

OAKHURST BAPTIST CHURCH

RULES OF PROCEDURE

Revised March 13, 2013

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ARTICLE I: Organization and Purpose

Section 1: Name

The name of this organization shall be the Oakhurst Baptist Church of Decatur, Georgia.

Section 2: Church Year

The church year shall be September 1 through August 31, and all officers shall assume their duties September 1 unless otherwise stated herein. The church financial year shall be January 1 through December 31.

Section 3: Priorities

The nature of our life together is characterized by a corporate commitment to these priorities:

- serious study of the scriptures wherein we discover our true identity as the people of God;
- regular assembling of ourselves in corporate worship during which we celebrate our identity and are strengthened for our life of service in the world;
- continual gathering of knowledge as to the condition of our world and creation of structures for mission in response to it;
- intentional giving of ourselves as servants of Christ in fulfillment of His mission for the sake of the Oakhurst neighborhood and the world; and
- creating in love the kind of community in which diversity is celebrated and our humanness is freely acknowledged and lovingly received so that we might together develop maturity in Christ.

ARTICLE II: Membership

Section 1: Qualifications

The only qualification to be a candidate for membership in this church is a confession of Jesus Christ as personal savior and lord.

Persons may present themselves as candidates for membership by one of the following:

- a. profession of personal faith and an intention to bear witness to this commitment through believer's baptism;
- b. promise of a letter from another Baptist church; or
- c. personal statement of a prior confession of personal faith, believer's baptism, and church membership.

We believe scriptural baptism is to be freely chosen by all who profess faith in Christ as a visual enactment of their faith and experience of God's grace. This church follows the traditional Baptist practice of baptizing believers only by immersion. We believe this practice to be the clearest witness of baptism as burial with Christ and resurrection to new life.

Those presenting themselves for membership by personal statement (category c) from other denominational traditions which do not practice believer's baptism by immersion shall be invited to bear witness to their faith through baptism by immersion.

In those cases where baptism by immersion cannot be freely and gladly chosen by the candidate, it shall not be deemed as a requirement for full membership.

Before a candidate shall be received into membership, the candidate shall be required to participate in an orientation program which shall delineate the meaning and responsibilities of membership in this particular congregation. Upon the completion of this program and the candidate's expression of intention to undertake such responsibilities, he or she shall be presented to the church and voted into membership.

Section 2: Voting

Each member present at church business meetings may act and vote in the transactions of the church.

Section 3: Meaning of Membership

The meaning of membership at Oakhurst is characterized by an active personal commitment to the church covenant:

We are together only to be the church of God in Christ. We are not here by chance, but God through grace is making of us a fellowship to embody and to express the Spirit of Christ.

In this fellowship, "there is no longer Jew or Greek, there is no longer slave or free, there is no longer male and female, for all of us are one in Christ Jesus" (Galatians 3:28). Therefore, we reject any status in this fellowship in terms of church office, possessions, education, race, age, gender, sexual orientation, mental ability, physical ability, or other distinctions.

As a member of this fellowship, I intend to live under the following commitments:

- I will gather regularly with the church to worship God, share the good news, and continually examine its implications for my life.
- I will study the Bible, meditate and pray so that I will more fully experience the presence of God.
- I will also be sensitive to God's message as it comes to me from persons, history, the arts, nature, current happenings in the world, and other sources.
- I will be responsible to God through creative use of all my income and possessions. I will give systematically and even sacrificially to the financial support of our church's ministry.
- I will discover and affirm the gifts God has given me and use them in God's service; I will evoke, affirm, and celebrate the gifts God has given to others.
- I will intentionally give myself as Christ's servant through participation in His mission in the world.
- I will offer to know and love my sisters and brothers in this fellowship, and I am willing to be known and loved by them.

With God's help and the help of my brothers and sisters in this fellowship, I make this covenant.

Section 4: Termination of Membership

Membership shall be terminated by:

- a. death;
- b. transference to another church; or
- c. request by the member that his or her name be dropped from the church roll.

ARTICLE III: Friends of Oakhurst

The purpose of Friends of Oakhurst is to meet the needs of persons who desire recognition of belonging, yet for various reasons cannot make the commitment required for membership.

Section 1: Requirements

Prospective Friends should hold membership in a Christian fellowship or desire Christian fellowship; make known to the pastor a desire for Friends' affiliation; complete the orientation requirements; and actively participate in Oakhurst's congregational life. Friends' status shall be bestowed upon completion of the orientation classes and presentation to the congregation.

Section 2: Privileges

Friends shall be added to the church directory and mailing list, may participate in all activities, mission groups and choirs and shall receive pastoral care.

Section 3: Distinction from Members

Friends are not members. Friends shall be ineligible to vote in conference, to serve as an officer of the church (corporation) or to serve as deacons or as chairs of committees.

Section 4: Termination

Friend's status may be terminated at any time by request of the Friend; or, if conditions under which the relationship was established change - causing the Friend to cease participation in the life of the church - the status may be terminated upon recommendation of the Deacons. If membership in the church is desired, Friends should follow procedures outlined in Article II.

ARTICLE IV: Church Meetings

Section 1: Services, Church Functions

- a. Regular services and functions: The church shall meet regularly Sunday morning and Wednesday evening for purposes consonant with the corporate priorities of the church as stated in Article I, Section 3.
- b. Special services and functions: Other meetings for the same purpose may be held at other times and shall be placed on the church calendar.
- c. Church committees, organizations, and groups may determine their meeting times subject to church policy.
- d. At any regularly scheduled meeting of the church, the church may – without special notice – act upon the reception of new members, upon dismissal of members to other churches and upon the appointment of messengers or representatives to conventions or councils.

Section 2: Business Meetings

- a. Regular business meetings: Business meetings shall be held monthly on a designated Wednesday night. The August business meeting shall be the regular annual conference.
- b. Special business meetings: Special business meetings may be held to consider significant matters. Such meetings shall be called by the moderator when:
 1. in his or her discretion, a matter brought to attention warrants a special meeting; or
 2. ten members of the congregation so petition.

Notice of each meeting and its purpose shall be given at least one Sunday morning worship service before the time of such meeting and at all intervening meetings. The time of the reconvening of incomplete meetings shall be announced in the same manner.

- c. Quorum: The quorum consists of those who attend the business meeting, provided it is a regular meeting or a special meeting that has been properly called. In the event of emergency or inclement weather, the meeting may be postponed.

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- d. Voting: A simple majority vote of those present and voting shall determine any matter voted upon, except:
 - 1. a three-fourths vote is required to call a minister; and
 - 2. a two-thirds vote is required to amend the Rules of Procedure.
 - e. Moderator: The chair of the Church Council shall preside as moderator at all business meetings of the church. If he or she is absent, unavailable or requests not to act, the assistant chair or secretary of the Church Council, the chair of the Deacons, any previous chair or vice-chair of Church Council, or previous chair of Deacons shall act, in that order.
 - f. Vice-Moderator: The assistant chair or secretary of the Church Council shall preside as moderator of business meetings as directed in the preceding paragraph.
 - g. Clerk: The church clerk shall be the recorder of all business sessions and official actions of the church. If he or she is absent, the moderator shall appoint a temporary clerk.
 - h. Parliamentary Rules: *Robert's Rules of Order (Revised)* is the authority for parliamentary procedure for all business meetings of the church. A parliamentarian shall be elected annually.

ARTICLE V: Church Officers (Moderator, Vice-Moderator, Treasurer, Clerk) and Corporate Responsibilities

The officers of the church shall correspond with the officers of the corporation.

Section 1: Moderator and Vice-Moderator

The chair of Church Council, who is also the president of the corporation, shall act as moderator of the church. The vice-president of the corporation, who is also the assistant chair of the Church Council, or the secretary of Church Council, shall act as moderator in the president's absence, unavailability, or on his or her request. The moderator shall conduct meetings as described in Article IV, Section 2, Business Meetings.

Section 2: Treasurer

The church treasurer shall be treasurer of the corporation. The treasurer shall be a member of the Finance Committee and serve as *ex officio* to the Church Council. The treasurer shall be limited to a three-year term. The church treasurer shall:

- a. in coordination with the Finance Committee, administer the financial affairs of the church including all special funds, designated gifts and grants;
- b. oversee the ongoing financial operations of the church;
- c. guide the office personnel in keeping accurate financial records;
- d. prepare for periodic financial review for audit, as arranged for by the Finance Committee;
- e. give a monthly financial report to the Finance Committee;
- f. prepare a quarterly financial report for the Finance Committee to present to the church at church conference; and
- g. prepare tax returns and maintain account signatures.

Section 3: Clerk

The church clerk shall serve as secretary of the corporation. The clerk also serves as the chair of the Membership Committee and serve as *ex officio* on the Church Council. The clerk shall be limited to a three-year term. The clerk's duties are as follows:

- a. serve as official recorder of any and all church conference sessions; keep appropriate record of all actions of the church unless otherwise specified;
- b. compile reports submitted to the church by organizations and committees; post reports electronically on the website and give hard copies to the History Committee;

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- c. deliver notices of actions required, including election or appointment of committee members and messengers to conventions and meetings;
 - d. be custodian of records and legal documents such as deeds and titles to property, charters and seal, subject to the demands and inspection of church;
 - e. conduct the official correspondence of the church in all matters other than that for which the ministers are responsible;
 - f. perform duties of the chair of the Membership Committee, Article XIII, Section 4;
 - g. perform duties of the secretary of the corporation; and
 - h. post an unofficial copy of the minutes of any church business meeting, including attachments, on the church bulletin board and website within seven days following any such meeting and provide a written summary for the next edition of the *Messenger* of any decisions made by the church in conference. Once the minutes have been approved at the next business meeting, the clerk shall replace the draft postings with the approved minutes.

