

The Policy Guide of the First Baptist Church, Weaverville, California, Inc.

Adopted January 19, 2013; Revised 1/17/16; Revised 1/20/19

Part 1 Officers

The officers of First Baptist Church Weaverville, Inc. (FBCW) consist of Elders and Deacons.

In the New Testament we find four titles used for male leadership in the local church: Elder, Overseer, Pastor, and Deacon. The first three terms are used interchangeably to refer to the same office. Elders (Overseers, Pastors) were appointed to oversee and shepherd the overall direction of a local church and are especially concerned with teaching the Scriptures. Deacons, on the other hand, were appointed for the efficient functioning of the local church and especially ministering to the physical needs of the body.

Scriptural references to church leadership within a local church are always plural, indicating a group of Elders and Deacons. Except for our Lord Jesus, who is called “the Chief Shepherd,” no single person in Scripture is referred to as “The Pastor” except Jesus. Therefore, First Baptist Church Weaverville (FBCW) has a board of Elders who pastor and oversee the church. We do recognize one of our Elders as the full-time Teaching Pastor, and he is given a wage so as to enable him to devote himself full-time to the ministry of FBCW.

Any man who aspires to the office of either Elder or Deacon must first demonstrate, by his life and witness, the scriptural qualifications of Elder or Deacon and must be in agreement with the doctrine and philosophy of FBCW. Such agreement should be demonstrated for at least one year before being considered for leadership.

Per the Scriptures, there is no time constraint on how long someone may hold these offices as long as he remains spiritually qualified and desires the work. Elders and Deacons may choose to step down at any time for any reason. If an Elder or Deacon disqualifies himself, he is immediately removed from office. The two offices shall re-assess their member’s qualifications and desires to serve, annually.

The Elders and Deacons will meet quarterly in one accord and in accountability seeking unanimity in matters of the church.

Elders

The qualifications and functions for an Elder are given in 1 Timothy 3:1-7, 17-22; 2 Timothy 4:1-5; Titus 1:5-9, 2:1; Acts 20:28-35; 1 Thessalonians 5:12-13; Hebrews 13:17; James 5:14 and I Peter 5:1-3. An Elder must meet the scriptural qualifications of an Elder at all times. If he does not, he is disqualified and no longer considered an Elder of the church. Any desire for reinstatement will be at the approval of the Elders and congregation.

It is the duty of every Elder to exercise prayerful and diligent oversight of FBCW, watching over the souls thereof as one that must give an account, to promote the edification of each believer and earnestly seek the salvation of the lost.

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Decision-making on the Elder Board must be by unanimous agreement. Each Elder has the same amount of authority as any of the others. However, this is not to say that each has the same role or specific ministry to fulfill. Depending on their spiritual giftedness and availability, our Elders will vary in their time commitment or public ministry.

In some circumstances, Elders may have the need to go on sabbatical. While on sabbatical they may be consulted but will retain no authority towards decision making. Their going on and coming off sabbatical will be done at the approval of the other Elders.

Elder responsibilities at FBCW shall be, but not limited to:

- Select a chairperson annually.
- Oversee all affairs of FBCW.
- Shepherd the flock of FBCW including visitation of its members.
- Oversee all aspects of preaching and teaching the Word of God. (Note: All teachers whether for adults, youth or children shall be FBCW members in good standing.)
- Oversee the Men's Ministry.
- Approve all other FBCW ministry policies and procedures.
- Provide assistance in the ordinances of Baptism and the Lord's Supper.
- Oversee all aspects of FBCW membership including the membership process. Review the membership list annually and give a report at the Annual Business Meeting.
- Oversee the selection process of Officers, Deaconesses and FBCW Staff (see Part 4 - FBCW Staff and Part 5 - Selection of Elders, Deacons, Deaconesses and Church Staff).
- Appoint one Elder to serve alongside the Deacons.
- Work with the Deacons to assure that there are always three individuals serving as Directors, aka Trustees to represent FBCW per the Articles of Incorporation. The position of Director/Trustee is of an indefinite duration or until the person would desire to step down or the elders and deacons decide they are disqualified from serving in this capacity.
- Review Pastor's performance and salary.
- Shared financial oversight with Deacons in preparing the annual budget. The budget will ultimately be approved by the congregation at the annual business meeting in January.

