of believers. Persons duly received by the members shall constitute the membership as defined in the Bylaws.

All internal groups created and empowered by the Church shall report to and be accountable only to the Church, unless otherwise specified by church action.

This church is subject to the control of no other ecclesiastical body, but it enjoys mutual counsel and cooperation which is common among Baptist churches. Insofar as is practical, this Church will cooperate with and have representation in the denominational causes sponsored by the Creath-Brazos Baptist Association, the Baptist General Convention of Texas, and the Southern Baptist Convention.

ARTICLE VI

AMENDMENTS

Amendments to the Constitution must be proposed in writing at any duly-called business meeting of the church. Within seven days, copies of the proposed amendment will be furnished to the membership. To allow time for discussion, voting cannot occur for at least 60 days after completing distribution. Amendments to the Constitution shall be approved by three-fourths ballot vote of the church members voting in a duly-called business meeting. A quorum for this ballot vote shall be established as 20% of the average worship attendance for the past month.

ARTICLE VII

ORDER OF PRECEDENCE

Should any conflict or discrepancy arise between the Constitution, Bylaws or Standard Operating Policies, the Constitution takes precedence, with the Bylaws following in order of precedence.

This Constitution supersedes all previous Constitutions.

Adopted on _____

THE RECOMMENDATION

A Q&A Session was held on Wednesday, January 15, 6:00 p.m., Worship Center hosted by your Transition Team. Slight changes have been noted in red as an update to the Bylaws recommendation to be presented to the church in business meeting on January 26, 6:00 p.m., Worship Center.

BYLAWS OF FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH OF BRYAN, TEXAS

PREAMBLE

We declare and establish these Bylaws to preserve and secure the principles of our faith and to govern the Church in an orderly manner. These Bylaws will guide this Church in conducting Christ's ministry locally, nationally or across all borders as He leads.

ARTICLE I NAME

The Church shall be known as the First Baptist Church of Bryan, Texas, located at 3100 Cambridge Drive, Bryan, Texas 77802.

ARTICLE II MISSION STATEMENT

First Baptist Church of Bryan is a body of baptized believers who strive to live with a passion for Jesus Christ and His purposes in the world by leading people to a personal, growing relationship with Jesus Christ.

ARTICLE III MEMBERSHIP

I. CANDIDACY

- A. Any person may offer himself as a candidate for membership in this church. All such candidates shall be presented to the church at any regular worship service for membership in any of the following ways:
 1. By profession of faith and for baptism, according to the policies of First Baptist Church Bryan;

2. By promise of a letter from another Baptist church of like faith and order;
 3. By statement of prior conversion experience and baptism in a Baptist church of like faith and order, when no letter is obtainable.
- B. Names of candidates for membership will be presented for confirmation at the next regular business meeting.
- C. If a person chooses not to ask for membership but wishes to be closely related to the church, such person may be confirmed under the watchcare of the church at the next regular business meeting. Individuals under watchcare may not vote on matters of church business and shall not serve in a leadership capacity or elected position.

II. RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF MEMBERS

- A. Each member shall have the right to vote in the governance of the church, with each member having one (1) vote on any matter submitted to a vote of the membership when present.
- B. The majority of the votes cast by the members present shall be the act of the members meeting, unless the vote of a greater number is required by law, the Constitution, these Bylaws or the motion.
- C. Each member may vote on the following matters:
1. Annual budget and subsequent changes to the budget,
 2. Amendments to the Constitution, Bylaws and Standard Operating Policies,
 3. Calling of or dismissal of Senior Pastor,
 4. Land mortgages, purchases and sales,
 5. Capital building programs,
 6. Formation and membership of Teams, Committees and Councils,
 7. Plans for merger or consolidation with another church,
 8. Sale, lease, exchange, or mortgage of all or substantially all of the property and/or assets of the church,
 9. Dissolution of the church,
 10. Expulsion of church member,
 11. Reinstatement of church member,
 12. Other committee or ministerial staff recommendations for which church approval is desired.

- D. Each member shall have the responsibility of participation in programs and activities of the church and of financial support of the church.

III. TERMINATION OF MEMBERSHIP

- A. Membership shall be terminated in the following ways:
 - 1. Death,
 - 2. Letter of transfer to another Baptist church,
 - 3. Request of the member,
 - 4. Affiliation with a church of another faith or denomination,
 - 5. Exclusion by action of this church.
- B. If a member becomes an offense to the Church and its good name by reason of immoral or unchristian conduct or by denying acceptance of fundamental doctrines of the Church, it shall be the responsibility of the Senior Pastor and deacon officers to take steps to resolve the offense in accordance with Biblical principles. If it is determined that exclusion of the member is necessary, the church may terminate membership by a three-fourths (3/4) vote of the votes cast at the duly-called business meeting where the expulsion recommendation is presented.