Section 4: Duties as Officers of Corporation

The duties of the church officers as officers of the corporation shall be those properly and normally imposed upon officers of church corporations. The officers shall have no authority to create obligations, make contracts, incur debts or mortgages, lease or dispose of property or disburse funds for the corporation except:

- a. as directed by the church membership at a properly called meeting; or
- b. to meet the fixed and current expenses and accounts of the church as authorized by, and not in excess of, the regular appropriations of the church budget, and subject to any other restrictions imposed by these Rules of Procedure.

Section 5: Signatures

The president and clerk of the corporation are authorized to affix their signatures and the seal of the corporation to such contracts, deeds, indentures, notes, certificates, and other papers and documents necessary for conduct of the church's business, including procurement of loans, creation of other obligations, or any other legitimate purpose on behalf of the church as a corporation when such activity has been approved by the church membership at a properly called business meeting. The authorized signatures and seal shall be by and for this corporation.

ARTICLE VI: Organizational Units and Structures

To carry out the purposes of the church, the following types of services and organizations shall be nurtured and developed continually:

Section 1: Employees

- a. Professional staff: Professional staff shall be employed to lead the development of overall church objectives, goals and programs as determined by the church membership (See Article II, Section 3 Meaning of Membership). Individual gifts should focus and fulfill areas of pastoral care of the congregation, community and world missions, music, education, and worship. Qualification for serving as a paid professional staff person implies seminary, theological, professional training or ordination to the gospel ministry. Professional staff titles may include, but are not limited to, pastoral team, minister of education, minister of music, organist, or other ministry teams.
- b. Operational Staff: Persons shall be employed to carry out other responsibilities as authorized by the church as they relate to maintaining the infrastructure of the church and performing tasks necessary for the church to operate effectively. Operational staff titles may include office, building and maintenance, grounds keeping, childcare, bookkeeping staff or similar positions.
- c. Contract Employees: Persons may be hired to provide service to the church in specific or specialized areas.
- d. At a time when there is an intersection of an individual's gifts who has been trained for ministry and the church's need for service, that individual who has not yet found a professional position, may be asked to volunteer in the Assistant Minister Program (see Assistant Minister Program: a mentoring program, in the appendix). The recommendation for such a position shall come to the church through the Personnel Committee at the request of the professional staff.
- e. Accountability: All employees are accountable to the Church. The Personnel Committee's job is to be the keepers of this accountability. It shall be the responsibility of the Personnel Committee to ensure open and active communication between staff and the membership, periodically evaluating the quality of the communication (see Article XI, Section 3, Personnel). The membership of the Church is accountable to participate in and support staff in the overall church objectives, goals and programs.

Section 2: Committees

Committees shall be established to carry out the church's activities in all priority areas. The pastoral team shall be *ex officio* members of all council committees. Additionally, the pastoral team shall collaborate with resource and standing committees.

Accountability: Concerns about committees should be directed to Church Council.

Section 3: Church School

A regular Sunday morning school, primarily for instruction in Biblical literature and concepts, and other learning opportunities, such as training classes and special seminars, shall be conducted for all age levels for both members and other interested persons.

Section 4: Music

Such groups, staffs and committees as needed shall be established to serve with a music director/minister to integrate musical experiences, expression and creativity into the education and worship activities of the church.

Section 5: Deacons

A group of adult members of the church especially chosen for their pastoral abilities and concern shall be ordained by the congregation to serve as lay ministers. The deacons shall focus their activities on the development of understanding and unity of spirit among all persons and groups within the congregation.

Section 6: Library

A library of books and materials shall be maintained as a resource center for church and community organizations and individuals.

Section 7: Ad Hoc Committees and Task Forces

Ad hoc committees and task forces with specially nominated and elected members shall be established for specified purposes to address church concerns and report findings or recommendations to the church. Such ad hoc or task force committees may be authorized and renewed by simple majority vote of the church in meeting for periods of time not to exceed two years. Formation of more permanent organizations with regularly nominated and elected members shall be made by amendment to these by-laws. All ad hoc or task force committees established by committees to assist in committee work shall not be nominated by the Discernment and Nominating Committee and shall be announced at church conference. Such ad hoc or task force committees shall report back to the committee asking for its formation.

Section 8: Mission Groups

Mission groups may be formed under guidelines established by the Missions Committee.

ARTICLE VII: Church Finance

Section 1: Stewardship Campaigns

Each member of Oakhurst Baptist Church shall be urged to make the commitment stated in the church covenant: "I will be responsible to God through the creative use of all my income and possessions. I will give systematically and even sacrificially to the financial support of our church's ministry." The Stewardship Committee shall make plans during the year to enlist all members in regular, systematic support of the church. During new member orientation, each candidate for membership shall be encouraged to make a financial commitment to the church.

Section 2: Regular Offerings

Members and visitors shall be given the opportunity during the Sunday morning worship service to make offerings and contributions for financial support of the church ministries included in the annual budget approved by the church.

Section 3: Mission and Benevolent Fund Offerings

Annual offerings for national and international missions shall be recommended by the Missions Committee and added, upon approval by the church, to the budget. Offerings for the Benevolent Fund shall be approved with the annual church budget and shall not require separate approval by the church. Individuals may make designated gifts, but such gifts must comply with IRS code with respect to charitable contributions.

Section 4: Special Offerings

Special offerings for purposes not included in the church budget may be taken by the church or any of its organizations only after consideration by the Stewardship Committee and approval by the church.

Section 5: Administration of Funds

All funds received by the church or its organizations shall be the responsibility of the Finance Committee. All funds shall be kept in accounts administered by the Finance Committee. All receipts and expenditures shall be recorded in the financial records of the church. Receipts that have not been designated by the donor shall be available for any expenditure of the church that is included in the annual budget or subsequently approved by the church. Receipts that have been designated by the donor for specific purposes shall be expended only in accordance with the purposes designated.

Section 6: Fiscal Year

The fiscal year shall be January 1 through December 31, and the budget shall be effective for this period. The Budget Committee shall draw up an annual budget for all church expenditures.

Section 7: Committee expenditures

All expenditures must have prior approval from the individual responsible for that line item in the budget in order for them to be reimbursed. Church committees and

organizations shall have discretionary authority to determine what form of pre-approval is required and to expend budget allocations for which they are responsible, with any of the following exceptions.

- a. Any expenditure for purchasing equipment or making property improvements in excess of \$1000 must be approved by the church prior to the expenditure and following recommendation by the Finance Committee.
- b. Any expenditure in excess of the budget allocation for that purpose must be pre-approved by the Finance Committee.
- c. Any unbudgeted expenditure or contract for expenditure must be pre-approved by the church following recommendation by the Finance Committee.
- d. When it is not possible to convene the Finance Committee, an urgent, unbudgeted expenditure to meet an acute need may be approved by a group consisting of one representative from each of the following:
 - chair of the Finance Committee or the Treasurer,
 - president or vice president of the corporation, and
 - chair(s) of the affected committee(s).The Finance Committee and the church in conference must be notified of urgent, unbudgeted expenditures as soon as possible, but no later than the next scheduled business meeting.
- e. Requests for disbursement of funds must be submitted in writing according to procedures delineated by the Finance Committee.

Section 8: Contributions to Other Organizations and Benevolent Fund

It shall be the practice of this church to encourage contributions to missions and denominational causes. The Budget Committee shall recommend with the proposed budget each year a percentage of undesignated receipts to be contributed to Baptist entities. Upon the recommendation of the Missions Committee, annual goals for local, national and international mission offerings shall be appended to the budget. Offerings to the Benevolent Fund of the church also shall be received on the occasion of each regular observance of the Lord's Supper.

Section 9: The Oakhurst Future Fund

The Oakhurst Future Fund (Future Fund) shall be an endowment with a distribution of earnings at the end of each church fiscal year as outlined below. Undesignated bequests to the church shall be added to the Future Fund.

- a. A professional manager for the Future Fund shall be chosen by the Finance Committee, which shall annually review the manager's performance and issue

instructions based on the church's financial condition. In general, the Finance Committee shall direct the manager to keep a portion of the Future Fund in liquid investments for use in the case of a catastrophic emergency, and the remainder in low-to-moderate risk, higher-earning investments.

- b. At the end of each church fiscal year, earnings of the Future Fund, net of management costs and an inflation adjustment, shall be distributed as follows: 60% to the Seed Grants line item of the Missions budget and 40% to the Capital Reserve line item of the Properties budget.
- c. The annual inflation adjustment to the Future Fund shall be an amount sufficient to increase the Future Fund's corpus by a percentage equal to the percentage change in the Consumer Price Index-All Urban Consumers for the twelve months immediately preceding the last quarter of the church's fiscal year.
- d. In case of a catastrophic emergency as defined by a majority of church members attending either a regular or called conference, required amounts of the corpus of the Future Fund shall be available to pay church expenses.
- e. If monies are removed from the corpus, net earnings of the Future Fund as well as 65% of any subsequent annual surplus in the church's budget shall be applied to restoring the corpus of the Future Fund. Restoring the Fund's corpus shall also become a major priority in planning for the church's finances.
- f. Gifts added to the Future Fund shall be recorded in the name of the giver and/or the person(s) honored by the gift.