Among the Elders there is one Teaching Pastor, a qualified man called and employed on a full time basis, by the membership, for an indefinite term. The Teaching Pastor shall be responsible for the regular preaching of the Word, public services, and will make recommendations to the Elders concerning all special meetings (i.e. visiting ministries, missionary presentations, weddings and funerals, etc.)

The Teaching Pastor shall be entitled to an annual vacation with full salary as follows:

- Two weeks' vacation after the first and second years of service. Five years' experience also qualifies him in lieu of this service.
- Three weeks' vacation after the third and fourth years of service. Five to ten years' experience also qualifies him in lieu of this service.

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- Four weeks' vacation after the fifth year of service. Ten years' experience or more also qualifies him in lieu of this service.

In addition, the Teaching Pastor shall be allowed time to attend conferences or other activities he and the Elders deem necessary to improve his ministry to FBCW. All activities shall be subject to the approval of the Elders. FBCW is to provide a reasonable money allowance for the teaching pastor to attend these functions.

The call of a Teaching Pastor is first the result of a recommendation from the Pulpit Committee to the Elder Board (see Part 6 – Councils and Committees). The Elders then review the recommendation, and upon reaching an unanimous decision regarding the applicant, he will be asked to come to FBCW for an in-person interview and preach before the congregation. After this, the prospective Teaching Pastor may then be asked by the Elders to candidate for the position which would consist of him returning with his family for a second interview, additional preaching and fellowship time with the congregation.

In order to call a Teaching Pastor, a vote will come before the membership at a business meeting. Notice of the meeting and its purpose shall be announced from the pulpit the two previous Sundays. A majority vote of three-fourths (3/4) of all voting members is required for the call.

The dismissal of a Teaching Pastor is accomplished by the same voting process used in calling a Teaching Pastor. The relationship will be dissolved by mutual consent or after one month's notice.

Deacons

The qualifications for Deacons are given in Acts 6:1-3 and 1 Timothy 3:8-13. A Deacon must meet the scriptural qualifications of a Deacon at all times. If he does not, he is disqualified and is no longer considered a Deacon of FBCW. Any desire for reinstatement will be at the approval of the Elders and congregation.

The term for a Deacon is two years. It is recommended that the terms be staggered. At the end of his term, he may continue on for another two year term. There is no maximum amount of terms he may serve as long as he desires the work.

Decision making by the Deacons will be by a simple majority. As with the Elders, each Deacon has the same amount of authority as any other. However, this is not to say that each has the same role or specific ministry to fulfill. Depending on their giftedness, talents and availability, the Deacons will vary in their time commitment or public ministry.

In some circumstances, Deacons may have the need to go on sabbatical. While on sabbatical they may be consulted but will retain no authority toward decision making. Their going on and coming off sabbatical will be done at the approval of the Elders.

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Deacon responsibilities at FBCW shall be, but not limited to:

- Select a chairperson annually.
- It is recommended the Deacons meet monthly.
- Provide assistance in the ordinances of Baptism and the Lord's Supper. It will be the responsibility of the Deacons to ensure there are enough men to serve the Lord's Supper.
- Attend to the necessities of the sick and needy within the congregation, including disbursement of Deacon's Fund.
- Aid the Elders in visitation.
- Serve on an as-needed basis with Elders for selection of Officers, Deaconesses and Church Staff (see Part 4 - FBCW Staff and Part 5 - Selection of Elders, Deacons, Deaconesses and Church Staff).
- Oversee all aspects of buildings and grounds.
- Oversee the Site Committee (see Part 6 – Councils and Committees)
- Meet monthly for financial oversight (including general budget as well as auxiliary funds) with shared financial oversight with Elders in preparing the annual budget. The budget will ultimately be approved by the congregation at the yearly business meeting in January.
- Provide at least 2 authorized check signers.
- Assure that the church financial records are audited periodically by an outside source.
- Supervise the employed church staff and review salaries.
- Work with the Elders to assure that there are always three individuals serving as Directors, a.k.a. Trustees, to represent the church per the Articles of Incorporation. The position of Director/Trustee will be of an indefinite duration or until the person would desire to step down or the elders and deacons decide they are disqualified from serving in this capacity.

