

Watson's Grove Free Will Baptist Church By-Laws

**Watson's Grove Free Will Baptist Church
By-Laws**

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RULES OF CHURCH GOVERNMENT

Introduction

The rules for the church's government are contained in the Holy Scriptures; however, some are understood and applied in general directions. It is, therefore, necessary that Watson's Grove Free Will Baptist Church adopt certain fixed rules of the polity as understood from the Holy Scriptures, from tradition, from custom, from practice, and necessity, that it may more perfectly perform its duties as a Christian organization.

The church government for Watson's Grove Free Will Baptist Church did not develop easily but materialized because of hardship, need, desire, and experience. Therefore, it is necessary that the church, at present and in the future, adopt the best rules of church government that it can formulate for the protection, direction, management, function, harmony, understanding, and cooperation of Watson's Grove Free Will Baptist (FWB) Church as a whole. That being said, Watson's Grove FWB Church is incorporated as a non-profit religious entity that has no voting members. All business transactions that would affect the corporation are managed by the congregation of Watson's Grove FWB Church in the same manner as those listed within these by-laws and are subject to no other outside entity involvement in any of those decisions.

ARTICLE 1: THE LOCAL CONGREGATION

A local congregation of the Original Free Will Baptist Denomination is one that adheres to and participates in *The Articles of Faith and Principles of Church Government for Original Free Will Baptists (of the English General Baptist Heritage)*. Therefore, Watson's Grove FWB congregation adheres to the same basic governmental principles and procedures to promote the success of the Gospel and the denomination and "keep the unity of the Spirit in the bonds of peace" and will continue to do so as long as both practice similar beliefs.

SECTION 1: The Organization of a Local Congregation

The basic governmental principles, structures, and procedures of Watson's Grove FWB Church congregation are as follows:

Officers:

The officers of Watson's Grove FWB Church shall consist of the following: Board of Trustees, Clerk, Assistant Clerk, Treasurer, Assistant Treasurer, Board of Finance, and Board of Deacons. All officers are elected by and serve at the will of the local congregation. In addition, all offices must be filled with active members of Watson's Grove FWB Church congregation who are qualified for the duty.

Board of Trustees:

The board of trustees shall hold title to all property, maintain all legal rights to said property, convey said property at the discretion of a four-fifths majority of the members present at a regular quarterly conference (any anticipated sale or conveyance of property must have been previously announced at the last regular quarterly conference of Watson's Grove FWB Church, and public notice of anticipated sale or conveyance having been made in the local paper or posted as the law requires.)

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Clerk:

The Clerk shall keep and maintain proper church records, including a membership roll and a record of church business meetings. The Clerk shall sign all legal letters authorized by the Church. All such records are the property of Watson's Grove FWB Church congregation, and the Clerk shall relinquish all church records to their successor.

Assistant Clerk:

The Assistant Clerk will assist the Clerk and fill in as needed. This would include preparing to replace the Clerk if needed.

Treasurer:

The treasurer shall be entrusted with the Church's funds and keep an account of all money received. They shall pay all bills as authorized by the Church and make a report of all receipts and disbursements annually or as often as the Church may require. The treasurer's records are the property of Watson's Grove FWB Church congregation. They are open to inspection by the members upon reasonable request, except in the case of the records of individual contributions, which are to be kept in confidence by the treasurer. All records, at the direction of the Church, are to be submitted for a financial audit. The treasurer shall relinquish their records and all funds to their successor.

Assistant Treasurer:

The Assistant Treasurer will assist the Treasurer and fill in as needed. This would include preparing to replace the Treasurer if needed. Legal authority to transact business in place of the Treasurer will also be required.

Board of Finance:

The board of finance shall be responsible for promoting Christian stewardship, planning the Church's budget, and aiding the treasurer in maintaining competent records. The members of this board shall assist with auditing financial records when necessary.

Board of Deacons:

The office of the deacon is scripturally described. For their qualifications, see 1 Timothy 3:8–13; for their ordination, see Acts 6.

The duties of the deacons are as follows:

1. to serve at the Lord's table,
2. to distribute the bounty of the Church among its needy members,
3. to visit the sick,
4. to assist the pastor in attending to and carrying out the worship and outreach program of the Church in a Godly manner,
5. to cooperate with the pastor to ensure efficient Scriptural discipline and programs are maintained,
6. to see that the worship and service programs are carried out in the pastor's absence.

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Should a deacon transfer his church membership or become inactive (not attending service regularly for two months without excuse), his office shall thereby terminate.

Pastor:

The duties of the Pastor are as follows:

1. serve as the general superintendence of the Church as the chief administrative officer.
2. to faithfully preach the Word,
3. to be an example to the flock,
4. to visit the members—especially the sick—as he has the opportunity;
5. to do all within his power to promote the spiritual interest of the Watson's Grove FWB Church,
6. to promote all denominational institutions, enterprises, and programs,
7. to advance the cause of Christ among men.

Watson's Grove FWB Church shall call its own pastor, from among the duly ordained Original Free Will Baptist ministers who are approved by the Western Conference of which the Church is a member, upon such terms as may be mutually agreeable.

The Church or pastor shall not terminate a pastorate without a thirty-day previous notice unless agreed to by both parties.

Church Membership:

As to the reception of members, any person who gives evidence of a change of heart and professes faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, has been baptized (immersed) by a duly ordained minister, and to whom the church covenant has been read and explained, and by whom accepted, shall be received into the Church.

Baptized (immersed) persons from other churches are received by letter or profession of faith. Individuals transferring from other denominations are expected to adhere to the doctrine and practices of the Original Free Will Baptist Denomination. In addition, the church covenant is to be read, explained, and accepted by the candidate for membership.

No one against whom any valid objection is made is received into the Church. When any member objects to the reception of an applicant, the matter is deferred until the Church can ascertain the nature of the objection. If, in the Church's opinion, the objection is not valid; the applicant may be received. The hand of fellowship is extended to all who are received into the membership according to the regular methods of the Church.

When a member in good standing desires to unite with another church, the Clerk may be authorized to send a letter of transfer of membership to the Church with which they are to unite. Such members receive letters of honorable dismissal and commendation.