Section 10: Authorization to Sign Checks

The officers of the Corporation are authorized to sign and/or countersign checks. In addition, the chair of the Finance Committee shall designate two members of the church at-large who shall be authorized to countersign checks.

Section 11: Financial Review

The Finance Committee shall have a financial review or audit made of the church's financial records every other year and shall report the results to the church in writing within three months of the close of the review. The Finance Committee shall have an audit of the church's financial records conducted at least once every four years by an entity from outside the church and shall report the results to the church in writing within three months of the close of the audit.

Article VIII: Ordinances

Section 1: Lord's Supper

The ordinance commemorating the Lord's Supper shall be observed by the church at least once every three months. The time of regular observance is to be determined by the ministerial staff and the Worship and Music Committee. All members of the church and other Christians are invited to participate in the service.

Section 2: Baptism

The ordinance of baptism may be administered at any worship service for any person who has presented himself or herself to the church professing faith in Jesus Christ as Lord and requesting baptism into the church.

Article IX: Polity

Section 1: Autonomy

The government of this church is vested solely in the members. It shall be subject to the control of no other ecclesiastical body.

The church may adopt its own standards and qualifications for all its officers, leaders, teachers, and workers.

Section 2: Cooperation with Other Baptist Organizations

The church shall seek to cooperate with causes sponsored by the Alliance of Baptists; American Baptist Churches, U.S.A.; Cooperative Baptist Fellowship; other affiliated auxiliaries; and the Baptist churches of the city, county, state and nation. As many messengers or representatives as may be allowed from this church to any such convention, meeting or council may be elected by the church at any regular meeting of the church.

Section 3: Ecumenical Cooperation

The church shall actively seek opportunities for cooperation in ecumenical ventures and in government-sponsored programs which are expressive of the gospel in the life of the community.

Section 4: Covenant

The church shall adopt a covenant stating the purpose for the existence of Oakhurst as a church and the commitments to which all Oakhurst members are called. Members shall be regularly confronted with their responsibilities for assuming these commitments as a part of their lives.

Section 5: Rules of Procedure

The church shall have written rules of procedure to facilitate its orderly operation and development. These rules may be amended separately in accordance with Article X.

Section 6: Ordination

It is the belief of Oakhurst Baptist Church that every member is a minister. Ordination to the gospel ministry is one way the church recognizes that one of its members is heeding the call of God to ministry as a profession, commends that person to other Christian churches, and blesses that person as he or she undertakes his or her formal ministerial charge. Ordination also meets certain legal requirements for performing wedding ceremonies, serving as a chaplain, and certain tax exemptions.

Ordination is significant both to the spiritual journey of the ordinand and to the life of the larger Christian community. For these reasons, we believe that ordination should be taken very seriously and should be preceded by a period of intentional preparation, education, self-examination and spiritual discernment on the part of the candidate, as well as intentional nurture of the candidate by the church. In most cases, it shall follow the candidate's acceptance of a formal charge to a position of ministry.

To fulfill this policy on ordination, Oakhurst Baptist Church shall follow the following procedure:

a. Licensing

1. The candidate for ordination should be licensed by the church at least six months prior to ordination. In doing this, the church is making public the fact that the individual apparently possesses the ability and the spiritual and emotional qualities necessary for ministry and the academic training required for ordination is being received or has been completed.
2. The candidate must be an active member in good standing of the Oakhurst Baptist Church for at least six months prior to licensing. (Note: Persons called as staff ministers at Oakhurst shall not have a time limit before requesting ordination. They also may skip being licensed.)
3. The candidate shall make known the desire to be licensed in writing to the chair of Deacons. The candidate shall be interviewed by the deacons, who shall determine whether to recommend to the church that the candidate be licensed.
4. When the church votes to license, a mentoring committee of 2 to 5 members shall be established by the pastor and chair of Deacons in consultation with the candidate. The committee shall meet regularly with the candidate to provide support and counsel in regard to vocation, pastoral identity, professional training and practical experience in ministry.

b. Ordination

1. The candidate should demonstrate appropriate training for the ministry. (In most cases, this shall be a Master of Divinity degree.) The individual should demonstrate the emotional maturity, ethical integrity, and personality characteristics that would allow him or her to embody the love of God in successfully carrying out the type of ministry to which she/he feels called.
2. The request for ordination shall be given to the deacons by the mentoring committee.
3. The deacons shall meet with the candidate and a representative of the mentoring committee for a report of the candidate's experience during the licensing period. The deacons shall assist the candidate in the articulation of the candidate's response to the gospel ministry.
4. The deacons, following the meeting with the candidate, shall recommend to the church action concerning formation of an ordination council.

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5. The church in conference shall act on the recommendation of the deacons concerning formation of an ordination council.
 6. After approval by the church, an ordination council of 7 to 11 members shall be called by the pastor and the chair of deacons. The council shall consist of members of Oakhurst Baptist Church and others who may be invited to participate. The ordination council may include members of the mentoring committee.

The ordination council shall ascertain whether the candidate meets the standards for ordination.

- (a) The candidate shall present copies of a paper to the council in advance addressing:
 - (1) vocation and call to the ministry;
 - (2) Christian experience;
 - (3) academic and field preparation;
 - (4) general comprehension of Christian doctrine and practice, including an understanding of God, Christ and the Holy Spirit;
 - (5) the purpose and place of the church in today's world;
 - (6) understanding of the ordinances as practiced by Baptist churches; and
 - (7) the role of the minister.
- (b) Questioning the candidate: After receiving the paper, the council shall meet with the candidate for a time of examination. The council must recognize that it is called to understand the views held by the candidate, not to change them.
- (c) At the end of the discussion, the candidate shall be excused. A discussion of the candidate's eligibility for ordination shall follow. The council then shall vote on a recommendation to the local church that:
 - (1) ordination should proceed; or
 - (2) the council shall convene at a later date for further discussion; or

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- (3) ordination should be deferred to some future date, stating the reasons; or
- (4) ordination should not take place, stating the reasons.
7. The ordination council, after examination of the candidate's qualifications for the ministry, shall recommend to the church to decline or proceed with the requested ordination; the church in conference shall then act upon the recommendation.
 8. If the recommendation of the ordination council is not to proceed with ordination, and the candidate wishes to appeal the decision, she/he can ask the church to vote on the matter at a regularly scheduled business meeting of the church following the usual procedures of the Rules of Procedure.
 9. Upon ordination, if the candidate wishes to have his/her ordination recognized by the American Baptist Churches of the South, he/she shall follow the guidelines established by that body.
 10. The chair of deacons in consultation with the candidate and the pastor shall establish an *ad hoc* committee to proceed with the planning of a service of ordination. This committee may include members of the mentoring committee and/or ordination council.

ARTICLE X: Amendments

These Rules of Procedure may be amended by a two-thirds vote of the membership present and voting at any regular meeting following special notice. Special notice for amendments shall consist of announcement in two consecutive regular meetings of the church and in the *Messenger*. The proposed amendment shall be available in writing for inspection. Any change shall be published and shall be added by the chair of the Rules of Procedure Committee to the official copy of Rules of Procedure in the library. Each amendment and official review shall be dated.

ARTICLE XI: Resource Committees

Definition

The resource committees are: Discernment and Nominating, Budget, Personnel, Search, Church Council, Staff Support, Rules of Procedure and Communications.

Relation to the church

Because of the basic nature of the tasks of these committees, they will be directly responsible to the church as a whole. Their meeting requirements are specified in each particular resource committee description.

Terms

Members and chairs of resource committees will be nominated by the Discernment and Nominating Committee and elected by the church. Committee members serve three-year rotating terms and chairs may serve consecutive one-year terms except as noted in specific committees' structure. After completion of one full term, a person will be ineligible to serve on the same resource committee for one year. If a member of any resource committee becomes or expects to become inactive during a three-year term, the member or chair of the committee may request the Discernment and Nominating Committee to nominate for election a substitute member for the remainder of his or her term. A person filling an unexpired term may be elected for a subsequent full three-year term.

Accountability

Each resource committee will attempt to maintain the highest standard of accountability to the church in whatever way is appropriate and will conduct its business according to the Rules of Procedure. Each resource committee will meet regularly. Each will make a written annual report to the church. Each will plan and conduct a yearly evaluation of its own area of work and evaluation of its entire priority area. Part of annual evaluation and review will be examination of the Rules of Procedure pertaining to each committee, and preparation of proposed amendments. Quorum for conducting business at any committee meeting is two-thirds of the members. Efforts will be made to notify all members in advance of a called meeting. The meeting should be rescheduled if any member objects to the time set for a called meeting.

Section 1: Discernment and Nominating Committee

Purpose

The Discernment and Nominating Committee recommends to the church for election persons to serve as officers of the corporation, members of all resource committees, council committees, standing committees and ad hoc committees and task forces for specified purposes to address church concerns. All nominations will be made to reflect the structure of the committee as outlined in the Rules of Procedure.

Responsibilities

- a. Help the congregation in a process of discernment to elicit nominations.