ARTICLE IV CHURCH OFFICERS

I. OFFICERS

- A. The officers of the Church, acting as a non-profit corporation, shall be the Chairman of Deacons, Vice-Chairman of Deacons, Secretary of Deacons, Chairman of the Finance Committee, Chairman of the Properties Committee, and Church Clerk.
- B. Each of these officers shall have been elected to serve in their capacity for the current calendar year by the members of their designated group, with the exception of the Church Clerk.

II. CHURCH CLERK

- A. There shall be at least one individual who shall fulfill the function of keeping records of church proceedings and keeping and making available at business meetings copies of the Constitution and Bylaws, financial policy, personnel rules, rules regulating election of deacons and any other rules, policies or procedures adopted by the church. Such individual shall

be familiar with methods and practices used in the church office to maintain a correct register of church members.

- B. The clerk will be elected to serve a three-year term as provided for in the Standard Operating Policies.

III. DUTIES

- A. They shall act for the church in legal matters, but they shall have no power to buy, sell, mortgage, lease or transfer any property without a vote of the church authorizing such action.
- B. The signatures of not fewer than two officers shall be required for such action.

ARTICLE V LEADERSHIP

I. SERVANT TEAM

- A. Senior Pastor. When a vacancy occurs a pastor shall be chosen and called by the church in a manner outlined in the Standard Operating Policies. The pastor elected shall serve at the will of the church or until the pastor chooses to resign.
 - 1. The pastor serves as the spiritual leader of the church and promotes the interests of the church.
 - 2. The pastor's role of leadership in the church shall in no way diminish the congregational authority of the church.
- B. Ministerial Staff. The church shall call as ministers of the gospel those men and women who have been called of God and whom the church deems necessary to serve it. The most recent personnel policies and procedures included in the Standard Operating Policies shall be followed in the calling of such ministers.
- C. Non-ministerial Employees. The church may secure the services of full-or part-time employees, such as secretaries, clerks or maintenance persons, as needed. These positions shall be filled in accordance with current personnel handbook as provided for in the Standard Operating Policies.
- D. All Members. We believe in the priesthood and ministry of all believers. All are called to serve as Christian ministers under the voluntary principle.

II. DEACONS

- A. PURPOSE

1. The deacons of First Baptist Church, Bryan are the servant leaders and spiritual leaders of the church.
2. Deacons are to be zealous in maintaining and guarding the unity and integrity of the church's ministries.
3. Deacons are expected to use the spiritual gifts granted them by the grace of God to partner with the pastor and church staff to proclaim the gospel, assist with pastoral tasks, care for church members and others in the community, and lead the church to engage in fellowship, witness, education, ministry and application.

B. OTHER DUTIES

1. Deacons should strengthen the Sunday School/Bible Fellowship ministry through personal involvement and leadership.
2. Deacons should listen carefully to the congregation.
3. Deacons should give wise counsel to the pastor, church staff, committees and congregation.
4. Deacons should work with the pastor to consider and formulate plans in the progress of the church.
5. Deacons should conduct themselves in a manner that provides role models for Godly living.

C. OPERATING PROCEDURES

1. The Deacon Handbook ~~Standard Operating Procedures (“SOP”)~~ discusses in detail the operations of the deacon body.
2. The Deacon Handbook ~~SOP~~ should be consulted in regards to the election of deacon officers, deacon status, the deacon selection process, deacon training and other deacon matters.

ARTICLE VI CHURCH GOVERNANCE

I. COMMITTEES, TEAMS AND COUNCILS

- A. The Committee on Teams and Committees shall be composed of nine or more church members who have been elected by the church. The Committee on Teams and Committees shall nominate members of standing committees, teams and councils for election by the church.

B. COMMITTEES

1. Committee members shall be elected by a majority of the church members present at a business meeting. Members shall have the right to nominate from the floor additional members to serve on any committee.
2. In addition to the committees specified in the Standard Operating Policies, the church shall authorize such additional committees as are necessary to attend to the activities of the church.
3. All who serve on committees shall be members of the church.

C. MINISTRY TEAMS AND COUNCILS

1. Church ministry teams shall be composed of church members united by a common vision using their spiritual gifts in Christian service to God, His church, and His children.
2. Councils shall be composed of church members who are normally appointed based on their representative positions within the church.

II. BUSINESS MEETINGS

- A. Church business shall be conducted during regularly scheduled and specially called business meetings as provided for in the Standard Operating Policies.
- B. The current edition of Roberts' Rules of Order shall be the guideline for parliamentary rules of procedure for all business meetings.