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Christian Discipline:

Discipline includes both the principle by which we live and the procedures by which we are governed. Christian discipline demands that the principle and the procedures embody the truth of Jesus Christ as taught in Scripture. It is hoped that all members of Watson's Grove FWB Church will observe and conduct themselves according to the Scripture and the Church Covenant; however, we are all subject to error due to human nature. It, therefore, becomes necessary that certain disciplinary procedures be invoked. All church discipline should be administered in the spirit of love and with the ultimate aim of reclamation of the erring one or ones. The Scriptural foundation for these procedures is Matthew 18:15–17 and Galatians 6:1.

It is hoped that the individuals may settle individual problems; however, if these must be brought to the Church, they must follow the procedures outlined in this section.

When an allegation is to be brought to the Church, the charges must be made in writing, signed by two or more members in good standing, and managed according to the procedures out-lined below:

1. Either individual's problems or charges must be presented first to the pastor and board of deacons.
2. If, after a reasonable investigation, a satisfactory solution can be reached, no further action will be taken.
3. If a satisfactory resolution cannot be reached, the case should be presented to the Church at a regular quarterly conference or, if necessary, at a special called conference, for which at least two weeks prior notice has been given.

SECTION 2: Meetings of the Watson's Grove FWB Church Congregation:

The congregation will meet regularly for the public worship of God.

Regular services are as follows:

Sunday School at 10 am

Sunday Morning Worship at 11 am

Wednesday Night Prayer meeting at 7:30 pm

Sunday Night Youth Meeting at 6 pm (2nd and 4th Sunday during the school year)

Note: *Sunday School Only on the 5th Sunday with no Morning worship.*

Modification to Regular services

There are occasions that may cause the regular service times to change. The Pastor or deacons may recommend these.

1. Emergency situations

- A. These situations may be caused by weather, national disaster, facilities issues, death in a church member's family, etc.... and are not long-term modifications to the regular service times or locations.
- B. The pastor and the deacon board may make those changes and notify the church without their involvement in the decision.

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C. Any change to the regular service times and locations that are projected to be long-term, must be approved by the church membership.

2. Nonemergency situations

A. These situations may be caused by moving a service to accommodate another planned church event, assisting another church, etc...

B. Any change to regular service times or location for nonemergency situations must be approved by the church membership with a majority vote of those in attendance at that time.

Business Meetings (Conferences)

These are held once every quarter and include communion and washing of the saints' feet. This is typically held the first Sunday night of each Quarter (Jan, April, July, October)

Special services

These are scheduled as needed and may include but are not limited to the following:

| | | |
|-----------------|-------------------------------|--------------|
| Revival | Christmas programs | Youth events |
| Easter Programs | Church socials and gatherings | |

Ordinances of the Gospel:

The ordinances of the Gospel are administered only by ordained ministers. The ordinance of Baptism should take place as soon as practicable after conversion. The ordinances of the Lord's Supper and the Washing of the Saints' Feet are conducted at the Church's quarterly conference.

Watson's Grove FWB Church, being of the Original Free Will Baptist order, does covenant and agrees to assemble four times a year (every three months) for the purpose of holding a godly conference. Then and there, the business of the Church shall be transacted.

However, in the case of necessity or emergency, the Church may call a special session of the conference as needed after giving notice to the pastor and members and transact the business needed to be addressed, confining their business transactions to the items for which the conference was called.

The pastor is the chairman of the business meeting. If the church is in between pastors or the pastor is voluntarily absent or providentially hindered from attending a business meeting at the time of the appointed Quarterly conference, the Watson's Grove FWB Church congregation will elect a temporary chairman and address necessary business. In the business of the excommunication of a member or the selling or transferring of church property, should Watson's Grove FWB Church be without a pastor, then the Church should call the Western Conference Executive Committee to appoint an ordained minister to serve as moderator for said business.

All business meetings are conducted according to the rules of order prescribed by *The Articles of Faith and Principles of Church Government for Original Free Will Baptists (of the English General Baptist Heritage)*.

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SECTION 3: Objects and Duties of the Watson's Grove FWB Church Congregation

The object of the local congregation is to be the people of God. This is accomplished by working together to practice Christian living and to carry out a Christian ministry in the community.

It is the duty of Watson's Grove FWB Church congregation to:

1. Establish and sustain regular public worship of God. This includes Sunday morning services, mid-week services, **youth services**, and quarterly communion services.
2. Establish and sustain a program of Christian education. This program shall include scripture and the faith and history of the Free Will Baptist denomination as its subjects and shall use all methods and tools that will result in an effective educational ministry.
3. Establish and sustain any auxiliary programs as deemed necessary.
4. Work for and maintain the highest possible standards of justice, righteousness, and love in community affairs.
5. Win people to the cause of Christ.
6. Pay into its treasury sufficient funds to support all church programs and to include denominational programs.
7. Be represented by delegation and to participate totally in the Western Conference to which it belongs and to abide by the rules and regulations the conference adopts for its member churches. This duty includes the report by annual letter and contributions for their expenses and programs of the Western Conference. It is the privilege of each Watson's Grove FWB Church member to participate in the Western Conference Annual Conference Meeting.
8. Represent by delegation and by annual letter to the Convention of Original Free Will Baptist Churches. Further, that God's will may be done, Watson's Grove FWB Church shall make financial contributions to the denominational ministries, institutions, and benevolent work.

SECTION 4: Relationship of the Watson's Grove FWB Church to the Western Conference

Watson's Grove FWB Church is a distinct organization with full authority to manage its own internal affairs, elect its officers, receive, dismiss, discipline, and exclude members in accordance with this book of discipline.

The Western Conference is a distinct organization comprised of its member churches, represented by delegation, its member ministers, and its own elected officials. It has full authority to manage its own affairs and the responsibilities designated and delegated by its members.

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ARTICLE 2: RULES OF ORDER

These rules of order and parliamentary procedure are prescribed for all Watson's Grove FWB Church business meetings.

- The term *moderator* means the presiding officer of Watson's Grove FWB Church.
- The term *member* means church member at Watson's Grove FWB Church.