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- b. In consultation with leaders and chairs of the previous years and with appropriate staff members, seek out and contact persons to fill the committees. The committee will attempt to base its recommendations on the interests and gifts of each person as well as on skills and experience. The committee will take particular care not to perpetuate roles by age, sex or race.
 - c. Nominate and bring to the church for election the chair of the Church Council before the other Council committee chairs.
 - d. Nominate and bring to the church for election the chair for all committees other than Deacons. The term chair as used throughout the Rules of Procedure also includes co-chairs when determined appropriate by the Discernment and Nominating Committee.
 - e. Recommend all persons nominated to the church for election not later than the June church conference, with the exception of Church School which will be presented at the August church conference.
 - f. Provide a complete list of committee members and chairs with dates of terms for publication in the *Messenger*; maintain an updated committee list and post it in the church office.
 - g. Receive resignations from persons wishing to resign before the end of their term of office. If a replacement is requested by the committee, the Nominating Committee will recommend persons for election to fill such vacancies.
 - h. Ensure that the Church Council completes nomination of a succeeding Discernment and Nominating Committee by its June meeting.

Structure

The committee will be composed of a chair and five members nominated by Church Council and elected to two-year, rotating terms except that a member filling an unexpired term may be re-elected for a full term. Members will not be eligible for consecutive terms. All professional staff may attend meetings, and chairs of other committees may be invited by the committee to attend for particular discussions. The new members of the Discernment and Nominating committee will be nominated by the Church Council, elected by the church no later than the June business meeting, and announced in the *Messenger* in August. The chair will be specifically nominated by the Church Council and will serve as chair for only one year. The committee will select a secretary to take minutes of committee meetings.

Section 2: Budget Committee

Purpose

The purpose of the Budget Committee is to prepare and present an annual budget that reflects as truly as possible the covenant community's goals, priorities and financial

commitment for the coming year. Each Budget Committee meets for part of one year, from June (or earlier) until the budget is adopted, no later than November.

Responsibilities

- a. Consider input from Church Council, all committees, mission groups and staff to discern the tangible goals and priorities of the church for the coming year.
- b. Project costs to accomplish goals; assess the possibilities for annual giving with input from Stewardship; and balance the two to develop budget priorities.
- c. Provide a draft of the proposed annual budget to the Church Council for their review before presentation to the church’
- d. Provide a draft of the proposed annual budget to church members on the Sunday before the conference at which the budget is to be presented for adoption.
- e. Present the proposed budget for adoption at a regular meeting of the church in conference by the end of November.

Structure

The committee will consist of three members of the Stewardship Committee; the chair, Treasurer, and one other member of the Finance Committee; the chairs of Finance, Missions, Christian Education, Worship and Music, Personnel and Properties Committees; and one of the at-large members of Church Council. The chair of the Finance Committee will serve as chair of the Budget Committee. The professional staff will be invited to all sessions of the Budget Committee.

Section 3: Personnel Committee

Purpose

The purpose of the Personnel Committee is to seek qualified persons to serve as professional, operational, and contract staff members (staff) of the church, to recommend Personnel Policies and Benefits, to set lines of communication for jobs to be fulfilled, evaluate staff, to measure commitment to team results, to address problems concerning personnel, and to serve as a liaison between the staff and the church.

Responsibilities

- a. With the assistance of the staff, Church Council, Resource and Council Committees, evaluate the personnel needs of the church and recommend to the church modification or creation of positions to meet these needs (See Article VI, Section 1: Employees).
- b. Seek and recommend persons to the church for employment as operational, contract or interim staff (For professional staff see Article XI, Section 4, Search Committee). Each recommendation for employment should include the

proposed date of employment, title, job description, conditions of employment, salary and benefits (determined after consultation with the Finance Committee), and other pertinent information.

- c. Recommend to the church policies for sick leave, holidays, vacation time and other benefits for each staff member as outlined in the Personnel Policies and Benefits in the Appendix.
- d. Annually review with staff insurance coverage and annuity or retirement benefits provided by the church. Recommend any salary adjustments or changes in benefits to the Budget Committee for subsequent action by the church.
- e. In consultation with appropriate committees and staff, write a job description for each staff member which includes work hours, accountability, and communication structure.
- f. Provide supervision for all staff and determine the accountability and communication structure for each staff member. The Committee may use its discretion to request the participation of other staff and appropriate committees in accountability structure.
- g. Provide for periodic (at least annual) evaluations of all staff following the process outlined in the Personnel Policies and Benefits in the Appendix. The Personnel Committee has ultimate responsibility for evaluating staff but may elect to delegate the evaluation process to other staff and/or appropriate committee. These staff and/or committees will submit a report of the evaluation to the Personnel Committee for review.
- h. Assist in resolving interpersonal problems and job disputes among staff and between staff and other church members. Assistance should be sought from Deacons or Church Council if necessary.
- i. Bring to the church, with the advice and assistance of the Deacons and Church Council, recommendations for involuntary termination of any staff. With due regard for personal privacy and privileged or confidential information, Personnel Committee will use a communication structure that includes documentation of failure to meet job expectations, personal conduct issues or continuing interpersonal conflicts detrimental to the church. Before bringing a recommendation for termination of employment to the church, the committee will consult with the Deacons Committee and the Church Council. Following consultation, the Committee will:
 1. inform the staff member of its decision;

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2. request that the Deacons and Church Council meet with the staff member to discuss the decision, if the staff member requests a meeting.
 - j. Receive and present to the church all resignations of church staff members.
 - k. Attach as appendices to the Rules of Procedure dated copies of all adopted Personnel Policies and Benefits and job descriptions.
 - l. Make all recommendations directly to the church.

Structure

The Committee will consist of a chair, secretary and 4 at-large members nominated by the Discernment and Nominating Committee and elected for three-year rotating terms. Additionally, a representative of the Church Council's leadership team familiar with Rules of Procedure, an active deacon, and a member of the Finance Committee who can address financial and insurance questions of the staff will be members of the committee, elected by the church for one-year terms. The committee will meet regularly to consider personnel needs, supervision and evaluation. All professional staff will be invited to attend unless otherwise notified.

Section 4: Search Committee

Purpose

The purpose of a Search Committee is to seek qualified persons to serve as professional staff for the church.

Responsibilities

- a. Evaluate the needs of the church regarding new or vacant positions and seek qualified persons to serve. Regarding professional staff positions, significant consideration will be given to the preference and recommendation of the remaining professional staff.
- b. Receive and consider recommendations of appropriate committees and groups and of individual church members.
- c. Seek approval from the Personnel Committee regarding the title, job description, salary (determined after consulting with the Finance Committee), and conditions of employment of any new professional staff.
- d. In consultation with the Personnel Committee, recommend to the church for approval any addition, elimination or significant alteration of any professional staff position..
- e. Recommend to the church for election any person chosen as professional staff.

Structure

A Search Committee will consist of at least two members of the Personnel Committee and at least five other church members. All members will be nominated by the Discernment and Nominating Committee, seeking balanced representation of the church membership, and elected by the church. The chair of this committee will be nominated by the Discernment and Nominating Committee and elected by the church. The committee members will remain on the Search Committee until the professional staff sought has been employed, notwithstanding the fact that their terms of office on the Personnel Committee have expired, and their successors on that committee have been nominated and elected and are serving.

Section 5: Church Council**Purpose**

The purpose of the Church Council is to lead the church through facilitation and coordination of ongoing programs and activities of the church. Also, its purpose is to recommend goals and priorities for the church and establish a means for evaluating the accomplishment of those goals. Church Council will, in its leadership role, reflect on the church's life together, initiate action to bring about effective change, and support the church to live by the commitments made in the Covenant.

Responsibilities

- a. Plan and conduct all monthly church business meetings.
- b. Facilitate assignment, coordination, and review of ongoing plans, programs, and activities.
- c. Review, coordinate, and facilitate proposed plans recommended by church staff, church officers, groups, and committees.
- d. Assign new programs and activities to the proper church committees or groups.
- e. Establish guidelines for use of the building and review building use requests that do not fit within defined policies. Encourage all church committees to make sure that activities and plans are written on the central calendar in the office.
- f. Review the proposed annual budget before presentation to the church.
- g. Nominate for election the members of the Discernment and Nominating Committee and bring these to the church for election by the June business meeting. Announce the new committee in the *Messenger* no later than August.
- h. Request reports from all church committees annually and implement the means for review of the reports by the congregation.

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- i. Recommend to the church objectives, goals, and priorities, based upon suggestions actively solicited from a broad cross-section of the church membership. The recommendation will indicate proposed implementation of each goal. The Church Council will establish a means by which to evaluate the accomplishment of the goals.
 - j. Discuss with the church existing programs and activities and future plans in terms of goals adopted by the church.
 - k. Serve as a sounding board for recommendations of change in church policy and make appropriate recommendations to the church for changes in the Rules of Procedure of Oakhurst Baptist Church.

No church member will be precluded from making recommendations directly to the church.

Structure

The Church Council will be composed of the pastor(s) and other pastoral staff, three at-large members, and the chairs or representatives of the following committees: Deacons, Worship and Music, Missions, Covenant, Christian Education, Finance, Stewardship and Communications. Each member will be a voting member. The three at-large members will serve as chair, assistant chair, and secretary of Church Council (the chair and assistant chair are also designated president and vice-president of the corporation). The treasurer and the clerk will serve as *ex officio* members.

The three at-large members and the pastor(s) will comprise a leadership team that will plan the agenda for Church Council and facilitate the Church Council meetings. Each at-large member will be nominated by the Discernment and Nominating Committee and elected for a three-year rotating term. Each year the Discernment and Nominating Committee will designate the chair, assistant chair and secretary of the Church Council from the three at-large members. After serving a three-year term, an at-large member will be ineligible to serve on the leadership team again for one year.

All other members will be on Church Council on a yearly basis as dictated by their role on the committee they are representing. The council will meet at least ten times a year at a set time and be on call as determined by the chair.

