

# PROPOSAL

## BYLAWS OF TRINITY BAPTIST CHURCH

### Article 1 – Church Membership

#### *Section 1 – Membership Definition*

Church membership is a commitment between a Christian and a body of Christians. As such, it is both a privilege and a responsibility.

#### *Section 2 – Membership Agreements and Commitments and Admission Process*

Trinity Baptist Church membership shall be comprised of “Born Again Believers”. She will receive into her membership those individuals who come as a result of the Lord’s leadership and who are willing to meet the requirements for membership. These include agreement to our Statement of Faith spelled out in Article III of our Constitution. A person is considered an “Active Member” if in addition to these their participation meets the level spelled out in our Membership Manual. Membership status will be reviewed every 2 yrs.

#### *Section 3 – Membership Discipline*

Any member guilty of conduct by which the name of our Lord Jesus Christ may be dishonored, and so opposing the welfare of the church, shall be subject to the admonition of the elders and the discipline of the church, according to the instructions given in 1 Corinthians 5: 1-13, Matthew 18: 15–17 and the example of Scripture. Church discipline, then, should ordinarily be contemplated after individual private admonition has failed.

Church discipline can include admonition by the elders, removal from office, and termination of membership or other disciplinary measures. The purpose of such discipline should be for the repentance, reconciliation, and spiritual growth of the individual disciplined; For the instruction in righteousness and good of other Christians, as an example to them; For the purity of the church as a whole; For the good of our corporate witness to non-Christians; and supremely for the glory of God by reflecting His holy character.

#### *Section 4 – Membership Dismissal*

The elder council following the death, voluntary resignation, inactivity, of any church member shall terminate membership. The Elder Council may also terminate membership as a result of church discipline.

### Article 2 – Church Leadership

#### *Section 1 – Summary*

The leadership of our church consists of elders, professional ministerial staff, deacons and ministry leaders including teachers and group leaders. In addition, our church, under the Bylaws, recognizes the administrative positions of trustees and church clerk.

#### *Section 2 - Elders*

##### *1. General*

Trinity Baptist Church believes in a plurality of Elders and Ministerial Staff, shepherding, serving and ruling. A council of Elders, which shall consist of no less than five (5) men, with a majority of non-staff members, confirmed by the congregation, and meeting the qualifications of scripture, selects prospective men. Our pastor is an Elder and permanent member of the Elder Council.

## 2. *Qualifications and Selection, Approval and Terms*

The Elder council will look to 1 Tim. 3:1-7 and Titus 1:6-9 as the basis for our qualifications of an Elder. A process of inviting to consider, interviewing, confirming a willingness to serve and be examined by the Elder council will be used to confirm qualification selection.

Prospective Elders make a commitment to serve a 3yr. term and can serve more 3yr. terms, by mutual consent. The congregation will confirm the Elder selections.

### *Discipline and Dismissal*

An Elder's office may be terminated by resignation or dismissal by the Elder Council if he is found to be physically or mentally incapacitated or spiritually unqualified. (Matt. 18:15-17, 1 Tim. 3:1-7 and Titus 1:5-9)

## 3. *Functional Organization and Responsibilities of Elders*

These are defined in the Trinity Baptist Church Elder Manual.

## *Section 3 – Senior Pastor*

The Senior Pastor, as the under-shepherd of the church, is an Elder of the Church responsible to God for leading and equipping the body to function as a New Testament church.

### *1. Responsibilities*

The pastor shall lead the congregation, and the church staff and serve as the First among equals on the Elder Council. He shall preach, administer the ordinances of baptism and the Lord's Supper, and perform such other duties as usually pertain to that office.

### *2. Acquisitions and Dismissal*

A. In the calling of any man to this position, the Elders will be responsible for recognizing godly and gifted men within the Church, or searching for godly and gifted men outside of the Church. In addition, however, the Church must be given adequate opportunity to assess the preaching and ministry gifts of any candidate before being asked to express her judgment, and must receive assurance from the Elders that having interviewed the man concerned, they are in no doubt as to his wholehearted agreement with our doctrine, Church covenant and constitution and by-laws. Having been nominated by the Elders, the congregation will voice her prayerful judgment during a Special Family Meeting, with a call being extended to the candidate provided that three-quarters (3/4) majority of the voting Active Members present with a quorum (*consisting of over 50% of Active Members who are present at the meeting or voting by absentee ballot*), during the Special Family Meeting affirm the Elders' nomination. The call will also serve as receiving both the Pastor and his wife, if he is married, and their children, if appropriate, into the membership of the Church. Ordination of Ministers will be scheduled as appropriate and convenient to the Church and to the individuals.

B. By Resignation: A Pastor, after sensing the call of God in a new direction of ministry, may submit his resignation to the congregation, provided that two weeks' notice is given.