Rules of Order:

All business sessions shall be governed by Robert's Rules of Order and such rules as set forth in this section.

1. If any member, in the judgment of the moderator, shall show anger in their discussion on any subject, they shall forfeit their seat in that session.
2. All business meetings shall adjourn by a majority vote.
3. All business meetings shall open and close with suitable devotions to God.
4. The Clerk shall sign the minutes of the business meeting.
5. A motion must be made by one member, seconded by another, and afterward stated by the moderator before it is debated. A motion shall be reduced to writing by the mover at the request of any one member.
6. A motion or resolution may be withdrawn at any time before a decision or amendment by the church congregation.
7. Any motion or resolution containing more than one distinct proposition shall be divided, provided a majority sustains the call for the division.
8. No motion to amend shall be in order beyond a motion to amend an amendment.
9. No amendment relating to a different subject shall be in order.
10. A motion lost shall not be recorded except so ordered at the time.
11. When a member speaks or offers a motion, they shall rise and respectfully address the moderator, confine themselves to the question under consideration, and avoid all personalities and unkind and disrespectful language.
12. When two or more members rise to speak at the same time, the moderator shall decide who is entitled to the floor.
13. While a member is speaking, no one shall interrupt them except to call them to order or ask them for an explanation or clarification. The one allowed to explain shall confine themselves strictly to an actual misunderstanding that may need explanation.
14. If the speaker yields the floor to another, they cannot claim it again.
15. No member shall speak more than twice, or longer than five minutes at each time, on any question without the moderator's permission, which shall be granted without debate.

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16. All conversation, by whispering or otherwise, which is calculated to disturb the speaker or hinder the transaction of business, and passing between the speaker and the chair, shall be out of order.
17. Committees shall be nominated by the Watson's Grove FWB Church congregation (no member is allowed to nominate more than one to the same committee). The nomination is then confirmed by vote, or the moderator may name the committee by request of the Watson's Grove FWB Church congregation.
18. The member first named to a committee shall be its chairman to call the committee together, but after it is convened, the committee may elect its own chairman and secretary.
19. Any subject under debate, matter, or business may be referred to a committee, with or without instructions.
20. All reports of committees shall be in writing, signed by a majority of the committee. When a majority report is followed by a minority report from the same committee, the former, after being read, shall lie on the table until the latter is presented, after which the majority report may be considered.
21. A report of a committee may be recommitted, when necessary, for further investigation or for presentation in some more acceptable form.
22. All reports, when read, shall be considered properly before the body without a motion to accept.
23. Voting shall be done by "aye" and "nay," by standing when a vote is close, or when it becomes necessary to count the affirmative and negative, and in special cases, by ballot.
24. In case of a tie, the moderator may cast the deciding vote.
25. All members should vote on one side or the other unless excused.
26. No motion, discussion, or other business shall be admitted while the vote is being taken.
27. Immediate action upon any question may be deferred by laying on the table until a specific time or indefinitely. Laying on the table does not kill a motion. It is intended to lay aside a proposition for a short but indefinite time. It may be taken from the table by a majority vote at any time when no question is pending during this or the next session. If not taken from the table, then it is killed.
28. When a motion or resolution is before the body, the only motions in order shall be:
 - 1st, to adjourn;
 - 2nd, previous question;
 - 3rd, to lay on the table;
 - 4th, to postpone indefinitely;
 - 5th, to defer to a definite time;
 - 6th, to refer;
 - 7th, to divide, if a division is admissible;
 - 8th, to amend—to modify a motion already on the floor.

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29. Motions to adjourn, when to adjourn, to take previous question, and to lay on the table, must be decided without debate.
30. Names suggested for filling vacancies shall be voted on in order of their nomination; when different numbers and times are proposed, the greater number and longest time shall be voted on first.
31. A motion to reconsider a motion previously passed must be made by one who voted in the affirmative when the motion passed. If a vote to reconsider is lost, it cannot be renewed during this session.

ARTICLE 3: MEMBERSHIP

QUALIFICATIONS FOR MEMBERSHIP

Upon a unanimous vote of the members present at any church service or meeting, membership shall be extended to all who have had and whose lives evidence a genuine experience of regeneration through faith in and acceptance of the Lord Jesus Christ as personal Savior; who renounce sin; who endeavor to live a consecrated life wholly unto the Lord; who fully subscribe to the statement of faith contained herein; and who enter into the church covenant contained herein; and upon compliance with any one of the following conditions:

1. By Baptism (immersion) as a true believer in Christ Jesus as personal Savior
2. By letter of transfer from another Bible-believing church of like faith and practice or other written statements of good standing from the prior church if the applicant has been baptized by immersion after a profession of faith.
3. By the testimony of faith, having been baptized by immersion.
4. By restoration, if having been removed from membership, upon the decision of the church after satisfactory evidence of repentance has been made to the pastor (or the board of deacons if the office of pastor is vacant).

DUTIES OF A MEMBER

On becoming a member of this church, in addition to the church covenant, each one further covenant to:

1. **The Pastor**
 - A. To love, honor, and esteem;
 - B. To pray for him;
 - C. To recognize his authority in spiritual affairs of the church.
2. **Others in the Congregation**
 - A. to cherish a brotherly love for all members of the church;
 - B. to support the church in prayer, tithes, offering, and with other financial support as the Lord enables;

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- C. in accordance with biblical commands to help through a lifestyle walk in the beliefs and practices of the church.

SECTION 1 - PRIVILEGES OF MEMBERSHIP

This congregation functions not as a pure democracy but as a body under the headship of the Lord Jesus Christ and the pastor's direction as the shepherd with the counsel of the deacon board of the church.

Membership in this church does not afford those individuals with any property, contract, or civil rights based on principles of democratic government.

1. Determinations of the internal affairs of this church are matters that shall be determined exclusively by the church's own rules and procedures.
 - A. The pastor shall oversee and conduct all aspects of this church.
 - B. The membership of the church has certain limited areas of voting.
 - C. Any member who neglects or shows unfaithfulness to church worship for six months shall be placed on an **INACTIVE List** and notified in writing that their voting privileges have been suspended until such time they are removed from this list and placed back on the active member status. (Note: for reason(s) given to the pastor and the board of deacons of the church, this may be waived).