Any church member may participate in a Church Council meeting by notifying the chair of Church Council that she/he wants to be on the agenda of the next scheduled meeting. Church Council members may invite other representatives from committees, groups or staff to meet with them for one meeting or on an on-going basis.

Section 6: Staff Support Committees

Purpose

The purpose of the Staff Support Committees is to support and improve the leadership of the professional staff persons and to provide a group with whom each professional staff person may discuss the personal and professional aspects of her/his work.

Responsibilities

- a. The committee will meet at least three times each year to work with the staff person on a different aspect of her/his job description.
- b. The committee must be knowledgeable about the congregation and, by listening to the congregation and the community, be able to give constructive criticism to the staff person.
- c. The committee is not a decision-making group. Minutes and records, if kept, and all proceedings are confidential, although the records may become a part of the staff person's personnel file if the individual so desires.

Structure

Each staff person may take the initiative to suggest to the Discernment and Nominating Committee at least three but no more than five persons for recommendation to the church for election. Members will be elected for annual terms with a three-year limit. No member of the Personnel Committee and no member of the Church Council should be recommended for election. These committees do not require a chair, although a committee may appoint one if desired.

Section 7: Rules of Procedure Committee

Purpose

The purpose of the Rules of Procedure Committee is to maintain and make available to members, staff and others the current revision of the Rules of Procedure and manage processes of revision.

Responsibilities

- a. Receive and review any suggested changes to the Rules of Procedure.
- b. Initiate a systematic review and revision of the rules every three years, soliciting input from staff, committees and other members, and publish a finalized, dated, complete composite within the 3-year cycle. Ensure that proposed amendments are consistent in form and content with current rules and represent useful and accurate changes.
- c. Present proposed amendments to the church for adoption in compliance with guidelines given in Article X: Amendments.

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- d. Keep the official copy of the Rules of Procedure in the Library marked “Do Not Remove,” up to date with all adopted amendments and revisions properly dated. Make additional copies available to the library for lending.
 - e. Keep secure (including a portable copy of each) both editable and non-editable electronic versions of the document and make the non-editable version available for download.

Structure

The committee will consist of a chair and five members presented by the Discernment and Nominating Committee and elected by the church for three-year, rotating terms. The Discernment and Nominating Committee will see that at least two persons with at least 5 years of active participation in church programs are on the committee during the revision years.

Section 8: Communications Committee

Purpose

The purpose of the Communications Committee is to lead in developing and implementing a comprehensive program of communication (involving all media and all publics) for Oakhurst Baptist Church.

Responsibilities

- a. Establish guidelines and policy for publicity both within and outside the church and assist in coordinating and arranging for such publicity.
- b. Evaluate publications and communications of the church.
- c. With the assistance of the professional staff and support staff recommend to the Discernment and Nominating Committee a person to serve as editor of the *Messenger*. Each year the Communications Committee will suggest to the Discernment and Nominating Committee their selection for editor of the *Messenger*, and the editor will be elected for a one-year renewable term.

Structure

The committee will consist of six members elected for 3-year rotating terms, and the editor of the *Messenger*, elected for a one-year renewable term. The chair will be nominated by the Discernment and Nominating Committee and elected by the church. The committee will meet on a regular basis and be on call by the chair. The chair or a representative of the Communications Committee will serve as a member of the Church Council.

The editor of the *Messenger* will meet, as needed, with the Communications Committee. The Communications Committee, along with the editor of the *Messenger*, will suggest to the Discernment and Nominating Committee their selection for persons to work on the *Messenger* staff, to be renewed annually.

Article XII: Council Committees

Definition

The council committees represent the priority areas of the Church Covenant. The council committees are Worship and Music, Missions, Deacons, Covenant, Christian Education, Stewardship and Finance. Each committee will be represented on the Church Council by its chair or an authorized representative.

Relation to other committees

Each council committee will serve as a channel of communication between the Church Council and the Standing Committees related to it by activity; as follows: *Worship* (Worship and Music Committee – Flower, Choir Councils, Media); *Missions* (Mission Committee); *Discover and Affirm Gifts/Know and be Known* (Deacons – Membership, Remembrance); *Covenant Community* (Covenant Committee – Fellowship); *Education* (Christian Education Committee – Church School, Library, History); *Stewardship* (Stewardship Committee); *Institutional Operations* (Finance Committee – Properties and Space, Transportation, Grounds, Teller) and indicated on the chart of committees. Each council committee will be responsible for receiving from and conveying to its related standing committees the routine business of the council; it will also serve as a sounding board for recommendations of its related standing committees as requested. This will be done for effective coordination, interrelation and support of activities and will not preclude any standing committee from bringing its recommendations to the council or the church directly. A council committee may suggest and facilitate cooperation between any of its related standing committees and other council and standing committees.

Terms

Members and chairs of council committees will be nominated by the Discernment and Nominating Committee and elected by the church. Committee members serve three-year rotating terms and chair may serve consecutive one-year terms. After completion of one full term, a person will be ineligible to serve on the same council committee for one year. If a member of any council committee becomes or expects to become inactive during a three-year term, the member or chair of the committee may request the Discernment and Nominating Committee to nominate for election a substitute member for the remainder of his or her term. A person filling an unexpired term may be elected for a subsequent full three-year term.

Accountability

Each council committee will meet regularly. Each will make a written annual report to the church. Each will plan and conduct a yearly evaluation of its own area of work or, in conjunction with its related standing committees, evaluation of its entire priority area. Part of annual evaluation and review will be examination of the Rules of Procedure pertaining to each committee and preparation of proposed amendments. Quorum for conducting official business at any committee meeting is two-thirds of the members. Efforts will be made to notify all members in advance of a called meeting. The meeting should be rescheduled if any member objects to the time set for a called meeting.

Section 1: Worship and Music Committee**Purpose**

The purpose of the Worship and Music Committee is to help us as a church to enrich our worship experience, focus the attention of the congregation on concerns chosen for special emphasis and explore approaches to worship in addition to those traditional in Baptist churches in order to heighten our sensitivity to God's presence and spirit.

Responsibilities

- a. Sponsor and coordinate special worship opportunities (services, exhibits, displays, drama).
- b. Work with the Christian Education Committee in planning and conducting seminars about worship.
- c. Assist the professional staff in planning worship and music for regular services as requested.
- d. Be responsible for acquisition, maintenance, inventory and disposition of implement of worship, such as musical instruments, hymn books, bibles, lighting, decorations and banners
- e. Prepare an annual budget for the Budget Committee to cover the above, as well as music literature and supplies needed by the choirs, choir fellowships and musicians' honoraria; adhere to the approved budget.
- f. Serve as a channel of communication between Church Council, Flower Committee, Choir Council(s), any other church choirs and Media Committee.

Structure

The committee will be composed of a chair and five members nominated by the Discernment and Nominating Committee and elected to three-year, rotating terms, along with staff responsible for worship planning.

Section 2: Missions Committee**Purpose**

The purpose of the Missions Committee is to provide leadership in planning and coordinating our participation with Christ's *mission* in the world locally and globally -- including that accomplished through *Missions*, *Missions Groups* and *Seed Grants*.

Mission is understood as Christ's redemptive and incarnational ministry in the world. The church seeks to affirm and participate in the continuation of Christ's mission in the world as stated in the church Covenant: "I will intentionally give myself as Christ's servant through participation in His mission in the world."

Missions is the way Oakhurst Baptist Church carries out Christ's mission in a particular time and in a particular way. Missions (in the plural) address the specific expressions of Christ's mission through the various ministries of the church.

A *Missions Group* is any organization, group, task force or activity considered by the church to be part of Christ's mission in the world through the ministries of Oakhurst Baptist Church. Some missions groups will be formed through *sounding a call*. Sounding a call will be guided by these three questions: Is the call incredibly Good News to you? Is the call almost impossible to accomplish? Is there a good chance that you will fail? Each missions group of the church will be represented to the larger church community through the Missions Committee.

Seed Grants provide money to establish programs or accomplish projects that would not be viable without the support. They are not intended to fund the operating budget of missions programs on a continuing basis, and no recipient may be funded for more than a total of five years (consecutive or otherwise) unless the church has put them into its regular budget. If and when that happens, the Missions Committee may continue to offer annual Seed Grant monies in amounts up to those allocated in the regular church budget.

Seed Grants are intended to provide support for a broad variety of mission projects and Christian ministry efforts, including those that meet human needs, relieve human suffering, provide Christian education and further peace and reconciliation. They should strike a balance between world and local missions needs, taking into account special priorities and emergency situations. In general, no less than 50% of the funds awarded for Christian ministry and mission projects should be used for local projects and programs. Seed Grants are funded through an annual distribution of earnings from the Oakhurst Future Fund as set forth in Article VII, Section 9, Oakhurst Future Fund (see Background below).

Responsibilities

- a. Study, evaluate and publish the mission needs and opportunities for the church.
- b. Work with the professional staff, especially in setting mission priorities of the church.
- c. Establish, publish and provide information for procedures necessary for creating missions groups, sounding a call, enlisting, training, annual reporting to the church of missions activities and closing of missions groups.
- d. Annually assess the activities of all missions groups and make recommendations to each missions group and the Church Council on the tenure of each missions group.
- e. Encourage representative(s) of the missions groups to attend and participate in the Missions Committee.

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- f. Cooperate with community, civic, governmental and religious organizations whose purposes correspond with the mission of the church.
 - g. Review all missions budget items, promote special missions offerings and make recommendations regarding these to the Budget Committee.
 - h. Direct the distribution of Seed Grant monies following a consistent and well-publicized process for receiving, reviewing and prioritizing requests. Present recommendations to the church for approval no later than the May church conference, distribute funds and ensure follow-up for accountability.