Part 2

Deaconesses - Women Who Serve

The qualifications for a Deaconess are given in 1 Timothy 3:11. A Deaconess must meet the scriptural qualifications of a Deaconess at all times. If she does not, she is disqualified and is no longer considered a Deaconess of FBCW. Any desire for reinstatement will be at the approval of the Elders. Each year the Deaconess ministry shall assess their members' qualifications and desires to serve.

The term for a Deaconess is two years. It is recommended that the terms be staggered. At the end of her term, she may continue on for another two year term. There is no maximum amount of terms she may serve as long as she desires the work.

Depending on their giftedness, talents and availability, the Deaconesses will vary in their time commitment or ministry duties.

Deaconess responsibilities at FBCW shall be, but not limited to:

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- Select a chairperson annually.
- Coordinate specific events/ministries for women, i.e.: Ladies Tea, Women's Retreat, Baby/Bridal showers, etc.
- Secure speakers for any women's ministry event that needs one. Speaker is subject to Elder approval.
- Prepare the elements for the ordinance of the Lord's Supper.
- Assist women in the ordinance of Baptism.
- Aid the Elders and Deacons in visitation.
- Perform any other duties as requested by the Elders or Deacons.
- Help in attending to the necessities of the sick and needy.
- Coordinate meals for those in need.
- Maintain the church food pantry.
- Maintain the church kitchen.
- Oversee Fellowship Ministry. This ministry will help to plan the calendar for the year and coordinate FBCW events such as (but not limited to) visiting guests, musical groups, camps, retreats, banquets and other special activities. It will be the role of this ministry to enlist the help of the congregation and delegate duties as the need arises. Each year the Deaconesses will select a member to lead this ministry.

Part 3 Youth Ministry

Youth is defined as grades 6-12. The Youth Leader(s) shall be a man or men and oversee all aspects of the youth ministry under the oversight of the Elders.

The purpose of the youth ministry is to help shepherd the youth. Recognizing the parents' responsibility in teaching their children who God is, what He has done, and what He requires of them (Exodus 13:6-15; Deuteronomy 4:9-10; 6:4-7, 20-25; 11:18-19; 32:45-46; Psalm 78:1-8; Ephesians 6:4; Colossians 3:20-21). The objective of this ministry is primarily to assist parents in this responsibility. A parallel objective is to shepherd those youth who are in difficult situations and/or whose parents are not believers; to seek to impact the families with the gospel as these encompass the mission of FBCW (cf. Matthew 28:18-20; Ephesians 4:11-16; Colossians 1:28-29; 1 Peter 5:1-3; Acts 20:28-30).

The goals of the youth ministry are:

- Never to usurp the parents' authority and responsibilities as the primary spiritual leaders of their youth, and whenever possible, to come alongside them to offer encouragement and assistance.
- To help the youth find a personal relationship with Christ through salvation and to grow in sanctification through the teaching of God's Word.
- To help equip them for effective Christian service, including evangelizing the lost and to provide them with opportunities for such service.
- To encourage the youth in spiritual disciplines including personal devotions and to rely on God through prayer.

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- To give them an opportunity for fellowship with other youth but not to forsake fellowship with the rest of the congregation.

Part 4

FBCW Staff

The FBCW Staff are those qualified members who carry out the ministry tasks that contribute to the efficient operation of FBCW. They shall set procedures with the approval of the Elders and/or Deacons. Unless otherwise specified, these positions are not paid employees. For FBCW Staff selection and length of service, please see Part 5 - Selection of Elders, Deacons, Deaconesses and Church Staff.

Qualifications:

Unless otherwise specified, the individuals of the following ministries shall be members in good standing. They should be those who are actively pursuing a right relationship with God. To this end, some of the Scriptures that should be considered are John 14:16, 21; Galatians 5:16-26; Ephesians 4:17-31; 5:1-21; Philippians 2:1-18; Colossians 1:9-12; 3:1-17. This is not to say every person who serves on the FBCW Staff is going to live out these commands perfectly but they are to be the pursuit of any believer, and most certainly those that would serve as staff members.

Staff Descriptions:

Moderator

This man shall preside at FBCW gatherings such as business meetings, the FBCW Council and special events. He shall also serve as a Corporation Officer (see Corporation Officers below). The Moderator can be selected from the Elders, Deacons, FBCW Staff or membership. In this person's absence, the Elders shall appoint a substitute.