SECTION 2 - DISCIPLINE OF A MEMBER

1. There shall be a discipline committee consisting of the pastor and the board of deacons.
 - A. These men shall have sole authority in determining any violations from the statement of faith and the church covenant of a member.
 - B. If the pastor or a deacon is the subject of a disciplinary matter, he shall not sit as a discipline committee member.
 - C. In the case of a pastor/deacon, he shall be entitled to the same steps as other church members and be subject to the same discipline.
2. Members are expected to demonstrate special loyalty and concern for one another.
 - A. When a member becomes aware of an offense of such magnitude that it hinders spiritual growth and testimony, he is to go alone to the offending party and seek to restore his brother.
 - B. Before he goes, he should first examine himself.
 - C. He should go with a spirit of humility and love, with restoration as the goal when he goes.
3. If reconciliation is not reached, a second member, either a deacon or the pastor, accompanies the one seeking to resolve the matter. This second step should also be preceded by self-examination and exercised in a spirit of humility and love, with restoration as the goal.

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4. If the matter is still unresolved after the steps outlined in subsections B, and C, the discipline committee shall hear the case as the church representatives are biblically responsible for putting down murmuring.
5. Suppose the issue is not resolved during the hearing before the discipline committee.
6. In that case, the committee shall recommend to the church members that they, after self-examination, make an effort personally to go to the offending member and seek that member's restoration.
7. If the matter is still unresolved after the steps outlined in subsections B, C, and D, members who refuse to repent and be restored will be removed from the church's membership upon a majority vote of the membership present at a meeting called to consider disciplinary action.
8. The discipline committee or the church may hear no matter unless the steps outlined in subsections B and C have been taken, except in the case of a public offense.

SECTION 3 – TRANSFER OF MEMBERSHIP

A member may request a letter to be sent to another church.

SECTION 4 -ACTIVE AND INACTIVE MEMBERSHIP

1. ACTIVE Membership

All members who attend church regularly are considered to be on the *ACTIVE* Membership Status.

2. INACTIVE Membership

The membership of any individual member shall be automatically moved to *INACTIVE* Membership status given the following requirements:

- A. The member has not attended church at Watson's Grove Church for a period of at least six months without approval of the pastor or deacons (sickness, job issues, assisting another church for a period of time, etc...).
- B. Tracking of attendance is not a formal process, and therefore, some leeway is allowed for dispute.
- C. The pastor or deacons should notify members of absences and lack of attendance in person or over the phone to seek reasons for their absence and inform them they could be placed on the *INACTIVE* Membership List.
- D. If after personal contact has been made or legitimately attempted but failed, and attendance does not resume, a letter will be sent by the clerk stating that they will be placed on the *INACTIVE* membership list.
- E. Members on this list will not have any voting privileges or hold any office in the church while on this list.

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- F. To be removed from the INACTIVE membership list, they must request that the church restore them to ACTIVE Membership status and give them full rights as Active members. This would require a majority vote in attendance at that time.

SECTION 5 - TERMINATION OF MEMBERSHIP

1. The membership of any individual member shall be automatically terminated without notice if the member in question is on the INACTIVE Membership List for a period of twelve months.
2. No member of this church may hold membership in another church. If any member unites in membership with another church, that person's membership is automatically terminated without notice from this church.
3. A member may resign at any time. No letter of transfer or written statement of good standing will be issued automatically upon such resignation except at the pastor's discretion in agreement with the board of deacons.

ARTICLE 4 OFFICERS

SECTION 1 - CHURCH OFFICERS

The church officers are:

1. Pastor
2. Deacons
3. Trustees
4. Clerk
5. Assistant Clerk
6. Treasurer
7. Assistant Treasurer
8. Superintendent of Sunday School.

Note: From time to time, as he deems appropriate, the Pastor may appoint other church officers, subject to a confirmation vote of the church's deacon board.

SECTION 2 - TERMS OF OFFICE

The terms of office shall be as follows:

1. Pastoral Offices

to include pastor, youth pastor, and associate pastor (as appropriate):

- A. The relationship between the pastor and the church shall be permanent unless dissolved at the option of either party by giving a thirty-day notice or less by mutual consent.
- B. If this is presented to the church for a vote, a notice of no less than three (3) services must be given from the pulpit to the church before said meeting.
- C. A 75% vote of the members present, and voting shall be required to decide the position.

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D. Disciplinary removal of a pastor from office automatically terminates his membership if he is a member.

2. Deacons

The board of deacons shall consist of a quantity determined by the church to serve the church membership best.

3. Trustees

Shall be elected by a majority vote of the church.

4. Clerk

Shall be elected by a majority vote of the church.

5. Assistant Clerk

Shall be elected by a majority vote of the church.

6. Treasurer

Shall be elected by a majority vote of the church.

7. Assistant Treasurer

Shall be elected by a majority vote of the church.

8. Superintendent of Sunday school

Shall be elected by a majority vote of the church.

9. All elected and appointed officers

A. Shall serve in their respective offices until their successors are duly elected or appointed except in case of disciplinary matter of an officer.

B. A vacancy occurring in any office or board, except in the case of the Pastor, Youth Pastor, or Associate Pastor, may be filled at any regular or special called business meeting.

C. All offices shall be filled at the Annual Church Business meeting or special called meeting, as necessary.

SECTION 3 - QUALIFICATION OF OFFICERS

1. All church leaders must be of high spiritual and moral character.
2. They shall serve at the pleasure of the church.
3. In case of failure to maintain these standards, the Pastor and Deacon Board shall determine the cause and try to correct such behavior.
4. If this is unsuccessful, the person shall be removed from their position, and a suitable replacement shall be appointed until the church, in an official business meeting, elects a replacement.

SECTION 4 - ELECTION OF PASTORS AND DEACONS

1. Pastors:

A. A pulpit or search committee recommended by the Deacon Board and approved by the general membership shall select and recommend pastoral candidates.