Structure

The Missions Committee will be composed of six members at-large and any professional staff assigned to the Missions Committee. The six at-large members will have three-year rotating terms and will be nominated by the Discernment and Nominating Committee and elected by the church. The chair will be one of the six at-large members and will be nominated by the Discernment and Nominating Committee and elected by the church. Members of the Missions Committee may be active in any missions group they desire. In addition, any missions group representatives may participate in the Missions Committee meeting discussions, but may not vote. No missions group representatives will participate in the Missions Committee for more than three successive years.

Background on Seed Grants

The Continuing Fund for Missions and Special Projects (Continuing Fund) was originally established to manage funds that came from the rental of the church building at 1034 West College Avenue, Decatur, Georgia, a new education building that Oakhurst Baptist Church built for a growing congregation in 1959. Ten years later, when neighborhood demographics changed and the congregation shrank drastically, the church moved back to the old education building and leased the College Avenue building to Southern Bell with an option to buy.

Money from the rental was used for property expenses, a portion for major needs of the church buildings, and no less than 50 % was used for the extension of Christian ministry in the local community and throughout the world in accordance with the purposes set forth in the covenant of Oakhurst Baptist Church. The explicit purpose was to provide “seed money” for missions that would not be viable without risk-taking support.

In 1994 the College Avenue property was sold to Southern Bell. Most of the proceeds were used to build the new education building and renovate the remaining space. A portion (approximately \$60,000) was retained in the Continuing Fund to continue drawing interest to provide seed money for local and global missions. Beginning in 2002, the Continuing Fund began to receive 50% of the net earnings of the Oakhurst Future Fund annually to add to its corpus. In 2007 the church voted to move the corpus of the Continuing Fund into the Oakhurst Future Fund in order to consolidate accounting and management, with the change to occur in calendar year 2008. Maintaining the intent of the

Continuing Fund, it was determined that 60% of the net earnings of the now-combined Future Fund each year would be allocated to Seed Grants administered by the Missions Committee.

Section 3: Covenant Committee

Purpose

The purpose of the committee is to help the church remain aware of its commitment to the principles set forth in the church covenant and to provide opportunities for supportive relationships through which a covenant community may be realized.

Responsibilities

- a. Keep the covenant and its meaning before each member of the congregation (in written forms, symbols, etc.).
- b. Lead in planning and conducting Covenant Sunday services and activities, which will include an opportunity for reaffirmation of a commitment to the covenant. Planning should be coordinated with the professional staff and with the Worship and Music Committee.
- c. Work with other committees in areas pertaining to the covenant.
- d. Provide leadership in the formation of groups that can provide support for living as a covenant community.
- e. Be alert for and call attention to inconsistencies between the covenant principles and our church structure and practice.
- f. Serve as a channel of communication between Church Council and the Fellowship Committee.
- g. Recommend an annual budget to the Budget Committee.

Structure

The committee will consist of a chair and five persons nominated by the Discernment and Nominating Committee and elected by the church for three-year rotating terms.

Section 4: Deacons

Purpose

Under the covenant of this church we have rejected status in terms of office. The ordination of a deacon at Oakhurst Baptist Church does not entitle that person to special privileges or to governing position. Rather, ordination denotes that the person has been chosen by the members of the church for his or her capacity and willingness to assume the servant hood role. The committee of active deacons will be a group committed to the nurture, care and service of other members and associates of the church. They will attempt to promote understanding and unity of spirit among all persons and groups in the congregation.

Responsibilities

- a. Plan and undertake such projects and activities as will express the deacons' ministry of servanthood. This responsibility may include coordinated efforts with professional staff and such committees as the Covenant Committee and the Membership Committee. Examples of deacon activity are: encouraging the active involvement of church members and attempting to reengage inactive members; visiting those in bereavement, illness or other distress; discovering and evoking the gifts of members within committees and groups; addressing problems of communication within the church; and making contacts with visitors.
- b. Provide for the observance of the Lord's Supper. This will include providing the elements, arranging the tables and gathering, cleaning and caring for cloths, cups and trays.
- c. Assist participants in the ordinance of Baptism; be responsible for care, acquisition and disposition of robes, towels and other necessary equipment.
- d. Participate in the ordination process as described in Article IX, Section 6.
- e. Receive the regular offering and benevolent offering during worship services. Administer the Benevolent Fund of the church.
- f. Lead in a program that will:
 1. assure that visitors to the worship service are greeted with warmth and friendliness;
 2. orient new, old and prospective members and Friends to all facets of the life of the church;
 3. assure that Oakhurst receives new members and Friends in such a way that they will know that they are loved and cared for;
 4. recommend to the church that candidates who have completed requirements be voted into membership (a candidate's letter will be requested only after completion of the orientation program.); and
 5. present to the church Friends of Oakhurst who have completed requirements as outlined in Article III, Section 1.
- g. Serve as a channel of communication between Church Council and the Membership and Remembrance Committees.

Structure

- a. **Number, selection, term:** The active committee of Deacons will consist of eighteen church members. Each will have considered carefully the covenant of the church and the stated purpose of the deacons and will have expressed to

the Discernment and Nominating Committee willingness and a capacity to undertake an active commitment to their implementation. Any person elected as a deacon, and not previously ordained as a deacon, will be ordained by the church in an appropriate service. Each deacon will be elected for a three-year term. On completion of a full term, the deacon will be ineligible to serve again for one year. A deacon serving an unexpired term will be eligible for election to a full term.

- b. **Officers' elections:** The officers of the Deacons will be a chair, a chair-elect, and a secretary. The Deacons will annually elect a chair-elect and a secretary. The chair-elect will serve a one-year term as chair-elect and the following year as chair. In the event the office of chair becomes vacant, the chair-elect will automatically succeed to that office and the Deacons will elect a new chair-elect. Should there remain six months or less in the term of the chair when the vacancy occurs, the new chair and the chair-elect will serve the remainder of the unexpired term and the next full term. Election will be at the August meeting. Newly elected deacons will be present and will vote. Deacons rotating off will not vote but will serve as a nominating committee and present nominations for chair-elect and for secretary to be voted on at the August meeting.
- c. **Meetings:** The deacons will meet regularly. The deacons may also be convened by the chair for consideration of urgent matters.
- d. **Subcommittees:** Subcommittees may be created as needed to perform the duties of the deacons. Appointments will be made by the chair. A list of these appointments will be posted in the church office.
- e. **Personnel Committee:** One deacon will serve on the Personnel Committee as described in Article XI, Section 3.

Section 5: Christian Education Committee

Purpose

The purpose of the Christian Education Committee is to recommend to the church education policy, goals, priorities and changes in policy to: facilitate assignment, coordination, review and evaluation of all educational plans, programs, curriculum materials and activities; and to fulfill the purpose of the Church School.

Responsibilities

- a. Recommend to the church education policy, goals, priorities and changes in policy.
- b. Facilitate assignment, coordination, review and evaluation of all educational plans, programs, curriculum materials and activities related to the Church School.

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- c. Devise and recommend to the Budget Committee an annual budget for education needs.
 - d. Coordinate room assignment for all classes and activities; consult with Properties and Space Committee about the purchase of needed equipment.
 - e. Encourage active participation of church members and other interested persons in the educational activities of the church.
 - f. Foster within the Church School an atmosphere of nurture and growth toward Christlikeness in mind, spirit and activity (i.e., discipleship training, evoking one's spiritual gifts).
 - g. Provide a definite plan for outreach.

Structure

The members of the Christian Education Committee will be the professional staff for Christian Education, *ex officio*, and six at-large members, one of whom will be chair. Representatives of the children, youth and adult divisions of church school will be chosen by the Christian Education and Church School Committees each year to serve on the Christian Education Committee.

The six at-large members will be nominated by the Discernment and Nominating Committee for three-year rotating terms and elected by the church. The chair will be nominated by the Discernment and Nominating Committee from the six at-large members and elected by the church. If the chair is vacated, leaving an unexpired term, the church will elect a new chair who will serve the number of years remaining in the former chair's term. This chair may be re-elected for a full three-year term at the conclusion of that term.

Section 6: Stewardship Committee

Purpose

The purpose of the Stewardship Committee is to help the church community achieve its stated short- and long-term goals by promoting and facilitating church members' fulfillment of their covenant of stewardship.

Responsibilities

- a. Encourage church members' growth in stewardship throughout the year, enlisting church members in systematic giving of time, talent and funds and leading sessions on stewardship in the new member orientation program.
- b. Prepare and execute yearly and long-term plans for developing the resources needed to achieve the church's established goals and priorities, including an annual budget fundraising campaign and an ongoing planned giving program;
- c. Periodically update the membership on the status of the church's goals and priorities relative to available resources.

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- d. Evaluate and respond to requests for special offerings or church-focused fundraising activities for purposes outside the approved budget, as outlined in Article VII, Section 4, Special Offerings.
 - e. Prepare and provide for distribution of giving statements.
 - f. Ensure that the church staff procures and distributes offering envelopes.

Structure

The committee will consist of at least six members, presented by the Discernment and Nominating Committee and elected by the church to serve three year rotating terms. The Discernment and Nominating Committee will nominate one member to serve as chair; the committee will choose one member to serve as assistant chair. The chair and two committee members will also serve as members of the Budget Committee, staying in that role until the budget is adopted regardless of their Stewardship terms. Each year the Stewardship Committee will choose one member to serve as a representative to the Finance Committee.