Clerk

He/she shall keep a correct record of the proceedings of FBCW meetings; keep a registry of the membership; preserve documents, papers, and letters, and issue such letters as directed. The Clerk shall post a copy of the minutes of all business meetings within two (2) weeks following the meeting. The Clerk shall also serve as a Corporation Officer (see Corporation Officers below).

Treasurer

He/she shall be responsible for the handling of all monies on behalf of FBCW including (but not limited to) the general and special funds and all other accounts. Some of these responsibilities are to deposit all income, manage accounts, pay bills and salaries, file corporate papers and perform any other FBCW financial duties as requested by the Deacons. The Treasurer shall provide a detailed report of receipts and disbursements at the monthly Deacon meeting as well as the quarterly business meetings.

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All offerings shall be counted by at least two members designated by the Deacons. The Treasurer shall post the annual Treasurer's Report two Sundays before the annual business meeting and make copies available to all the membership. They shall also serve as a Corporation Officer (see Corporation Officers below)

Assistant Treasurer

He/she shall perform the duties of Treasurer in his/her absence.

Children's Ministry Director

He/she shall be responsible for the general oversight and coordination of Sunday School, Children's Church, Vacation Bible School and the Nursery for children from nursery age to 5th grade. They shall seek the approval of the Elders for all teachers and curriculum. Any teacher may also appoint, with the Director's approval, an assistant as the need arises. All teachers and assistants must be FBCW members in good standing. The exception would be youth whose parent(s) or guardian(s) would need to be member(s) in good standing. All teachers and assistants must be approved by the Reducing the Risk Committee. The Director shall also keep the Children's Ministry Volunteer Handbook current and up-to-date. A Children's Ministry Volunteer Handbook may be obtained through the church office.

AWANA Commander

This man shall provide oversight and direction for the AWANA program. He will also be in charge of securing volunteers needed to carry out the program. All volunteers must be approved by the Reducing the Risk Committee.

Nursery Director

This woman provides oversight and direction for the Nursery under the leadership of the Children's Ministry Director. She will secure the volunteers needed to carry out the program and follow the guidelines of the Children's Ministry Volunteer Handbook. All volunteers must be approved by the Reducing the Risk Committee.

Head Usher

This man shall, with the approval of the Deacons, appoint other ushers and be responsible for coordinating and training them to be greeters, hand out bulletins and receive the Sunday offering as well as to provide for the comfort and security of the congregation. The head usher shall also work with the secretary, Fellowship Ministry and/or Deaconesses to prepare FBCW facilities for various functions.

Librarian

He/she shall maintain the FBCW library and endeavor to promote its contents and use for the Biblical and spiritual edification of the congregation.

Choir Director

This man/woman will oversee all aspects of the choir including music selection, rehearsals and the planning of presentations. The Director may organize individuals or a music committee to help in this process. Those who participate in the choir ministry must be church members in good standing.

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The exception would be youth whose parent(s) or guardian(s) would need to be member(s) in good standing.

Song Leader and/or Worship Team Leader

This man will lead the congregation in corporate worship through music and singing.

Corporation Officers

In order to satisfy California corporation requirements for FBCW, INC., four members must serve as Corporation Officers. Unless otherwise specified, the positions of Moderator, Clerk, and Treasurer will be three of the four corporation officers. The Moderator will act as Chief Executive Officer, the Clerk as Secretary, and the Treasurer as Chief Financial Officer. The fourth Officer (Agent for Service of Process) shall be an Elder. These positions must be voted on by the membership and recorded in the minutes.

Paid Staff

The Paid Staff currently consists of the Teaching Pastor, Church Secretary, Janitor(s) and Gardener(s). The Deacons supervise all aspects of the paid staff and shall keep job descriptions and contracts on file in the FBCW office.

Part 5

Selection of Elders, Deacons, Deaconesses and Church Staff

From approximately October 15 through November 15, any church member may submit themselves for consideration by the Elders for the offices of Elder and Deacon, as well as Deaconess or any

Church Staff position to be affirmed by the membership at the Annual Meeting the following January. The Elders may enlist the help of the Deacons in this process.