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- B. Their selection and advice shall be based on, but not limited to, the qualifications according to Scripture (1 Timothy 3:1- 7 and Titus 1:6-9).
- C. Once the committee has qualified a candidate, their recommendation shall be made to the general membership in a regular or special business meeting after the announcement of said meeting is made at least (3) services in advance.
- D. Only one (1) candidate shall be voted on at a time.
- E. If the candidate fails to receive 75% approval, he is disqualified.
- F. The committee shall continue to select a candidate which will be approved on the above conditions.

2. Deacons:

- A. Deacons shall be selected and recommended by the deacon board and approved by the active membership by 75% or more significant approval.
- B. Candidates must be in good standing with the church.
- C. Candidates must qualify for the office scripturally (1 Timothy 3:8-13 and Acts 6:3).

SECTION 5 - PASTORAL OVERSIGHT OF OFFICERS AND STAFF

- A. The Pastor may hire associates or staff to assist him in carrying out his God-given responsibilities subject to approval by the Deacon Board and a 75% approval of the quorum present.
- B. All church staff, whether paid or volunteer, shall be under the supervision of the Pastor.
- C. The Pastor shall have the authority to appoint or dismiss such staff subject to a 75% approval by the quorum present.

SECTION 6: DUTIES OF OFFICERS

1. THE PASTOR

- A. The Pastor shall preach the Gospel regularly and shall be at liberty to preach the whole counsel of the Word of God as the Lord leads him.
- B. He shall administer the church's ordinances, act as moderator at all church meetings for the transaction of church matters, supervise the church's teaching ministries, and tenderly watch over the spiritual interests of the membership.
- C. The Pastor shall inform all newly elected officers of the function and responsibilities of their respective offices.
- D. He shall extend the right hand of fellowship to all new members on behalf of the church and perform such other duties as generally appertained to the position.
- E. He shall be free to choose the means and methods by which he exercises the ministry that God has given him.

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2. THE BOARD OF DEACONS

- A. The Board of Deacons shall assist the Pastor, in such manner as he shall request, in promoting the spiritual welfare of the Church, in conducting the religious services, and in performing all other work of the Church.
- B. They shall make provision for the observance of the ordinances of the Church.
- C. If requested by the Pastor, they shall consider applications for church membership.
- D. They shall assist the Pastor in visitation and all other evangelistic efforts of the Church.
- E. They shall provide the pulpit supply and act as leaders for church meetings if the pastor's office is vacant.
- F. The Board of Deacons shall assist the Pastor in caring for the administrative needs of the Church's various ministries as requested by the Pastor.
- G. In the absence of a Pastor, the Chairman of the Board of Deacons shall fulfill the duties of the office of Pastor except for full-time pulpit responsibilities.

3. THE CLERK

- A. The Clerk shall keep a record of Church proceedings, of the membership roll, of all baptisms, of certificates of ordination, licenses, and commissions as directed by the Church.
- B. The Clerk shall preserve all documents, papers, and letters during their term of office and deliver them to any successor upon leaving office.
- C. The Clerk shall keep an account of any special events in the life of the Church which are of historical interest.

4. THE Assistant CLERK

- A. Shall assist the Clerk as needed.
- B. This is a backup position, and as such, the candidate should become familiar with all aspects of this office. They must also become able to fill in for the Clerk if needed and take their place if required.

5. THE TREASURER

- A. The Treasurer shall account for all funds contributed to the church and shall disburse them as ordered by the church.
- B. The Treasurer shall present a quarterly written report of itemized receipts and disbursements to the church and prepare a statement of cash receipts and disbursements for the fiscal year.

6. THE Assistant TREASURER

- A. Shall assist the Treasurer as needed.
- B. This is a backup position, and, as such, should become familiar with all aspects of this office. They must be able to fill in for the Treasurer if needed and take their place if required. This would include legal authority to manage financial matters that the Treasurer can manage.

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7. THE SUPERINTENDENT OF SUNDAY SCHOOL

- A. The superintendent of Sunday school shall supervise the Sunday school.
- B. They shall have the authority to decide on Sunday school material upon the pastor's approval and help find Sunday school teachers when needed.
- C. They shall preside at teachers' meetings and report on the Sunday school's status at the quarterly business meeting.

8. THE TRUSTEES

- A. The trustees shall be responsible for holding titles to all real property belonging to the church.
- B. They shall not encumber these properties without 75% approval of the church members.
- C. They shall serve as the loan committee for the church when such business transactions are necessary and approved by the quorum present.

9. DUTIES OF ALL OFFICERS

- A. All Boards shall prepare a report of their work for the annual church conference meeting and shall surrender any records in their possession to the Clerk of Records at the close of their term of office to be filed as a permanent record of the work of the church. All records are the property of the church.
- B. Any officer who neglects their duties as outlined in this document for a period of three (3) months may be removed from their office at the discretion of the pastor and deacon board. This board may appoint others to serve the unexpired term of office.

10. INSTALLATION OF OFFICERS

Public installation service in which all newly elected church officers are to be dedicated to their respective offices and the ordination of freshly elected deacons shall be held at a public church service which the pastor shall set.

ARTICLE 5 MEETINGS

SECTION 1 - MEETINGS FOR WORSHIP

- 1. Unless otherwise determined by the Pastor, the deacon board, or the church membership, the Church shall meet each Sunday morning for public worship and at least once during the week for bible study and prayer.
- 2. Except when circumstances forbid it, the ordinance of the Lord's Supper and the foot washing service shall be observed during the regularly scheduled quarterly business meeting.

SECTION 2 - MEETINGS FOR CHURCH ADMINISTRATION

- 1. An Annual church business meeting shall be held during the fourth quarter conference in July, at which time the regular church election and church business shall be considered.

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2. All other business meetings shall be announced to the church no less than (3) services in advance.
3. A quorum shall consist of active members present.
4. For any meeting under this article, the moderator, in his sole discretion, shall have full authority to order the immediate removal of any member or other person present who the moderator deems to be disruptive to the proceedings by act or presence.
 - A. The moderator shall have full authority to order the removal of all children (ages to be determined by the moderator) if the moderator determines that circumstances so warrant in his sole discretion.
 - B. Suppose the moderator decides that compliance with his order of removal is unsatisfactory. In that case, in his sole discretion, the moderator may order an usher or other church officer to escort a disruptive person out of the meeting place or, in the alternative, request a postponement of the meeting until a future date when satisfactory compliance may be assured.
5. Quarterly Conferences shall be held on the first Sunday night of January, April, July, and October or as soon as possible to those dates if moved due to conflicts.