C. By Grievance: When a grievance exists against a Pastor, either due to his teaching contrary to the beliefs of this Church or to alleged conduct on his part unfitting an Elder, any member may bring such grievance before the Elder Council. If the Elder Council, after thorough investigation (personal contact with person in question) and consideration, believe the grievance to be true and substantial, may call for a Special Family Meeting with two weeks notice. The vocational call of the Pastor may be terminated at such a meeting given the following: A recommendation of the Elder Council for removal, and, a majority vote of Active Members either present or by Absentee ballot is reached with a quorum of fifty percent of active members. The termination shall be immediate and any compensation shall be rendered in not more than 30 days. Unless otherwise recommended by the Elders (on a case by case basis), the Church will compensate the Pastor so removed with not less than one-twelfth of his total annual compensation.

### *Section 3b – Professional Ministerial Staff*

This church shall call and employ such professional staff members, as the church needs to fulfill its mission and ministries. The Elder Council shall recommend all ministerial staff members to the church.

The Elder Council may hire additional staff to assist with pastoral ministry or administration. The Elder Council shall define the responsibilities for additional staff positions. The Elder Council will define the responsibilities for the additional staff position.

If at any point a Ministerial Staff Member is proven after Elder Council investigation, to have performed immoral or un-Biblical acts unbecoming the office of Minister, the Elder Council may immediately discharge him/her from the staff. Unless otherwise recommended by the Elders (on a case by case basis), the Church will compensate the Ministerial Staff so removed with not less than one-twelfth of his total annual compensation. The Church body shall be notified of the decision as quickly as possible.

### *Section 4 – Deacons*

#### *1. Leadership and Oversight*

Acts 6:2-3 (NIV) is the scriptural basis for this office. Qualifications for deacons for Trinity Baptist Church are those qualifications listed in I Timothy 3:8-13 (NIV).

#### *2. Organization*

1. Deacons and nominees for Deacon shall be qualified for the office as specified in the Bible (1 Timothy 3:8-12). The Church shall recognize men who are giving of themselves in service to the Church, who possess particular gifts of service and who are willing to serve in this calling. These men shall be received as gifts of Christ to His Church and set apart as Deacons. The Deacons shall be active in all areas of Church life.
2. The Deacons shall be Active Members of the Church for a minimum of two (2) years prior to serving.
3. A Deacon's term of office may be terminated by resignation or by dismissal by the Elders if he is found to be physically or mentally incapacitated or spiritually unqualified or becomes inactive in the church. (Matthew 18:15-17, 1 Timothy 3:1-7, and Titus 1:5-9)
4. The Deacons shall be recommended by members of the Church. The Elders will compile and confirm the recommendations and submit the names to the members for affirmation at an appropriate Family Meeting.
5. The number of Deacons shall be determined by the needs of the ministry and by the call and qualification of men in the Church. The Elders shall recommend this number of Deacons.

#### *3. Responsibilities of Deacons*

The Deacons shall be ready to assist the Elders in any service that shall support and promote the ministry of the Word and Prayer, new and existing ministries of the Church, and the care for the members of the congregation. Their responsibilities include:

1. Working for the unity of the body and supporting the Elders;
2. Aiding the Elders in the visitation and prayer needs of the congregation;
3. Participating in the greeting and welcoming ministries of the Church;
4. Assisting in administering the ordinances of the Gospel;
5. Assisting at fellowship gatherings of the Church;
6. Overseeing the gathering of tithes and offerings;
7. Meeting together with the Elders and Ministerial Staff at least quarterly for the purpose of prayer and communication.
8. Assisting the Pastor(s) and Elders in other and various needs that may arise.

## Article 3– Elections

### *Section 1 – Election of Officers and Teams*

Officers of the church, consisting of Church Clerk and Trustees, shall be elected by a majority vote of members at a Special Family Meeting. The Elder Council will call a Special Family Meeting announced with at least two weeks notice and present names of nominees. A quorum of 25% of Active Church Members either present or with Absentee Ballot is required.

Other leaders such as new elders, deacons and professional staff will be presented to the congregation by the Elder Council for confirmation with opportunity to object with cause with a week to do so.

### *Section 2 – Stewardship Standing Team*

#### *1. Selection*

The Elder Council appoints the Stewardship Team for a 3yr term. The number shall be seven, and shall be chaired by an Elder chosen by the Elder Council. They shall develop a budget with the input from Professional Staff and submit to the Elder Council and administer and oversee church finances according to financial policies.

Fiscal Year and Budget Plan will be January 1-December 31 of each year.

### *Section 3 – Other Teams*

#### *1. Establishment and Dissolution*

Teams are appointed for a specific purpose and are disbanded when that purpose is accomplished. The Elder Council and Ministerial Staff shall choose the teams.