After discussion of those who would be deemed spiritually qualified to serve, the Elders would contact individuals for an interview. Once all interviews had taken place, the Elders would form a proposed list to be posted for the membership to review four weeks prior to the Annual Meeting. If any member believed a candidate to be unqualified due to sin, that member should follow the steps of Matthew 18:15-17 for confronting a brother or sister in sin. If they have any other concerns about the candidate, they should bring these to the attention of the Elders as soon as possible. The membership will affirm by ballot and simple majority the slate of proposed Elders, Deacons, Deaconesses and Church Staff at the Annual Meeting.

While Elders, Deacons and Deaconesses serve until they desire to step down or become unqualified, FBCW Staff are selected annually. If any of the FBCW Staff desires to step down mid-year, that person shall notify the Elders who will recommend another person to the membership for affirmation. This affirmation can take place at any quarterly business or specially called meeting. It should be noted that Elders, Deacons, Deaconesses or any FBCW Staff position can be filled at any time throughout the year.

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Part 6

Councils and Committees

There are two types of councils and committees: standing councils and committees, and special committees. Standing councils and committees are on-going ministries. Special committees are

initiated as the need arises. All council or committee members (standing or special) shall be members in good standing. Any exceptions would be at the approval of the Elders.

The Elders and/or Deacons shall approve the duties and length of service of a special committee. Each special committee shall endeavor to select a committee leader as soon as possible after being appointed.

The following are FBCW standing councils and committees.

FBCW Council

The FBCW Council shall consist of the Teaching Pastor, Moderator, Clerk, Treasurer, Youth Leader, Children's Ministry Director, Choir Director and/or Song Leader, Fellowship Ministry Leader and Chairperson of the Elders, Deacons, Deaconesses and Missions.

The FBCW Council shall meet at least quarterly on a regularly set day. Special meetings of the council may be called by the Moderator, Elders or any two members of the council. No special meetings may be held without prior notification of all members of the council. A two-thirds (2/3) majority of the membership of the council shall constitute a quorum. The Clerk shall record the minutes of all council meetings. All matters voted on by the council require a simple majority (51%) to be approved.

The purpose of the FBCW Council shall be to correlate and coordinate the ministries and activities of FBCW, yet with advisory powers only. The functions of the council shall include the following:

- Open each meeting with a Scripture reading and prayer
- When necessary, reports of progress since last meeting
- Review the calendar of activities and meetings for the months ahead
- Review and provide input to the annual budget
- Discussion of any church related issue that needs attention

Reducing the Risk Committee

The Reducing the Risk Committee is to be appointed by the Elders. The members of the committee serve for an indefinite period of time. If at any time a person desires to step down from the committee, a replacement will be appointed by the committee subject to Elder approval.

The purposes of this committee and policy are to 1) safeguard children and youth in children's ministries from sexual abuse; 2) protect staff and volunteers in children's ministries from potential allegations of sexual abuse; 3) limit the extent of the church's legal risk and liability due to allegations of sexual abuse..

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The committee is required to brief each children's ministry leader on all Reducing the Risk policies. It is the responsibility of the ministry leaders to carry out these policies. If at any time the committee desires help on a specific issue they should go to the Elders for counsel.

Missions Committee

The Missions Committee is to be appointed by the Elders. This committee is generally composed of at least three members, one of which shall be an Elder. The committee members shall serve for an indefinite time. If at any time a person desires to step down from the committee, a replacement will be appointed by the committee subject to Elder approval. It shall recommend policies to the congregation to be followed with respect to missionary objectives, giving, and cooperation. The Missions Committee shall select a committee chairperson annually. Matthew 28:18-20, Acts 1.

Site Committee

The Site Committee is overseen by the Deacons and focuses on planning issues in regard to the buildings and grounds of FBCW, including but not limited to parking, removal of old structures, construction of new structures and future plans/goals for the plant and property. Any member in good standing may be on the committee. The committee shall have as its chairperson either a Deacon or Elder.

The following is a FBCW Special Committee:

Pulpit Committee

Upon the departure, or notification of departure, of the Teaching Pastor, a Pulpit Committee shall be selected at a regular or specially called meeting. The committee shall consist of at least one Elder, one Deacon and three members to be selected by the Elders and affirmed by the membership.

The Pulpit Committee shall be responsible for taking the necessary steps to secure a candidate for the membership to consider. This would include a thorough investigation of the candidate prior to his being presented to the membership for action. Only one candidate shall be presented at a time for consideration and voting. See also the "Teaching Pastor" section under "Elders" in "Part 1 – Officers".