SECTION 3 - SPECIAL MEETINGS

1. The Pastor (or Board of Deacons if the pastor's office is vacant or the Pastor is the subject of possible disciplinary action) may call a special meeting by giving notice and the purpose of the meeting to the church members at least three (3) services before said meeting.
2. The pulpit or search committee meeting for the election of a Pastor requires a notice of at least (3) services before the meeting.
3. Bible conferences, missionary conferences, and revivals may be held as the pastor deems beneficial.
4. Singings and other events that may be beneficial may be requested of the deacons **and the pastor** for approval.

SECTION 4- FISCAL YEAR

The church's fiscal year shall begin on July 1 and end on June 30.

ARTICLE 6 MINISTRY OF EDUCATION

SECTION I – PURPOSE

The church believes that it is to provide members and their children with an education based on and consistent with the Holy Scriptures.

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SECTION 2 - CHURCH PARTICIPATION

All educational programs or courses of instruction formulated and offered by the church shall be primarily for the benefit of the members of the church; however, the pastor may permit a non-church member to participate in church educational programs or courses of instruction if he deems it in the best interest of the church.

SECTION 3 - STAFF MEMBERSHIP

All instructors, teachers, and administrators shall be members of Watson's Grove FWB Church. This provision shall not apply to visiting missionaries, evangelists, or preachers who deliver sermons, conduct revivals, or other temporary special meetings. The pastor and his family may choose to officially keep their church membership at their home church while serving at Watson's Grove FWB Church. In this case, the pastor is still the moderator for all business matters and, therefore, would have a vote in case of a tie only. He would still lead any church efforts, seeing the pastor is the lead administrator at Watson's Grove FWB Church.

SECTION 4- STATEMENT OF FAITH ACCORD

All educational programs or courses of instruction shall be taught and presented in full accordance with the church's statement of faith.

SECTION 5 - UNITY

All educational programs or courses of instruction shall be conducted as an integral and inseparable ministry of the church.

SECTION 6- TEACHING

1. All educational programs or courses of instruction shall be conducted consistent with the teaching of the inerrant Word of God.
2. Any assertion or belief that conflicts with or questions a Bible truth is a pagan deception and distortion of the truth, which will be disclaimed as false.
3. Every instructor or teacher is responsible for presenting the inerrant Word of God as the sole infallible source of knowledge and wisdom.

SECTION 7 - CHRISTIAN WALK

All administrators, instructors, and teachers shall continue or adopt a life- style consistent with the precepts they teach, whether in or out of the classroom.

SECTION 8 - YOUTH WORKER SCREENING

1. A "youth worker" is any individual who regularly supervises or has custody of minors in our church, such as a nursery attendant, Sunday School teacher, or youth group leader or assistant.

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2. All applicants for youth work shall complete the following screening process:
 - A. To serve as a volunteer youth worker, applicants **should** be church members and have been in regular attendance for at least six months, **however, the pastor may approve regular church attendees who are not members to serve but not lead in these programs.**
 - B. Applicants must complete an "Application for Youth Work" form.
 - C. A background investigation may be conducted on all applicants. This investigation may include the following:
 - i. Contacting churches or other organizations where the applicant has served.
 - ii. Contacting employers for whom the applicant worked within the past five years.
 - iii. Requesting a criminal record check in this state and, if feasible, in states where the applicant has lived during the past five years.
 - B. All information acquired during the screening process will be treated as confidential and not disclosed to others outside the Pastor and Deacon Board unless the Deacon Board deems that limited disclosure is necessary to protect a child from possible harm.
3. The Pastor and Deacon Board shall make final approval to work with the youth.

ARTICLE 7 ANNUAL COMMITTEES

SECTION 1 - BENEVOLENCE COMMITTEE

1. The benevolence committee is responsible for recommending assistance to individuals or families who request assistance in times of need.
2. The benevolence committee is allowed to help an individual or family once per fiscal year without prior approval. **A typical gift of \$200 is provided** but not exceeding \$1,000, without going to the congregation for a vote. **Love offerings may also be collected to assist with the specific need.**
3. If additional assistance is needed within the same fiscal year, approval must be given by the pastor or chairman of the deacon board in the pastor's absence.

SECTION 2- BEREAVED FAMILIES COMMITTEE

1. The bereaved families committee is responsible for showing love and support to bereaved families of church members.
2. The bereaved families committee is responsible for providing food to be taken to the homes of the bereaved families and serving one meal to the families.
3. The bereaved families committee is responsible for purchasing a flower arrangement for the church, or an equal monetary or other contribution may be made in the deceased's name at the family's request.

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SECTION 3 - BUILDING COMMITTEE

1. The building committee is responsible for overseeing all activities associated with the operation, maintenance, safety, and security of all buildings and grounds.
2. The building committee is responsible for making recommendations to the deacon board on any new additions to the buildings or grounds.
3. The building committee is responsible for communicating with contract workers to confirm any changes in services prior to the approval of the yearly budget at the annual business meeting.
4. The building committee shall present these changes to the finance committee in a timely manner in order to be considered in the yearly budget.

SECTION 4 - CHAIRMAN OF USHERS

1. The chairman of ushers is responsible for ensuring the assigned ushers are serving at the appropriate times and places.
2. The chairman of ushers is responsible for finding a replacement during the absence of an usher.
3. The chairman of ushers is responsible for training new ushers who wish to serve.
4. The chairman of ushers is responsible for gathering and posting the total number of persons present during the morning services.

SECTION 5 - CONSTITUTION & BY-LAWS COMMITTEE

1. The constitution and by-laws committee collaborates on any amendments or revisions approved by a 75% vote of the quorum present at a special or regular church business meeting.
2. The constitution and by-laws committee ensures these changes are reflected in the constitution and by-laws.
3. An updated copy is made available to the church.

SECTION 6 - COOKING COMMITTEE

The cooking committee is responsible for assisting in the preparation of food for cookouts and any other church-related activities.