Section 7: Finance Committee

Purpose

The purpose of the Finance Committee is to oversee, direct and administer the assets, liabilities, revenues and expenditures of the church according to fiscal policies established by the church.

Responsibilities

- a. In coordination with the Treasurer, administer the financial affairs of the church, including all special funds, designated gifts and grants.
- b. Maintain records of memorial and other monetary gifts to the church.
- c. Oversee the management of the Oakhurst Future Fund and the annual distribution of net proceeds as described in Article VII, Section 9, Oakhurst Future Fund, and provide a report on the Future Fund to the church at least annually.
- d. Review, update and ensure adherence to the church's fiscal policies.
- e. Maintain a financial record system following generally accepted accounting practices.
- f. Provide for periodic financial review as outlined in Article VII, Section 11, Financial Review.
- g. Coordinate all insurance needs of the church other than employee benefits.
- h. Oversee receipt, count, tabulation and deposit of offerings, contributions and other receipts.

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- i. Coordinate with church individuals, committees and organizations the expenditure of church funds allocated for their oversight in the annual budget, according to the rules and exceptions defined in Article VII, Section 7, Committee Expenditures.
 - j. Recommend to the church adjustments to the adopted budget necessitated by unforeseen circumstances.
 - k. Inform the church of its financial status relative to its budget commitments through: monthly Treasurer's reports to the Church Council; written quarterly reports to the church in conference; and copies of the quarterly report published, posted and made available to all committees.
 - l. Convene the Budget Committee by the end of June.
 - m. Serve as a channel of communication between Church Council and institutional operations such as the Properties and Space, Grounds, Transportation and Teller committees.

Structure

The committee will consist of six members nominated by the Discernment and Nominating Committee and elected by the church to serve three year rotating terms, in addition to the Treasurer and Stewardship Committee representative. The Discernment and Nominating Committee will recommend one member to serve as chair, and the Finance Committee will choose one member to serve as assistant chair. The chair of the Finance Committee will serve as the chair of the Budget Committee until the budget is adopted by the church. The Treasurer and one other member of the Finance Committee will also serve on the Budget Committee until the budget is adopted, regardless of their terms on the Finance Committee.

Article XIII: Standing Committees

Definition

The standing committees and their related council committees are:

- a. Worship and Music Committee
 - Choir Councils
 - Flower Committee
 - Media Committee
- b. Deacons
 - Membership Committee
 - Remembrance Committee
- c. Covenant Committee
 - Fellowship Committee
- d. Christian Education Committee
 - Church School Committees
 - Library Committee
 - History Committee
- e. Finance Committee
 - Properties and Space Committee
 - Transportation Committee
 - Grounds Committee
 - Teller Committee

Relation to other committees

Each standing committee will use its related council committee for routine communication with the Church Council and, if appropriate, as a sounding board for its recommendations. This will be done for effective coordination, interrelation and support of activities and will not preclude any standing committee from bringing its recommendations to the Council or to the church directly.

Terms

Members of standing committees will be elected to serve one-year terms and may be re-nominated by the Discernment and Nominating Committee for consecutive terms.

Accountability

Each standing committee will meet as often as necessary or as specified in its own committee description. It will report business periodically to the church so as to keep the congregation informed of its work and needs. Each will make a written annual report. Each will plan and conduct yearly evaluation and, if appropriate, this will be done in coordination with related council and standing committees. Part of annual evaluation and review will be

examination of the Rules of Procedure pertaining to each committee and preparation of proposed amendments. Quorum for conducting official business at any committee meeting is two-thirds of the members. Efforts will be made to notify all members in advance of a called meeting. The meeting should be rescheduled if any member objects to the time set for a called meeting.

Section 1: Choir Councils

Purpose

The purpose of the Choir Councils is to serve as representatives of choir(s) to the church, to recommend and maintain choir guidelines and to facilitate choir activities.

Responsibilities

- a. Advise the director or minister of music in her/his selection of music and in regard to the acceptable frequency of and progress in rehearsals.
- b. Facilitate special music programs, choir social gatherings, and necessary work on choir properties (robes, folders, music, etc.).
- c. Share concerns and celebrations of active and inactive choir members at rehearsal.

Structure

Each choir determines who will serve as its council members for the year. Once selected, the names will be brought to the Discernment and Nominating Committee for presentation to the church for election. The Choir Council(s) will report to the Church Council through the Worship and Music Committee.

Section 2: Flower Committee

Purpose

The purpose of the Flower Committee is to secure, arrange and dispose of floral or other arrangements for church services.

Responsibilities

- a. Prepare an annual calendar, encouraging members and friends to provide arrangements for the recognition of persons or events.
- b. Furnish notices of recognition for publication in the bulletin;
- c. Recommend an annual budget item to the Budget Committee;
- d. Store containers (urns, vases, etc.);
- e. Develop guidelines for the acquisition, placement, and disposition of flowers or other arrangements.

Structure

The committee will be composed of a chair and two to four persons nominated by the Discernment and Nominating Committee and elected by the church. The committee shall

meet and report at the discretion of the chair. Reports will be made to the Church Council through the Worship and Music Committee.

Section 3: Media Committee

Purpose

The purpose of the Media Committee is to manage and operate the sound system, video record worship services, and facilitate various other church-related media activities.

Responsibilities

- a. Operate the sound system for worship services and other events such as special meetings, concerts or presentations in the sanctuary.
- b. Video tape worship services and other presentations.
- c. Edit video tapes and copy tapes for archival purposes as well as for checking out to church members.
- d. Recruit, train, and schedule people to do the work of the committee.
- e. Check and maintain assistive hearing devices.
- f. Recommend an annual budget to the Budget Committee.

Structure

The committee will be composed of eight to ten people who will meet and report at the discretion of the chair. The Discernment and Nominating committee will nominate all members for one year terms, one of whom will be designated as chair. All members and chair will be elected by the church. The committee will report to the Church Council through the Worship and Music Committee.

Section 4: Membership Committee

Purpose

The purpose of the Membership Committee is to maintain an accurate roll of the church members under the direction of the church clerk and in cooperation with the church administrator.

Responsibilities

- a. With the church administrator, establish procedures and guidelines for the maintenance of the church membership record system.
- b. Assist candidates for membership in completing information cards.
- c. Bring to the church requests for changes in membership status.
- d. After diligent effort to locate members whose addresses are unknown, present these names to the church requesting transference to an "unknown" file.

Structure

The committee will consist of the church clerk, who will be the chair, and two other persons nominated by the Discernment and Nominating Committee and elected by the church. The committee will report to the Church Council through the Deacons.

Section 5: Remembrance Committee**Purpose**

The purpose of the Remembrance Committee is to supervise, in collaboration with the Grounds Committee, the basic design, planning and administration of interment of ash remains on the grounds of Oakhurst Baptist Church property. The committee works closely with pastoral staff and Deacons on details of interments.

The purpose of interment on church property is to provide an appropriate, consecrated and maintained place for the interment of ash remains of:

- Oakhurst Baptist Church members and their family members;
- Friends of Oakhurst and their family members;
- church staff and ministers who have served Oakhurst Baptist Church, and their family members; and
- with the approval of the Remembrance Committee, applicants who are not members, Friends or family members but who are connected with or significant to the church, a member, family member or staff member.

Family members are defined as spouse or partner, parents, grandparents, siblings, children or grandchildren of the eligible person.

Responsibilities

- a. Develop, and recommend for approval by the church, policies and procedures for interment of ash remains on church grounds.
- b. Maintain a site map of numbered spaces on church grounds.
- c. Review and act on applications for interment of ash remains.
- d. Determine fees and act on requests for waiver of fees.
- e. Facilitate, in collaboration with family members and pastoral staff, delivery and burial of ash remains.
- f. Maintain the memorial name plaque and Book of Remembrance and arrange for engraving of individual name plates.
- g. Provide an annual written report to Church Council at the end of each church year.

Interment

- a. Ash remains will be interred directly in the ground in numbered spaces assigned by a member of the Grounds Committee.

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- b. The location of occupied and available spaces will be shown on a site map filed in the church administrator's office.
 - c. In the event all spaces are used, remains may be reverently interred in previously used spaces. To the extent possible, this will be accomplished in the order in which the spaces were initially used, i.e., beginning with the first-used space and continuing in sequence of use.
 - d. The name and dates of birth and death of each person whose ash remains are interred on the grounds will be listed on a name plate and affixed on a memorial name plaque, in order of interment, on the exterior wall of the church. The name plate will be the only marker or memorial on the grounds.
 - e. The assessed fee covers the cost of the plaque and ongoing costs of maintaining the church property in support of the Remembrance Ministry.

Structure

The committee will consist of a chair and at least four members nominated by the Discernment and Nominating Committee and elected by the church for one-year terms. The committee will include at least one deacon or person with professional pastoral care experience, at least one and no more than two current members of the Grounds Committee, and the church office manager (*ex officio*). The committee will report to Church Council through the Deacons.

Section 6: Fellowship Committee

Purpose

The purpose of the Fellowship Committee is to encourage a sense of community and well-being among church members and facilitate and/or plan church-wide social gatherings.

Responsibilities

- a. Plan church-wide socials.
- b. Plan recreational activities for all age groups.
- c. Recommend an annual budget to the Budget Committee.

Structure

The committee will consist of a chair and nine to eleven persons nominated by the Discernment and Nominating Committee and elected by the church. The committee will report to Church Council through the Covenant Committee.