Part 7

Aspects of Membership Not Covered in Constitution

Membership is discussed under Article VII of the Constitution. This part discusses membership transfers, non-resident members, in-active members and discipline of members.

Membership Transfer

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This section discusses 1) how a member of FBCW may transfer to another church and 2) how a member of another church may become a member of FBCW.

A letter of transfer may be granted upon request to any member in good standing, as stated by the Elders, who desires to unite with another church of like faith and practice. Also, the leadership of the new church may contact FBCW's Elders for a verbal recommendation. The Clerk will then assure that the individual's name is removed from the FBCW membership list.

If an individual desires to join the membership of FBCW, they must go through the normal FBCW membership process as outlined in Article VII of the Constitution. The previous church(es) of the candidate may be contacted for additional information.

Membership applications can be obtained through the FBCW office.–

Inactive Members

Any member who willfully or habitually is absent from most of the services of the church for six months without stated cause or by reason of having moved his residence from the community or who is continually negligent in spiritual duties shall have his or her name placed on the in-active list, revoking their rights and privileges of membership including voting. This provision shall be carried out by the Elders after an effort to restore such a member has been made. On recommendation of the Elders, the congregation may drop a member from the church roll after he or she has been on the in-active list for a period of six months.

If an in-active member wishes to be restored to active membership they must petition the Elders. It shall be the responsibility of the Elders to determine at what point in time someone may be returned to the active membership list. If someone has their membership dropped and wishes to be reinstated as a member, they must go through the normal membership process. In the case of dropping a member or reinstating an individual to membership, the congregation shall be notified of such action at the next quarterly business meeting.

Non-Members

Non-members may serve in some capacities with the approval of the Elders. To do so, they must sign the FBCW Statement of Faith, adhere to all policies in the FBCW Policy Guide and submit themselves to the leadership of the Elders.

Confidentiality of Members

The Elders must maintain the strictest confidentiality when counseling members of the congregation regarding private, personal matters unless it becomes necessary to honor God and His Word through church discipline (see below). To this end, the Elders may confer and counsel with one another, but again, always with the strictest of confidentiality and only as the need arises.

Discipline

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Any sin affecting the unity, harmony, and doctrine of FBCW will be dealt with. Any brother or sister found to be in such sin will be confronted according to Matthew 18:15-17 (up to a four-step process). The purpose of this discipline is for the repentance and restoration of the sinning brother or sister in their relationship with God as well as the congregation or any individual sinned against. Matthew 18:15-20; Galatians 6:1; Romans 16:17-19; 1Corinthians 5:9-13; 1 Timothy 6:1-5; Titus 3:10-11.

Part 8 Meetings & Voting

Regular business meetings shall be held quarterly. The Annual Business Meeting shall be in January of every year. It will be the responsibility of the Moderator and Clerk to develop the agenda for the regular business meetings. Reports for all business meetings from the FBCW Staff as well as other pertinent ministry leaders can be given verbally but shall be in written form and given to the Clerk 3 weeks prior to a meeting. This will allow the reports to be made available to the membership two Sundays prior to the business meeting. Included with these reports shall be the minutes from the previous business meeting. The Treasurer's report, as well as the Clerk's report shall be provided

verbally at all meetings. Ministry reports can chronicle the activities of the previous quarter but should also include future ministry goals.

Special business meetings may be called at any time provided at least two weeks notice has been given from the pulpit and in the bulletin. The Elders are responsible for developing the agenda for special business meetings.

All business meetings are directed by the Moderator. Robert's Rules of Order will be used to govern the meeting.

When voting is called for, only those active members in good standing will be allowed to cast a vote or vote by absentee ballot. Absentee voting will be with consent of the Elders. Depending on the issue, votes are either verbal or by ballot. A show of hands is also equivalent to a verbal vote.

All ballot votes require a two-thirds vote of total ballots cast and all ballots shall be burned or shredded immediately following the voting. All other votes made verbally or by show of hands require a simple majority.

Part 9 Associations and Affiliations

- Member General Association of Regular Baptist Churches – garbc.org
- Member California Association of Regular Baptist Churches – carbc.org
- Shepherds Fellowship – shepherdsfellowship.org
- Pacific Justice Institute (legal) – pacificjustice.org