III. RULES FOR GOVERNANCE

- A. The church shall be governed in accordance with the applicable provisions of the Texas Non-Profit Corporation Act, the Articles of Incorporation, this Constitution, Bylaws and such Standard Operating Policies as the church and its committees may adopt which are not in conflict herewith.

ARTICLE VII DISSOLUTION

The First Baptist Church of Bryan, Texas, may be dissolved only with authorization by its membership giving direction to the church officers. This authorization shall be presented at a special meeting called for that purpose and approved by a three-fourths (3/4) vote of the membership present. Upon dissolution or other termination of First Baptist Church, Bryan, TX, all remaining assets of the Church, after payment in full of its debts, obligations, and necessary final expenses, or after the making of adequate provision thereof, shall be distributed to a qualified church of like faith and order or other mission cause affiliated with the Creath Brazos Baptist Association or the Baptist

General Convention of Texas as shall be chosen by the Church Officers. A quorum for this vote shall be established as 20% of the average worship ~~Sunday school~~ attendance for the past month.

ARTICLE VIII AMENDMENTS

Amendments to the Bylaws must be proposed in writing at any duly-called business meeting of the Church. Within seven days, copies of the proposed amendment will be furnished to the membership. To allow time for discussion, voting cannot occur for at least 30 days after completing distribution. Amendments to the Bylaws shall be approved by three-fourths (3/4) ballot vote of the church members voting in a duly-called business meeting. A quorum for the ballot vote shall be established as 20% of the average worship attendance for the past month.

ARTICLE IX ORDER OF PRECEDENCE

Should any conflict or discrepancy arise between the Constitution, Bylaws or Standard Operating Policies, the Constitution takes precedence, with the Bylaws following in order of precedence.

These Bylaws supersede all previous Bylaws.

Adopted on _____

THE RECOMMENDATION

A Q&A Session was held on Wednesday, January 15, 6:00 p.m., Worship Center hosted by your Transition Team. No changes have been made to the recommended Business Meetings Guidelines sent on January 10. The Transition Team presents this recommended Business Meetings Guidelines to the church in business meeting on January 26, 6:00 p.m., Worship Center.

GUIDELINES FOR ALL BUSINESS MEETINGS

I. Moderator

- A. The Senior Pastor shall serve as Moderator for all business meetings unless he chooses not to fulfill that role.
- B. If the Senior Pastor chooses not to serve as Moderator, the Church will vote to elect the Moderator from nominee(s) supplied by the Committee on Teams and Committees for a three year term.
- C. The Moderator should be trained to conduct business meetings in an effective, efficient, and orderly manner. Training should be completed prior to assuming duties.

II. Parliamentary Rules

- A. The current edition of Roberts' Rules of Order shall be the guideline for parliamentary rules of procedure for all business meetings of the Church except as otherwise provided in Church Bylaws.
- B. The Church will vote to elect the Parliamentarian from nominee(s) supplied by the Committee on Teams and Committees for a three year term.
- C. The Parliamentarian should be trained to conduct business meetings in an effective, efficient, and orderly manner. Training should be completed prior to assuming duties.

III. Agendas and Notifications

- A. Agenda(s) shall be prepared by the designated staff member in consultation with the Ministerial Staff, the Senior Pastor, and the Moderator, if the Senior Pastor is not the Moderator.
- B. Any team or committee that requests that an item for action be placed on the agenda should submit in writing the item and relevant information at least ten (10) days prior to business meeting.
- C. Recommendations from the Personnel, Finance, Missions, Properties or other committees deemed by the Deacon Officers as significant to the harmony and fellowship of the membership will be submitted first to the Deacon Fellowship for endorsement, word of caution, or without remark. The Deacon Fellowship will not have the right to change any such recommendation.

- D. Any church member may request an item be placed on the agenda by submitting a proposal in writing fourteen (14) days in advance of a scheduled meeting to appropriate Ministerial Staff and/or committee for consideration.
- E. Agenda(s), relevant information, and contact information for any item on the agenda shall be communicated to Church members at least seven (7) days prior to the scheduled meeting.
- F. Items not previously submitted for inclusion on the agenda may be brought before the Church during regular or called business meetings. Items brought from the floor shall be referred to appropriate Ministerial Staff and/or committee for study for possible consideration for action at a future business meeting.
- G. When matters to be considered will have no foreseen financial impact(s), notification rules may be suspended so that a particular business item may be expedited (e.g., provision of recommendation for seminary applicant/candidate).
- H. Guidelines outlined above for all business meetings shall be followed except as provided in Church Bylaws or other Standard Operating Policies.