Section 7: Church School Committee

Purpose

God through grace is making of us a fellowship to embody and to express the Spirit of Christ. God is calling us to participate with God as disciples and learners and to engage in the continuing education process of discovering, remembering and reaffirming our identity as the people of God, equipping ourselves to be that people in an ever-changing

world, and facilitating Bible study as a cornerstone of the learning process among our fellowship. The purpose of the Church School is to assist each of us in this process and to augment our efforts to be faithful disciples.

Responsibilities

The Christian Education Committee administers Church School, other activities for children and youth and other learning activities it may formulate to lead the members of the congregation and others who participate into the fullness of Christian life. In exploring and forming Christian identity and becoming active disciples, learning to live in a covenant community, and becoming people of God, the Church School will provide the following ongoing programs:

- a. Sunday morning Church School opportunities for all ages;
- b. other activities for children and youth with emphasis on missions, music and building covenant community. The activities for children and youth will be in cooperation with, and active participation of, music and missions through the Worship and Music Committee, Director of Music Ministries and Missions Committee;
- c. summer educational programming for children, youth and adults;
- d. Christian education and devotional or spiritual formation activities for the congregation through other events and efforts;
- e. outreach for Church School activities and events; and
- f. Extended Session for children during Sunday morning worship services to provide care and nurture of younger children so that they may experience the love of God through their care and learn to live in covenant community.

The Christian Education Committee will ask for cooperation and enlist participation from all other church committees for the development of programs that further our Christian life together.

Structure

The Christian Education Committee coordinates the activities of the Church School and represents the interest and concerns of the Church School to the church. The Church School is divided into classes and divisions (Preschool and Children, Youth and Adults). The Coordinators of each of the divisions will be nominated by the Discernment and Nominating Committee and elected by the church in August. Assisted by the Christian Education Committee, the Coordinators will recruit teachers and workers for the Church School and activities for children, youth, and adults. They will give names of selected teachers and workers to the Discernment and Nominating Committee so these teachers and workers may be presented and elected for one-year terms at the August church conference. The committee reports to Church Council through the Christian Education Committee.

Section 8: Library Committee

Purpose

The purpose of the Library Committee is to manage the church library as a resource center from which organizations, committees, members and community friends can access materials and services for programs, personal growth, spiritual development and leisure.

Responsibilities

- a. Select, acquire, process, store, dispose of, promote and circulate library materials: books, other printed materials, audio/video recordings, seasonal and interest center materials.
 - b. Ensure that the library remains unlocked at all times in order to maintain open hours for the convenience of members and community friends who are in the building.
 - c. Maintain a permanent record of individuals memorialized through gifts to the library.
 - d. Solicit and consider advice on acquisitions from officers, leaders, staff and other members.
 - e. Circulate DVD recordings of worship and other services and events as requested.
 - f. Recommend an annual library budget to the Budget Committee and adhere to the budget approved.
- a. Collaborate with the History Committee on shared supplies and storage and display space and turn over to that committee any materials of possible historic significance to the church, including original DVD recordings of worship and other services.

Structure

The Library Committee will be composed of a chair and three or more members nominated by the Discernment and Nominating Committee and elected to one year terms. It will report to Church Council through the Christian Education Committee.

Section 9: History Committee

Purpose

The purpose of the History Committee is to provide a ministry of memory to identify, record, preserve and share information concerning the church's life and work.

Responsibilities

- a. Document and carry out policies for the appropriate collection, preservation, organization, storage and use of materials related to the history of the church.

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- b. Help the church understand and learn from its own history and from its larger Baptist heritage by preparing exhibits, presenting appropriate information to new-member classes and assisting with anniversary celebrations and other chosen activities.
 - c. Ensure as far as possible that the history, both by and about the church, is accurately portrayed in all forms of communication.
 - d. Coordinate with the Library Committee and church staff about displays, supplies and identification and storage of archive-worthy materials.
 - e. Write and communicate to church members an annual history of the life of the church.
 - f. Identify and partner with appropriate external organizations to archive historically significant materials.
 - g. Recommend an annual History Committee budget to the Budget Committee.

Structure

The committee will consist of the church historian, who will serve as chair, and four others nominated by the Discernment and Nominating Committee. They will be elected annually for renewable one-year terms. The church clerk will serve as an *ex officio* member. The committee reports to the Church Council through the Christian Education Committee.

Section 10: Properties and Space Committee

Purpose

The purpose of the Properties and Space Committee is to oversee all actions necessary for the operation and maintenance of buildings, grounds, space, furnishings, and equipment owned by the church, with the exception of equipment expressly the responsibility of other committees.

Responsibilities

- a. Inspect all properties periodically, evaluating required maintenance and housekeeping.
- b. Arrange for maintenance and repair of all properties as necessary.
- c. Maintain inventory of furnishings and equipment and recommend replacements, acquisitions or dispositions as needed.
- d. Develop maintenance procedures and guidelines for security, insurance, code compliance and use of buildings, properties and space.
- e. Authorize issuance of keys to the building and other locks; keep a record of persons holding keys, along with the reason.
- f. Recommend or approve any decorating or painting of any area.

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- g. Recommend or approve any structural changes or remodeling.
 - h. Prepare recommendations for the Budget Committee for expenditures necessary to preceding items.
 - i. Recommend employment, method of supervision and termination of maintenance and housekeeping personnel to Personnel Committee.
 - j. Devise and supervise a method of lending and returning church properties and equipment.
 - k. Advise other groups and committees in their assignment and use of rooms.

Structure

The committee will consist of a chair and at least five members nominated by the Discernment and Nominating Committee and elected by the church. The committee will report through the Finance Committee to Church Council.

Section 11: Transportation Committee

Purpose

The purpose of the Transportation Committee is to oversee the operation of the church vehicle and provides transportation to the church for people in the community.

Responsibilities

- a. Survey transportation needs and make recommendations to the church for meeting these needs.
- b. Establish guidelines for and supervise the use of the church vehicle, noting any requirements of the insurance company.
- c. Maintain vehicle in operating condition as required by the insurance company; obtain annual tag and inspection sticker.
- d. Provide qualified drivers for vehicle to make regular pick-ups in community for Church School and church services.
- e. In cooperation with the Properties and Space Committee, maintain adequate insurance for vehicle.
- f. Prepare and recommend an annual budget to the Budget Committee.

Structure

The committee will be composed of a chair and at least two other members nominated by the Discernment and Nominating Committee and elected by the church. The committee will meet quarterly or upon call by the chair and will report to the Church Council through the Finance Committee.

Section 12: Grounds Committee**Purpose**

The purpose of the Grounds Committee is to evaluate needs of the grounds (dirt/softscape areas and growing plants outside the church building), designate a schedule of work for upkeep, and secure help to maintain and improve the grounds. Additionally, the Grounds Committee will work with the Properties Committee and the Remembrance Committee as needed.

Responsibilities

- a. Evaluate yearly tasks to maintain all grounds of the church.
- b. Designate a schedule for completing tasks.
- c. Assign and prepare spaces for interment of ash remains on behalf of Remembrance Committee.
- d. Assess annual budget needs and recommend annual budget to the Budget Committee.
- e. Communicate to the Properties and Space Committee any hard scape needs observed and coordinate tasks with Properties and Space as appropriate (irrigation and storm water issues in particular require joint management).
- f. Provide a written annual report to the church through the Church Council.

Structure

The committee will consist of a chair and three to five members nominated by the Discernment and Nominating Committee and elected by the church for one-year terms. The committee will meet and report at the discretion of the chair. At least one and no more than two members of the Grounds Committee will be designated to serve simultaneously on the Remembrance Committee. The Grounds committee will actively communicate with the Properties and Space Committee on the state of grounds needs. Reports will be made to the Church Council through the Finance Committee.

Section 13: Teller Committee**Purpose**

The Teller committee assists the Finance Committee by assuring accurate and timely collecting, counting, reporting and depositing financial receipts collected from regular church events including Sunday offerings, Wednesday night suppers and any others as assigned by the Finance Committee.

Responsibilities

- a. Ensure appropriate number of committee and church members are present at assigned times to collect, count, report and deposit monies.
- b. Implement procedures specified by the Finance Committee for these designated activities.

Structure

The committee will consist of a chair and at least four members, nominated by the Discernment and Nominating committee and elected by the church for one-year terms. The Committee may recruit other church members to assist the Committee for defined duties. The Committee will meet at the discretion of the chair. It will report to Church Council through the Finance committee.

Section 14: Office Equipment and Procedures Committee

Purpose

The purpose of the Office Equipment and Procedures Committee is to oversee purchase and maintenance of church office equipment and furniture and advise church staff on office procedures.

Responsibilities

- a. Periodically inspect and evaluate office equipment, furniture, computer systems and domain services for upgrades and maintenance requirements.
- b. Arrange for maintenance and repair of office equipment and furniture as required.
- c. In consultation with Church Administrator, recommend purchase or replacement of office supplies, equipment and furniture.
- d. Evaluate and advise Church Administrator on procedures that meet the church's administrative needs.
- e. Prepare recommendations for the Budget Committee for expenditures necessary to preceding items.

Structure

The committee will consist of a chair and three to five members nominated by the Discernment and Nominating Committee and elected by the church to one-year terms. The Church Administrator will be *ex-officio* to the committee. The committee will report through the Finance Committee to Church Council. The chair of the Communications Committee or his or her designee will serve as an *ex-officio* member.

APPENDIX: Personnel Policies and Benefits

(See printed copy of Rules of Procedure in the church library)