### *Section 4 – Trustees and Church Clerk*

#### *1. Church Clerk*

The Elder Council shall select and the congregation vote to approve a Church Clerk as its clerical officer to serve a three (3) year term. The church clerk shall be responsible for keeping a suitable record of all official actions of the church, except as otherwise herein provided. The church may delegate some of the clerical responsibilities to a church secretary who will assist the elected clerk. All church records are church property and shall be kept in the church office when an office is maintained.

#### *2. Trustees*

The Elder Council shall select and the congregation vote to approve three (3) trustees to serve as legal officers of the church. They shall hold in trust the church property. After a recommendation from the Elder Council and majority vote with 25% quorum by the church congregation on each specific action, the Trustees shall have the power to buy, sell, mortgage, lease, or transfer any church property. When the signatures of trustees are required, they shall all sign legal documents involving the sale, mortgage, purchase, or rental of property, or other legal documents related to church-approved matters.

## Article 4 – Indemnification

### *Section 1 – Mandatory Indemnification*

If a legal claim or criminal allegation is made against a person because he or she is or was an officer, employee, or agent of the church, the church shall provide indemnification against liability and costs incurred in defending against the claim if the elders determine that the person acted (a) in good faith, (b) with the care an ordinarily prudent person in a similar position would exercise under similar

circumstances, and (c) in a manner the person reasonably believed to be in the best interest of the church, and the person had no reasonable cause to believe his or her conduct was unlawful.

### *Section 2 – Permissive Indemnification*

At the discretion of the elders, the church also may indemnify any person who acted in good faith and reasonably believed that his or her conduct was in the church's best interest and not unlawful.

## Article 5 – Church Ordinances

We believe that the Lord Jesus Christ has committed two ordinances to the local Church: Baptism and the Lord's Supper. We believe that Christian baptism is the immersion of the believer in water in the name of the triune God as a public profession of faith. We believe that Christ instituted the Lord's Supper for commemoration of His death. We believe that these two ordinances should be observed and administered until the return of the Lord Jesus Christ. (Matthew 28:18-20, Romans 6:3-5; 1 Corinthians 11:23-26)

### *Section 1 – Baptism*

Baptism will be offered to those who have publicly professed faith in Jesus Christ and who have met with at least one of the Elders or Ministerial Staff to discuss their conversion experience. A baptismal service will be scheduled as quickly as is permissible and convenient for the Church and for the baptismal candidate.

### *Section 2 – Lord's Supper*

The Lord's Supper will be observed at least quarterly. The Lord's Supper will be open to anyone who professes personal faith in the Lord Jesus Christ and who has made that profession known publicly.

## Article 6 – Church Meetings

### *Section 1 – GENERAL CHURCH SERVICES*

The church shall maintain services on Sundays and at other times as deemed necessary by the pastor and Elders of the church.

### *Section 2 – CHURCH BUSINESS MEETINGS or Special Family Meetings*

The church shall meet in regular business meeting once each quarter at a day and time to be set by the Elder Council. If a specially called business meeting to consider important matters is necessary, a two-week public notice of the nature of the meeting must be given. Public notice for the Trinity Baptist Church is defined as written notification in the Worship Guide and or email. There must be a quorum present to take action. The quorum (25% of Active or 50% of Active members as determined by the Elder Council) shall consist of those who attend either the regular business meeting or the special family meeting. The most recent edition of Robert's Rule of Order is the authority for parliamentary rules of procedure for all business meetings of the church. The Stewardship Team and the Elder Council must review new recommendations from the floor, involving any non-budgeted expenditures prior to church action. Absentee voting will be allowed and will be part of establishing quorum.

## Article 7 – Dispute Resolution

Believing that the Bible commands Christians to make every effort to live at peace and to resolve disputes with each other in private or within the Christian Church (Matthew 18: 15–20, 1 Corinthians 6: 1–8), the church shall expect its members to resolve conflict among themselves according to biblically based principles, without reliance on the secular courts. Consistent with its call to peacemaking, the church shall encourage the use of biblically based principles and the avoidance of suits of law or equity

to resolve disputes between itself and those outside the church, whether Christian or secular and whether individuals or corporate entities.

#### Article 8 – Church Dissolution

In the event of the dissolution of the church, the church shall, after paying or making provision for the payment of all the liabilities of the church, dispose of all of its assets to such organization or organizations organized and operated exclusively for charitable, educational, or religious purposes as shall at the time qualify as an exempt organization or organizations under Sec. 501 (c) (3) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986, as the Elder Council shall recommend confirmed by a 50% of a quorum of the Active Church Members.

#### Article 9 – Amendments to Bylaws

Proposed changes to the Constitution and By-Laws shall be made by the Elder Council and all changes will have been presented in writing two weeks prior to a Special Family Meeting and copies of the proposed amendment be furnished to each member present. Amendments require a passing vote of three-fourths of a 50% active quorum who are entitled to vote. Signed absentee ballots are allowed to establish a quorum.