IV. Voting

- A. Only members of First Baptist Church Bryan, as defined in the Church Bylaws, may vote.
- B. The Moderator shall determine the way a vote shall be taken following the current edition of Roberts' Rules of Order.
- C. A quorum of twenty percent of the previous month Sunday morning worship attendance is required for consideration of :
 - Senior Pastor is to be called or dismissed
 - dissolution of church
 - property acquisition or sale
 - plan to merge or consolidate with another church
 - amendments to constitution or bylaws
- D. A quorum of ten percent of the previous month Sunday morning worship attendance is required for consideration of any other item not listed under C above.

REGULAR BUSINESS MEETINGS

- I. Regular business meetings shall be held once each calendar quarter.
 - A. Dates for regular business meetings shall be determined by the Ministerial Staff with input from all ministries and appropriate committees and included on projected church calendar.
 - B. All other church activities will be suspended during regular meetings so that all ministerial staff and all church members normally engaged in other ministries may attend. Child-care during business meetings should be provided by qualified/approved persons (paid) so that all church members be given opportunity to attend business meetings.

- C. The projected yearly calendar, which shall include church office holidays, special events, regular business meetings, etc., shall be communicated to members by means of the communication medium currently being used. (Electronic or paper distribution)
- D. Guidelines outlined under Section I through IV above for all business meetings shall be followed.

SPECIAL/CALLED BUSINESS MEETINGS

- I. A special business meeting may be called by agreement of two (2) of the following: Moderator, Senior Pastor, Chairman of Deacons, and/or Vice-Chairman of Deacons.
- II. Guidelines outlined above for all business meetings shall be followed.
- III. Calling of emergency or catastrophic event-response meeting may be completed by agreement of two (2) of the following: Moderator, Senior Pastor, Chairman of Deacons, and/or Vice-Chairman of Deacons. In the event such a meeting is called, the 14 day advance notice requirement for submission of agenda items by Church members (Section III: Agendas and Notifications, Clause C) and quorum requirements will be suspended.

HIERARCHY OF DOCUMENTS OF GOVERNANCE

In the practice of church business and matters of deliberation, the following order of precedence will be observed:

<p>1. Federal Statutes: Many laws which may appear foreign to the church have the highest level on this hierarchy.</p> <p>2. State Statutes: At the state level we find many rules that apply, for example,</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Texas Open Meetings Act: (Government Code 5. Open Government; Ethics; A. Open Government; Chapter 551 Open Meetings) b. Corporate Code: Controls a church that is incorporated <p>3. City and Local Laws: There are plenty</p> <p>4. Articles of Incorporation: First Baptist Church, Bryan</p>	
Church Constitution	<p>5. Church Constitution: For the church's rules that should be most stable and require the most demanding conditions to amend.</p>
Church Bylaws	<p>6. Church Bylaws: For the church's rules that should be more flexible and require less demanding conditions to amend. The bylaws define the reason for the society's existence.</p>
Robert's Rules of Order	<p>7. Rules of Order: Parliamentary Authority is Robert's Rules of Order</p>

SOPs, Handbooks, Manuals, Policies, Procedures, Operations	8. Standing Rules: For the church's rules that should be the most flexible and require the least demanding conditions to amend or suspend.
Practices, Precedence	9. Customs: Any practice by the church that is supported by unwritten agreement and may even violate a bylaw or a rule of order. However, when a member protests pointing out the violation, the bylaw or rule of order must be complied with.

All **Standard Operating Procedures** will be preserved in writing by the church administrative office and available to any church member upon request.

Any church member desiring further inquiry to matters related to Standard Operating Procedures (i.e. policies, handbook) should first acquire the document and seek clarification from the liaison or responsible individuals so noted. If the inquiry is not thus satisfied, the church member may escalate said inquiry to the individuals responsible. If after such attempts the inquiry remains unsatisfied, any church member may bring the inquiry to the attention of the church as stated by the Constitution and Bylaws.

Matters of practice, procedure, or policy will be subjected to each related higher guiding documents (1 to 9 noted above) and interpreted thereby.

The following chart of documents (i.e. **Standard Operating Procedures**) is not exhaustive, but serves as the general guide to church matters:

Document	Group of Reference and Interpretation	Responsible Individuals	Liaison
Administrative Policies	Administrative Staff	Pastor	Assoc Pastor/ Business Administrator
Discipleship/Christian Education Policies	Education Staff	Minister of Ed/Admin	Education Staff
Financial Policies	Finance Committee	Committee Officers	Minister of Ed/Admin
Mission Handbook	Missions Council	Council Officers	Missions Minister
Committee Handbook	Committee on Teams and Committees	Committee Officers	Minister of Ed/Admin
Personnel Handbook	Personnel Committee	Committee Officers	Pastor
Deacon Handbook	Deacon Body	Deacon Officers	Pastor