SECTION 7 - FELLOWSHIP HALL COORDINATOR

1. The fellowship hall coordinator is responsible for scheduling the use of the fellowship hall for any church-related or non-related church activities.
2. The fellowship hall coordinator is responsible for adhering to the church's policies and procedures for the use of the fellowship hall (See Article 13 Section 2).

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SECTION 8 - FINANCE COMMITTEE

1. The finance committee shall consist of the treasurer, assistant treasurer, and other committee members including the Pastor and the Board of Deacons.
2. The finance committee is responsible for overseeing the duties of the church treasurer while assisting the treasurer when necessary.
3. The finance committee is responsible for developing the yearly budget and submitting it to the church at the annual business meeting once it has been approved by the deacon board.
4. The finance committee must meet before the start of the fiscal year to complete the yearly budget and at other times as the board and treasurer deem necessary.
5. The treasurer must have approval from the finance committee before the yearly report is available to the church.
6. The treasurer will review Quarterly offerings and make recommendation to the church for additional funding of denominational and non-denominational efforts given the extra funds within collected tithes and offerings needed to meet the churches financial obligations.

SECTION 9 - NOMINATING COMMITTEE

1. The nominating committee is responsible for filling all-volunteer leadership positions for various activities and functions from among the members of the church.
2. The nominating committee is responsible for presenting the names of willing workers to the deacon board for approval no later than June 1.
3. Once the deacon board has approved the names with the associated position, the nominating committee will present the names of willing workers to the church at the annual business meeting.

SECTION 10 - NURSERY DIRECTORS

1. The nursery directors are responsible for scheduling workers for Sunday mornings and evenings and during any other church-related activities.
2. The nursery directors are responsible for overseeing those workers who serve during the appropriate times and places.
3. The nursery directors oversee nursery maintenance and purchase supplies when needed.

SECTION 11 - SOUND & VIDEO TECHNICIANS

1. The sound and video technicians are responsible for implementing audio and video needs during Sunday services, Wednesday night, and other church-related activities.

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2. The sound and video technicians are responsible for training any workers willing to serve.
3. The sound and video technicians should have a working knowledge of soundboards, computer projection software, and other equipment commonly used in the sound and video needs of the church.

SECTION 12 - SUPPLIES

1. The supplies committee is responsible for gathering any supplies the building or kitchen needs.
2. The supplies committee is responsible for ensuring all necessary supplies are stocked for any cookouts or church-related scheduled activities.
3. The supplies committee may request a check from the treasurer or request reimbursement for purchasing any supplies they see necessary.

SECTION 13 - TECHNOLOGY COMMITTEE

The technology committee is responsible for advising and making any necessary changes to the technical operations of the church.

SECTION 14 – COMMITTEE STRUCTURE

1. The Pastor and Deacon Board shall RECOMMEND various ad-hoc committees to perform specific functions within overall church operations and then be approved by the quorum present at the annual church conference.
2. Selections and recommendations of members for any committee shall be made by nominating committee and submitted to the Pastor and Deacon Board for approval. Once approved, the list is presented at the annual church conference for a vote by the quorum present.
3. The rotation of committee members is recommended to allow others to serve and to provide fresh ideas from other members.
4. The Pastor and Deacon Board is to be notified of replacements, recommendations, problems, etc.
5. Each committee shall elect a chairperson who will meet periodically with the Pastor and Deacon Board.
6. Annual budget requests from various committees shall be submitted to and approved by the Finance Committee prior to the annual church conference.

ARTICLE 8 MISCELLANEOUS CONSIDERATIONS

1. No selling or solicitation of funds in the name of this church shall be done unless authorized by the Pastor and Deacon Board.

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2. No selling of goods, products, or services for personal gain shall be permitted on church property (Items for sale to support Christian Ministries by those groups may be conducted in the fellowship hall if approved by the Pastor and/or the Deacon Board).
3. No sales of any type shall be allowed inside the church sanctuary.
4. No activities shall be permitted on any church property that fails to glorify God.

ARTICLE 9 UNAUTHORIZED EXPENDITURES

1. The Pastor and the Board of Deacons (or the Board of Deacons if the pastor's office is vacant) may authorize any expenditures up to \$1,000.00 not previously authorized in the regular budget. Once paid, receipts must be provided to the Treasurer.
2. A majority church vote must approve payments greater than \$1,000.00 and not approved in the regular budget.

ARTICLE 10 ORDINATION QUALIFICATIONS

Any member of this church who gives evidence of a genuine call of God into the work of the ministry and possesses the qualifications stated in 1 Timothy 3:1- 7 and Titus 1:6-9 may be presented to the Western Conference for consideration to be ordained as a minister of the Gospel.

ARTICLE 11 TAX-EXEMPT PROVISIONS

SECTION I - PRIVATE INUREMENT

No part of the net earnings of the church shall inure to the benefit of or be distributable to its members, trustees, officers, or other private persons, except that the church shall be authorized and empowered to pay reasonable compensation for the services rendered and to make payments and distributions in furtherance of the purposes as defined in the church Constitution and By-laws.

SECTION 2 - POLITICAL INVOLVEMENT

No substantial part of the church's activities shall be propaganda or an attempt to influence legislation. The church shall not participate in (including the publishing or distribution of statements) any political campaign on behalf of any candidate for public office.

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SECTION 3 - DISSOLUTION

Upon the dissolution of the church, the trustees shall, after paying or making provision for payment of all the liabilities of the church, dispose of all of the assets of the church to such organization or organizations formed and operated exclusively for religious purposes as shall at the time qualify as an exempt organization or organizations under Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 (or the corresponding provision of any future United States Internal Revenue Law), as the trustees shall determine. Assets may be distributed to or utilized by organizations that agree with the church's statement of faith as recognized by Free Will Baptists.

SECTION 4 - RACIAL NONDISCRIMINATION

The church shall have a racially nondiscriminatory policy and, therefore, shall not discriminate against members, applicants, students, and others based on race, color, or national or ethnic origin.

ARTICLE 12 DEPOSITS AND DESIGNATED CONTRIBUTIONS

SECTION 1 - DEPOSITS

- A. The Finance committee receives tithes and offerings.
- B. The committee shall keep records of tithes obtained and offerings received and prepare all documents necessary for said tithes and offerings to be deposited into the proper bank accounts.
- C. Monies received shall be counted and verified by at least two committee members along with the treasurer or assistant treasurer immediately after the service in which it is received.
- D. A deposit shall be prepared, and a person shall be designated to execute the deposit with the proper banking facility as soon as reasonably possible.

SECTION 2 - DESIGNATED CONTRIBUTIONS

- A. From time to time, the church, in the exercise of its religious, educational, and charitable purposes, may establish various funds to accomplish specific goals.
- B. Contributors may suggest uses for their contributions, but all suggestions shall be deemed advisory rather than mandatory.
- C. All contributions made to specific funds or otherwise designated shall remain subject to the exclusive control and discretion of the pastor and the deacon board.
- D. No fiduciary obligation shall be created by any designated contribution made to the church other than to use the contribution for the general furtherance of the gospel as approved by the church membership.

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ARTICLE 13 OPERATIONAL PROCEDURES

SECTION 1 – SANCTUARY

1. The Sanctuary is a Holy place. It is to be used for worship and Godly meetings only.
2. The Altar on which the Pulpit is located is Holy Ground. It is not a playground and should be respected.
3. There is to be no food or drinks in the Sanctuary. Water in a closed container may be permitted. In addition, fluids needed to support small children may also be allowed in a closed container.

SECTION 2 –THE FELLOWSHIP HALL

1. The Fellowship Hall Coordinator will oversee scheduling, supplies, and equipment issues.
2. The Fellowship Hall is to be used by the church and their immediate families only.
3. All activities must be supervised with a church member present at all times.
4. The fellowship hall is not to be rented.
5. Make sure the heat, air, and lights are turned off and the building is locked when leaving.
6. Leave the building and grounds clean.
7. Remove all trash from the premises.
8. Reimburse the church for any damage done to property, building, or grounds. Notify the pastor should this occur.
9. See that activities are conducted in a Christian manner.
10. There will be no alcohol or drugs brought on or consumed on the premises.
11. There will be no secular dancing, profanity, indecent dress, or disorderly conduct allowed on the premises. Remember that this is God's House all the time, not just on Sunday.
12. No use of tobacco inside the hall or sanctuary.
13. No pets are allowed inside, with the exception of service animals.
14. Building furnishings are not to be removed without permission of the church.
15. Church members may borrow chairs and tables. Please remember to return as soon as possible after use.
16. No activities are to be planned that will interfere with worship or scheduled church activities.
17. A Calendar is provided in the Fellowship Hall for the reservation of the use of chairs, tables, and the fellowship hall.

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ARTICLE 14 AMENDMENTS

1. This By-Laws be amended or revised at a special or regular church business meeting by a 75 percent vote of the quorum present at said meeting.
2. Amendments or revisions must be submitted in writing.
3. A notice of at least (3) weeks is required before said meeting.

ADOPTION

These by-laws were adopted by a 100% vote of the members present and voting at a duly called meeting of the church in which a quorum was present.

A copy of these by-laws shall be posted in the church office and on the church's website and given to any existing or new members upon request.

These By-Laws supersede any other By-Laws of the Church.

Date: July 08, 2024

Clerk of Records Maegan Williams

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REVISIONS

| Date of Revision | Reason for Revision | Notes |
|--|---|---|
| July 8, 2024 | SECTION 1: The Organization of a Local Congregation | Simplified clerk and treasurer name for simplicity. |
| | SECTION 2: Meetings of the Watson's Grove FWB Church Congregation: | Added Youth Meetings during the School year |
| | ARTICLE 6 MINISTRY OF EDUCATION SECTION 8 – Youth Worker Screening | Added the option to allow non-church members to serve as youth workers with the approval of the pastor. |
| | ARTICLE 7 ANNUAL COMMITTEES SECTION 1 – Benevolence Committee | Specified that \$200 is the typical gift given to an individual identified in need. Love offerings may also be collected to assist with the specific need. |
| April 7, 2024 | General Updates to include | |
| | Rules of Church Government | Added Incorporation pg. 5 |
| | SECTION 1: The Organization of a Local Congregation | Officers Section: added Assistant Clerk and Assistant Treasurer offices pg. 5 |
| | | Officers Section: added description for Assistant Clerk and Assistant Treasurer offices pg. 5 |
| | ARTICLE 4 OFFICERS SECTION 1 - CHURCH OFFICERS | New Church Positions for Assistant Treasurer and Assistant Clerk pg. 16 |
| | ARTICLE 4 OFFICERS SECTION 2 - TERMS OF OFFICE | New Church Positions for Assistant Treasurer and Assistant Clerk pg. 17 |
| | SECTION 6: DUTIES OF OFFICERS | New Church Positions for Assistant Treasurer and Assistant Clerk pg. 19 |
| ARTICLE 7 ANNUAL COMMITTEES SECTION 1 - BENEVOLENCE COMMITTEE | The benevolence committee is allowed to help an individual or family once per fiscal year without prior approval, with a fund not exceeding \$1,000, without going to the | |

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| | | congregation for a vote." Pg. |
| | ARTICLE 7 ANNUAL COMMITTEES SECTION 8 - FINANCE COMMITTEE | The finance committee shall consist of the treasurer, assistant treasurer, and other committee members to include Pastor and board of Deacons. Pg. 25 |
| | ARTICLE 9 UNAUTHORIZED EXPENDITURES | Added to item 1. "Receipts must be provided to the Treasurer once paid". pg. 29 |
| October 8, 2022 | Initial Release | |

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| Date of Revision | Reason for Revision | Notes |
|-------------------------|--|---|
| April 7, 2024 | ARTICLE 13 OPERATIONAL PROCEDURES SECTION 1 – SANCTUARY | Allow water and fluids for small children in a closed container in the sanctuary. Pg.29 |
| | ARTICLE 13 OPERATIONAL PROCEDURES SECTION 2 –THE FELLOWSHIP HALL | Linked the Fellowship Hall Coordinator's requirements to this procedure. Pg. 29 |